

A Tiny Spot on the Earth

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*The Political Culture of the Netherlands in the Nineteenth
and Twentieth Century*

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Amsterdam University Press

Cover illustration: Nationaal Archief/Spaarnestad. Photo/Wilh. L. Stuifbergen
Translated by Vivien Collingwood

Cover design: Suzan Beijer
Lay-out: Crius Group, Hulshout

Amsterdam University Press English-language titles are distributed in the US and Canada by the University of Chicago Press.

ISBN 978 90 8964 704 7
e-ISBN 978 90 4852 415 0 (pdf)
e-ISBN 978 90 4852 416 7 (ePub)
NUR 686

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All government, indeed every human benefit and enjoyment, every virtue, and every prudent act, is founded on compromise and barter. We balance inconveniences; we give and take; we remit some rights, that we may enjoy others; and, we choose rather to be happy citizens, than subtle disputants. As we must give away some natural liberty, to enjoy civil advantages –, so we must sacrifice some civil liberties, for the advantages to be derived from the communion and fellowship of a great empire. But in all fair dealings the thing bought, must bear some proportion to the purchase paid.

– EDMUND BURKE, *SPEECH ON CONCILIATION WITH AMERICA*, 1775

Introduction

In 1795 a *coup d'état*, supported by military assistance from the French revolutionary army, brought an end to the existence of the seven independent provinces, and led to the founding of the 'one and indivisible' Batavian Republic. From that moment, the Netherlands became a nation state with a 'modern' political culture. This fundamental transformation formed part of an 'Atlantic Revolution'; the new state was carried on the waves of a global development, one that had become particularly manifest in the United States and France. At the same time, it became clear that the Netherlands was profoundly dependent upon power relationships over which it had little influence: the Kingdom of Prussia had managed to prop up the revolution in the Netherlands by military means between 1787 and 1795; and Napoleon would subsequently bring the country under French influence and even annex it in 1806, after which independence was restored in 1813 in large part thanks to Russian soldiers and British politics.

The Netherlands had about two million inhabitants at this time, and thus had limited opportunities to gather large sums by taxation or raise a formidable army through conscription. As a result, the country could no longer play a meaningful role in international 'Great Power politics'. This had already become clear in the course of the eighteenth century, but now it was undeniable: the Netherlands was a small country, described in parliament in 1796 by the representative Schimmelpenninck as 'our tiny spot on the earth'.¹

That 'tiny spot' would sigh many a time in realization of its smallness, but with some regularity it would transform this awareness into the notion that it had a task in the world: whilst it was no longer the great power that it had been in the Golden Age, it was an exemplary nation, a guide that would show other countries the way to a world in which power and interests no longer played a decisive role, where law and justice dominated, and where the climate was determined by tolerance. Such a manoeuvre, for example, was expressed in 1864 in incomparable fashion by the popular historian, W.J. Hofdijk:

Once we commanded the sea, and proclaimed the law to the peoples; we were the talk of Europe and the world, they would bow to the Lion of the Netherlands, fluttering on his tricolour standard. That belongs to the past; it will never come back –; and it also need not come back. A different future lies before us; a more glorious one – and one that is achievable.

And if you, as I, remain true to the old Lion of the Netherlands – you shall also preserve him for the future: you will be able to see him, rejuvenated by the glory of conquest, with his old standard, the clear ‘Orange, white, blue’ blazing out above his rippling mane, but with his proud paw resting on a new blazon, which shall bear the motto:

IT IS MORE SPLENDID
TO BE THE MOST VIRTUOUS
THAN THE MOST POWERFUL
PEOPLE ON EARTH.²

In the course of the nineteenth century, this theme would be extended to the idea that the Netherlands was an exemplary country in a general sense.³ It felt justified in assuming this position of moral superiority on the grounds that it had bridged deep religious differences through the generally endorsed principle of freedom of religion, resolved the class struggle by a system of negotiation and consultation, and generally suppressed conflicts of power and interest through reasonableness and democratic conviction. According to this line of argument, the result was a deeply egalitarian society of citizens (*burgers*), as described in 1934 by the much-quoted historian, Huizinga:

Whether we like it or not, we Dutch are all bourgeois [*burgerlijk*]: from the notary to the poet, and from the baron to the proletarian. Our national culture is bourgeois in every sense of the word.⁴

According to him, this explained the ‘evenness [*effenheid*] of national life’. Whilst this may have been somewhat boring, it simultaneously allowed much trouble to be avoided, and thus bred contentment.

On this basis, Dutch history retrospectively gained not only a tradition, but also an identity. It has been said, somewhat blasphemously, that while God created the world, the Dutch made their own country. They fought against the water, and in the course of this fight a ‘polder mentality’ developed in which power was replaced by consultation. As a form of enlightened self-interest, a democratic mentality lay at the heart of Dutch culture, and had done so since ancient times. In this respect political scientists pointed to the political culture that had been created by the regents in the Republic of the United Netherlands, which was said to be characterized by ‘compromise and accommodation’ and ‘persuasion’ – and thus also by multiple, protracted meetings.⁵ At the end of the twentieth century, this

analysis even gained something of an international reputation, when in the form of the 'polder model' it was held up to the world as a method for cutting back the welfare state without too much ado.⁶

The past of the Netherlands was thereby presented as too 'flat,' however, with too great an emphasis on continuity and too little focus on the far-reaching changes that occurred, often with numerous conflicts, in the structure and conduct of politics. It is often forgotten, for instance, that the Netherlands as a unitary state embarked on a real revolution in 1795, including a phase of terror, though one that claimed few lives in comparison with France.⁷ This phase tends to be passed over silently in the national culture of remembrance, as is the fact that the first real constitution was drafted in 1798, not 1848, and that the monarchy did not begin with the restoration of independence in 1813 but was imposed by France (1806-1810).

This one-sidedness is not limited to the inception of the nation state, but also implies a mediocre grasp of the huge problems with which people subsequently struggled in the creation of modern politics. Indeed, it was not a matter of a kind of natural growth of institutions and customs; it was not a question of a gradual 'transformation' (a much misused word) of the political culture. Here, perhaps, it is useful to draw a comparison with evolutionary theory. Evolution is hardly a peaceful process; it does not entail voluntary adaptation, but displacement, battles and extinction. Neither is it a gradual process of steady change: long periods of more or less great stability are interspersed with periods of sudden, rapid change ('critical junctures').⁸ In a comparable way, the development of politics can be analysed as a process in which institutions and customs change relatively slowly, alternating with moments in which circumstances are uncertain and the future unpredictable. In these relatively short moments the real power relations are exposed, individual politicians exercise decisive influence, and, moreover, chance plays a role. The choices that are made in what are relatively short period periods of time determine opportunities and the future course of events.⁹ Such 'moments' determine the structure of this book.

We shall look successively at how the Netherlands became a unitary state with a representative political order, how the parliament laboriously rose to become the 'Acropolis of our Fatherland',¹⁰ how the development of ideology crystallized into political parties, how the first contours of the welfare state were drawn, how the mutual penetration of state and society resulted in a 'pillarized' corporate order, how modern conservatism bound itself to economic growth and thereby to Europe; and finally, how pessimism and populism united in 'declinism', the notion that the Netherlands had

fallen from grace and into decline. First, however, we must make several theoretical and methodological remarks regarding the key concepts of the nation state and political culture.

The nation state

Whilst the term 'nation state' was probably coined only at the beginning of the twentieth century, the concept dates from an earlier time and arose out of a complex discussion in the eighteenth century about the nature of society (how are people connected with each other?) and the basis on which decisions within a society are ultimately made (who or what is the arbitrator when there is a difference of opinion?).¹¹ Two traditions stand out in this discussion.

The first started from the notion that society is not a united entity, let alone a homogenous ethno-cultural entity, but a union or association of people. The general interest and integrity of the territory should be guaranteed by the state, in particular by means of (effecting) compliance with the law. In that respect, a sovereign, for example, was the final arbiter, and thus also represented the community as such. In this tradition, 'politics' was therefore disconnected from the personal or dynastic interests of the sovereign; the state, as an abstraction, was superior to these. In such a state, one could subsequently strive for greater cohesion and harmony in the political community.

The second tradition assumed that a society is more or less characterized by unity by its very nature. This unity should then be expressed at the level of the state, as an affirmation of consensus. In the most utopian variant of this tradition, no state was even necessary, given that that all men are brothers (or should be). In a certain sense, the tradition thereby turned away from politics and focused much more on achieving a 'natural' sociability, which was sought in language, culture and also, in the longer term, racial unity.

In the first tradition, the state determined the nation; in the second, the nation determined the state. This led to differing views on the meaning of the economy and, in particular, of trade. In the first tradition, trade between people and nations was seen as being in everyone's interest; all parties profited from it. The implication was that there was a commercial sociability that would thrive, in particular, if every individual was 'productive'; 'labour,' not 'virtue', was the most important quality by which people were judged. The second tradition rejected this line of reasoning: trade was

based on individual transactions and was thus by definition not focused on the common interest. Moreover, this egoism often went hand in hand with double-dealing and deception, and led to international rivalries, if not war.

The two traditions would struggle for precedence and in the course of the nineteenth century, sometimes deeply entangled, they would develop and connect with political movements. The first tradition would contribute most to liberalism, the second to socialism. This explains why these two movements played leading roles in the political-theoretical debate. An important shift in this debate was brought about by Protestant and Catholic politicians, who separated modern popular sovereignty from the idea that a nation state should be homogenous, and managed to replace the notion of 'one and indivisible' with 'unity in diversity'.¹² To summarize this as succinctly as possible: the liberals built up the state, the socialists focused on the nation and, until deep into the twentieth century, Christian politics made itself master of the political order. It follows that the nation state is not so much a 'thing' as a concept that was at stake in far-reaching controversies and a deeply divided past.

In addition, it is important to realize that both traditions make a distinction between economics and politics as if these were separate domains. This is by no means the case. For example, the debate on the 'social question' in the final quarter of the nineteenth century must be seen as a conflict between the equality of citizens and economic inequality, both features of the nation state. One can also point to the current problems afflicting the European Union: the nature of trade between people and companies is different from that of the integration of sovereign states. In this case, commercial sociability is in conflict with political sociability. The transition from a common market to a political community has thus proved unusually difficult and has by no means been automatic, in contrast to what the founding fathers of European integration expected. As a result, in this book we shall pay a relatively large amount of attention to the connections between economic and political developments.

Political culture

I argued above that this book will focus in particular on decisive moments, on crossroads in politics, within the framework of fundamental concepts of what politics is, how a society ought to function, and how a country positions itself in international relations. This framework can be described as the underlying layer of politics, such as that which has taken shape in

the Netherlands, partly consciously and partly almost instinctively. We are able to make such an analysis by considering which choices politicians have made and which political-theoretical views have inspired them, or which ones they have rejected or ignored. But politicians do not operate in a vacuum. To be sure, they act according to the constitution 'without undue influence or consultation', but they are the representatives of the electorate and thus inextricably intertwined with it. As a result, I will also pay attention to the views that existed in wider circles on the manner in which politics could promote what is right and good in society.¹³

In the political sciences, from the 1960s onwards this led to a focus on 'political culture.'¹⁴ Rather than specific issues, this concerned the basic ideas underlying such issues, which did not change from one day to the next but formed part of a pattern of socialization and were thereby anchored in behaviour. Although this approach was initially accompanied by high expectations, the results were disappointing. A change in a political culture was difficult to explain, for example, just as it was unclear whether political culture was the cause or effect of behaviour. Historians were not much concerned about developing an elaborate theory around this concept, and from the 1980s they used it to study politics from an anthropological perspective.¹⁵ As a result, however, the concept became rather broad. In general, it has been used to shed light on political views and behaviour by looking at how values, views, convictions and expectations acquire meaning in the public debate.¹⁶ This determined the perception of interests, the room for manoeuvre that was deemed acceptable or necessary, and the presumptions that lay behind opinions and ideas. In that light, this book examines the moments at which these changed; at which 'normal' politics became 'old' politics.

On one important point, however, I deviate from the way in which the concept of political culture is normally used. Originally the concept was developed largely to compare different countries with each other. Accordingly, there was a natural emphasis on what distinguished each country from the others. Now it is indisputable that every country has its own customs, but at the same time it should be noted that every country, with more or less enthusiasm, forms part of a larger whole. For centuries, the discussion about politics has not been a national discussion but an international one; from the eighteenth century, the emergence of newspapers connected local communities with the larger world, just as the nineteenth century was largely characterized by an unprecedented increase in the number of international contacts: this was the golden age of the seaport and the railway station. Particularly between c. 1860 and 1914, there was

a massive exchange of money, goods and people.¹⁷ The Netherlands was explicitly involved in this process from an early stage, both through the printing and distribution of Enlightenment works and through the constant expansion of its colonial empire.¹⁸ The country lay at an intersection of the French, English and German cultures, and meant to capitalize on the most valuable thinking emanating from them. It had a very open economy with, after England, the lowest trade tariffs. As a small country, the Netherlands was thus unable to withdraw from international political, economic and cultural developments, and in broad terms this has remained the case. Research based on extremely diverse data suggests that at the beginning of the 21st century, the Netherlands was even the most internationally oriented country in the world.¹⁹ Though this might be taken with a pinch of salt, the fact remains that the history of the Dutch nation state can hardly be seen as something that stands alone. For this reason, in this book about Dutch political culture I shall frequently refer to international developments, which partly form an essential context and partly determine the course of events in the Netherlands to a major extent.

In addition, it is important that we do not view political culture as a separate domain, disconnected from daily politics and the general culture. This would entail making a contrast between structure and events, whilst everyday reality shows us that these are inseparable from one another.

I thus consider political culture as a whole, in which three analytical domains can be distinguished. The first of these is the political system, with the constitution at its heart.²⁰ That constitutional thinking lies at the core of modern political culture is also shown by the great attention that was paid to drafting the constitution during the American and French revolutions, as well as the Batavian one. The second domain took shape at the interface between private life, the state and the market. This was described as 'civil society', or 'die bürgerliche Gesellschaft', which took concrete form in all kinds of diverse societies and associations, in which women also played an important role.²¹ There was also a third domain, which can be described as the general attitude of the population. Around 1600, Hugo Grotius described this concept as 'a certain characteristic of the people as a whole' (the *habitus*) and more than two centuries later, Tocqueville described it as 'the habits of the heart'.²² Later it would be called the 'spirit of the people [*volksgeist*]' or the 'character of the people', terms that were tainted by fascism and replaced with the more neutral 'mentality'.²³ Very recently, research has been carried out on the extent to which such a mentality is also genetically anchored; as such, it is described as an 'orientation'. While still very much in an initial phase, the research appears to point to the existence of two orientations:

on one side, a tendency to focus on one's own group, with a relatively bleak view of human nature (as 'tending towards all evil') and a strong preference for authority ('rules are rules'); and on the other, a tendency to be open to others, a readiness to deviate from the rules if the conditions seem to justify it, and a favourable attitude towards change and experimentation.²⁴ Given that it has focused to date on individuals, and not yet on social customs and routines, I shall not draw upon this research in this book.

Politics

The English political scientist Bernard Crick once asserted that politics is a complicated human activity, one that is as important for the continued existence of society as sexuality. Both areas are ruled by passion and domination, violation and seduction, success and failure. Some experience in both areas with the endless variations and mutual dialectic between them offers more insight than a hopeless quest to find an ultimate definition.²⁵ What 'politics' is resists definition, even more so where politics, to a great extent, concerns the question of which things are political.²⁶ We cannot determine what it is beforehand, and neither can we predict how it will develop. It is a 'contested concept': whilst it is possible to have a reasonable discussion about it, we should not expect to agree.

To say that politics is an almost indefinable concept is not to say that it is impossible to write a history of politics. In doing so, however, a number of hazards should be avoided. The most important, perhaps, is that the historian knows what happens in the end. Whilst that might appear an advantage, it brings a major disadvantage. There is a permanent temptation to over-interpret, to find explanations that are too easy, too many 'causes,' and pay too little attention to chance and coincidence. In this respect, we should heed the warning of the English historian Michael Mann: society is neither an entity nor a 'system', but a theoretical abstraction: 'Because there is no whole, social relations cannot be reduced "ultimately", "in the last instance", to some systematic property of it – like the "mode of material production", or the "cultural" or "normative system", or the "form of military organization."²⁷ To be sure, these are patterns of thinking that are deeply anchored in the historical profession, but they must be seen mainly as the constructions that were used in the nineteenth century to write historical accounts with one's own homogenous national state as the all-dominating beginning and end-point, and which were driven by 'the course of history' (or 'time'). As a result, there is also too little understanding of the possibility

that things could have been different. If Napoleon had not advanced on Moscow, the Netherlands might have remained part of the French Empire; if Erhard, rather than Adenauer, had led the Federal Republic of Germany, 'Europe' might not have developed along a French-German axis, but might be based on a British-German free trade association.²⁸ Here, too, a comparison with the theory of evolution may be enlightening: in contrast with the usual nineteenth-century interpretation, evolution does not have a 'direction', let alone a 'goal', and can only be ascertained with hindsight.²⁹

People are used to bringing order to a system-less and goal-less world, and intuitively provide heterogeneity with an interpretation.³⁰ However, this is sometimes rather difficult. The classic reference, in this respect, is a passage in Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, in which a commander comes to report to the army commander-in-chief that his regiment had been involved in a pitched battle half an hour ago, but 'he was unsure whether his regiment had beaten off the attack or had been cut to shreds by the attackers'.³¹ For the contemporary, the reality that is lived is unclear and the future uncertain. In 1823 a farmer from Friesland wrote in his journal: 'How little a person knows what the next moment shall bring...'.³² This perspective guided the way the past is viewed in this book, in which I have aimed to strike a balance between continuity and discontinuity, and to distinguish unstoppable processes from chance.

Haarlem, February 2009 – April 2014.

1. Long Live the Republic!

1798: The Constitution

In the final quarter of the eighteenth century, against a background of protracted wars and the rising tax burden that went with them, a culture of rebellion developed in a number of countries. It was said that the misery was caused by corruption. The moral basis of the *ancien régime* was thereby eroded and the sovereignty of kings rapidly lost legitimacy. This heralded the start of a revolutionary era, one that was already seen by contemporaries as being of global historical significance. Whilst the revolutions in the United States and France are the best-known examples, this was a worldwide phenomenon.¹

The vacuum that consequently developed in the public order was filled with the idea of popular sovereignty. Although it was interpreted in various ways, lying at its heart was the notion that people had inalienable rights. Regardless of class, belief or race, they were all citizens, and this gave them the right to shape the community to which they belonged. It justified the abolition of the privileges that had been associated with class and belief, bringing an end to the 'politics of difference': people no longer belonged to different classes, neighbourhoods or religious dominations, but were individuals who in principle had equal rights and duties. And whilst women were excluded from the political domain more emphatically than before, Jews now had civil rights, for example, Catholics were permitted to hold government posts in formerly 'Protestant nations' (and vice versa), and a start was made to the abolition of slavery.

The most outspoken representative of this new gospel in the Western world was the English-American writer and politician, Thomas Paine, who published *The Rights of Man* in 1791.² For Paine, a political order was an agreement between the members of a community on how they should exercise a number of shared rights. A written constitution, the contract, was the first step towards this, followed by a rational electoral system. In this way, 'government by hereditary succession' would be replaced by 'government by election and representation', if necessary by violent means. To clarify: Paine was not proposing the introduction of something similar to what we now understand as 'democracy'; at most, that was only suitable for very small, well-organized states. In his view, the key concept was 'representation': the election of representatives who would be guided by common interests.

Directly opposed to this was the English politician, Edmund Burke, whose *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790) pointed to the other side of the idealism that had been unleashed, the notion that the world could be improved in accordance with a rational plan. Popular sovereignty would lead only to 'mob rule,' the tyranny of the masses, and unity would be imposed by violent means. Moreover, the representatives, such as those proposed by Paine, would distance themselves from the voters in no time and degenerate into a group of raiders and thieves. According to Burke, the idea of an entirely new political system negated the fact that the state was not a contract but a covenant between the past, the present and the future, between the dead and the living. Politics should be based on tradition and the existence of differences. Changes should only be made with caution; politics, after all, consisted for a large part in the sharing of inconveniences ('We balance inconveniences, we give and take').³ Moderation in this was a form of wisdom, compromise was preferable to being in the right. When Burke wrote this, the Terror was yet to come.

In the violent turbulence that had plagued the world, the state emerged as the key winner at the beginning of the nineteenth century. This was partly a consequence of the need to restore a degree of peace and order. More important, however, was the fact that the state had managed to legitimize itself in a new way. It was not simply a matter of restoring hierarchy; at the same time, it was about the acceptance of new norms. The state should promote the well-being of the people and spread enlightenment; modernization became the *raison d'état*. The revolution was thus declared to be at an end, and the citizens were encouraged to accumulate earthly treasures. This sentiment was captured in the much-quoted call of 1843 by the French politician Guizot, for people to be satisfied with the political rights they had gained and stop whining for new ones: enrich yourselves – 'enrichissez-vous' – and thereby improve the moral and material position of France.⁴ Consequently, a new inequality would develop, one no longer based on the privileges of birth but on earnings. In that respect, around 1800 states began to resemble each other more, and all would have to deal with the tension between the new political equality and the equally new socio-economic inequality. That is the framework in which the events in the Netherlands should also be seen.

In the 1780s, a conviction grew in the Netherlands that the country was in decline. Everything was getting worse in almost every respect, both materially and morally. This led to a new form of classical republicanism, in which the active participation of the citizen, guided only by a willingness to put the common interest above everything else, was seen as an important

guarantee of the continued existence of a free republic. Liberty should be defended, by force of arms if needs be, against abuses of power and corruption. The 'patriots' were prepared to do this; they turned against the government of the stadholder William v and struggled for a 'restoration': a return to an idealized past in which the citizens had yet to be oppressed by a tyrannical and corrupt Orangist regime. The patriot movement was swept aside in 1787 by Prussian troops. In the years that followed, partly influenced by developments in America and France, the idea arose that in a modern state 'democracy' would only take shape through the election of representatives, though opinions were also deeply divided as to whether these 'representatives' of the people should be bound by mandates or operate autonomously. With the outbreak of the revolution in the Netherlands, in 1795 an extremely complex debate was thus held on the manner in which republican participation might be combined with democratic representation;⁵ and that was just one of the problems that was facing the new political culture.

One and indivisible

On Tuesday 1 March 1796, 90 people's representatives assembled in the former ballroom of the Stadholder's Quarter of the Binnenhof in The Hague.⁶ This was now the *Gehoorzaal* (audience chamber) of the National Hotel, the meeting place of the revolutionary National Assembly of the Batavian People. Benches had been set out for the people's representatives, who were meeting to deliberate on a new constitution. On the second floor, along the short sides of the hall, stands had been installed for the public in which the limited number of places had been divided fairly between men and women. Boxes had also been installed for foreign diplomats and the editors of the *Dagverhaal*, a regular publication that would report on the deliberations as carefully as possible.⁷ Now that the Batavians had thrown off the servitude that they had suffered for the past two centuries, the veil that had previously allowed the interests of the people and the country to be discussed in secret was lifted. The first edition of the *Dagverhaal* spared no effort in declaring it an historic day:

The morning sun rose in a cloudless sky; the air was pure and good, and that was the first omen – if one chooses to believe in omens – that was the first symbol of the good fortune that the National Convention of the free Society of Batavians will bring.

Elected almost unanimously as the first Speaker of the National Assembly was Pieter Paulus, a lawyer and politician who had built up a considerable reputation, even among his opponents.⁸ Particularly in the run-up to the first meeting, he had shown himself to be both an energetic and a convincing politician. After he had been inaugurated, he solemnly pronounced:

In the Name of the People of the Netherlands, whom we represent here,
I declare this Assembly to be the Representative Body of the People of
the Netherlands.

Outside, the assembly hall was surrounded by a sizeable crowd. They must have been cold, as the temperature was freezing and there was a brisk north-easterly wind. According to the *Dagverhaal*, however, following Paulus' solemn words, the people were overcome with joy:

The most wonderful music was to be heard from all around. From the windows, to the side of the Hof, Trumpeters announced the event to the anxious crowd. Here, too, the Voice of the People made itself heard; here, too, there was talk of willing participation and true joy! There was a waving sea of hats on the bayonets, swords and sabres that had been thrust in the air. – Everyone cheered; all cried, *Hurrah!* or *Long Live the Republic!* – many were standing with tears of gratitude in their eyes. And if the experienced and careful judge of character does not deceive himself, then several people who had previously held different opinions were persuaded by these moving events to change their ideas.

Paulus then explained to the gathering the three major changes that would distinguish this National Assembly from the now disbanded States General. The first was that decisions would be taken here, rather than by holding 'endless consultations'. This would be made possible by a second change, namely that the members would not hold consultations with their mandators, but would take decisions in the National Assembly on the basis of their own judgement and according to a majority of votes. And from this followed the third change: the members now represented the 'people', no longer the different provinces from whence they came. He did not even want to hear the word 'province' any more! This did not elicit immediate protest, although there were some in the hall who had a different take on this. Of course the Batavian Republic was 'one and indivisible'; but whereas for some people this was a sacred principle, for others it functioned merely as a starting point for further deliberations. It may even have been foolish

to force the Batavians into the straitjacket of a unitary state, if only because for centuries the population had been accustomed to a provincial order and provincial roots.⁹ The magic words borrowed from France – ‘one and indivisible’ – were therefore unable to solve every problem relating to how to structure the national entity.

Besides this, however, there was also a very different matter: the National Assembly represented ‘the people’; but who were the people? Were they a collection of individuals? This problem came to light when dealing with the issue of whether people were permitted to appeal collectively to the National Assembly with particular desires or wishes. Were all kinds of clubs, associations and suchlike not ‘sources of division’, and would it thus not be wise to limit access to the individual citizen? This would allow him to gain a ‘dignified bearing’, and would enable him, as a ‘noble man’, to rise above all kinds of baseness. It was determined that citizens would be permitted to submit collective petitions, but only if they had signed them ‘one for one’, and not if they had been signed in their name by chairmen or secretaries, for example.¹⁰

In this way, a number of crucial issues were brought up long before a new constitution had been established. The core problem was that decisions had to be made simultaneously about both the nature of the reforms and the manner in which such decisions should be taken. This was even more difficult where there was a lack of clarity, or even a vacuum, on essential points. Although a Batavian Republic had been declared, for example, the nature of this new ‘nation state’ was still unclear; and whilst a National Assembly had met, the meaning of ‘representation’ had yet to take shape, just as there was significant disagreement about what the tasks of this National Assembly as a whole should be.¹¹ Moreover, there was little time or space to discuss such matters calmly, given the presence of French troops. Although these remained aloof for the time being, they might easily (and depending on developments in France) become impatient and intervene.

Politicians may intend to put all kinds of theoretically-grounded insights into practice, but they have to respond to unforeseen and uncontrollable developments. With this, ad hoc decisions bring about new realities, which in turn shape the further course of events.¹² In transitional periods such as these, all kinds of ideas and ideals are naturally put forward, but at the same time a struggle for power takes place. And finally, chance plays a role in complex situations such as these. For instance, the representative Speaker of the National Assembly, the ‘second apostle’ Paulus, died prematurely: during the cold opening ceremony he had developed pneumonia, to which he succumbed on 17 March 1796. With this, the revolution lost a guide. This

added to the instability of the decision-making process, after which one *coup d'état* would follow another in rapid succession. In the end, France stepped in and annexed the Netherlands.

Analytically, the various issues with which the Batavians were struggling – such as the meaning of citizenship, parliament, representation, the state and the nation – could be kept separate; but in reality, of course, everything was interlinked. It was particularly in relation to the separation of church and state and the definition of the scope of citizenship, however, that decisive steps were taken in the new political order.

The separation of church and state

The *ancien régime* was grounded in group rights and privileges; it did not recognize individual citizens as carriers of equal political rights. This meant that the population largely had rights that stemmed from corporations; a citizen of a town, for example, a guild, or membership of a church. A corporate order such as this formed the backbone of the *ancien régime*,¹³ but it was destroyed by the French Revolution. In Paris, for example, the guilds were outlawed in 1791. Nothing was allowed to come between the interest of the individual and the general interest: 'Il n'y a plus que l'intérêt particulier de chaque individu et l'intérêt général.'¹⁴ In the Netherlands, the guilds therefore saw the storm clouds gathering. In June 1796, a number of representatives from guilds in Dutch towns had petitioned the National Assembly with a number of both practical and principled arguments to justify their continued existence.¹⁵ For example, guilds ensured that buyers got value for money, just as they also ensured a degree of peace and order in society. Perhaps more importantly, guilds were not tainted with politics; after all, they had not been founded by sovereigns or aristocrats. In fact, they were the earliest associations of free citizens. They were not the property of a political government, but independent associations, founded and maintained by citizens with their own money, sometimes centuries ago. The National Assembly simply had no right to interfere with them. It was a powerful case, but it was not enough. In 1798 it was decided in principle to dismantle the guilds, after which it would take at least two decades before the decision was enforced everywhere. With this measure, albeit implicitly, an essential mechanism of the market economy was introduced: freedom of enterprise, grounded in faith in commercial sociability.¹⁶

Behind these issues, a fundamental problem was emerging: if town and province, guild and corporation were stripped of all political meaning, on the grounds that nothing should come between the national government and the individual, then at the same time, every imaginable form of social cohesion would be dissolved. Society would then consist only of separate individuals. Neither was 'politics' able to assume this role: whilst politicians naturally had only one objective to pursue – the well-being of the fatherland – in practice, they managed to divide people somewhat. In fact, the political order was also geared towards this: there was an enormous compulsion to take up positions, meaning that emotions frequently ran high, both in the National Assembly and beyond. Public life was politicized to the core, and this process thus did not unite people, but on the contrary, kept them apart.

No one, however, could imagine a society in which the citizens were not linked in some way or another. That was all the more important given that internal divisions created weakness, and might, in particular, easily tempt the French to intervene. The solution to the problem lay in religion. In the end, after all, everyone was a Christian; that is to say, everyone believed in the wise omnipotence of Our Father in Heaven and of the meaning of the Ten Commandments on earth. That was why the National Assembly lost no time in tackling the question of whether meetings should not be opened with a prayer, and whether a national day of thanksgiving should be held in every church. After all: 'without Religion, there can be no public happiness.' This elicited protest, however, on the grounds that while religion might be essential, one could only expect wretched disputes from churches: 'The Hydra of religious disputes is sleeping, and why should we awaken her, just at the moment we would rather see her lie in eternal slumber?' Millions of people, it was added, would have had their lives spared 'if Political power in its actions had never known Religion, and Religion in its offerings and worship had never known Political governance.'¹⁷ This then led to an opening prayer in which the Enlightenment and the Fatherland were consecrated:

Almighty Supreme Being! In Your wisdom and love, lead us in the faithful execution of our duty, for the promotion of the well-being of our Fatherland and our Fellow Men! Amen.

The relationship between church and state was thereby immediately raised, and a work of art had to be achieved: to separate the church from the state, *and* to retain the link between belief and the nation.¹⁸ That was easier in theory than in practice. In the area of education and poor relief, for example, churches fulfilled public duties, just as town and regional administrations

maintained a hierarchy between different churches and had the authority to intervene in all kinds of disputes within the churches. The relationship was thus quite complex. Moreover, with a radical division of church and state, there would be no possibility of reining in troublesome ministers when they strayed onto political territory for example, or fermented socially divisive ecclesiastical disputes. These were all reasons, then, to maintain some form of supervision in some way or other. In this regard, the debate about the separation of church and state was an exceptionally difficult one, in all its implications; but at the same time, it was unavoidable. It was even essential for the establishment of a new political culture. With this, after all, it was symbolically established that every individual had a right to his own beliefs and convictions – and not only with respect to religion. And by extension, it meant that a separation was made between a public and a private sphere. At the same time, it opened up the space for people to organize themselves, if they wished to, on the grounds of matters of interest or importance, and in this way create a civil society. In short, it made modern politics possible.

On 23 May 1796 the separation of church and state was formally addressed in the National Assembly. Between 1 July and 5 August, meetings would be held on this almost daily. In a number of respects, it was an intractable problem. On the one hand, people not only wanted to maintain religion, but also even to strengthen it. This was hard to imagine without some role for the church. On the other hand, however, in the *Declaration of the rights of man and of the citizen*, which had been solemnly proclaimed in January 1795, it had been stated emphatically that ‘every Man has the right to serve God in the way that he does or does not wish, without being coerced in this in any way’. This wording did not mean that people officially had the right *not* to serve God; it simply expressed that the state was utterly indifferent as to the way in which it was done.¹⁹ Did this mean, however, that the bond had to be severed between the state and the great national church? To be sure, the Dutch Reformed Church (1571) was not a state church, but it was privileged; it was a ‘public church’. One had to be a member if one wished to hold public office, just as in the opposite sense, the state paid a large share of the pastors’ salaries and covered the costs of synod meetings. However, if this church were to receive further support for the promotion of the religious level of the population, then this would contradict the notion of equality. Did that not imply that *all* churches had to be supported? As far as this concerned Protestants – dissenters such as the Mennonites, the Remonstrants and the Lutherans – this might be considered; but would this also have to apply to the Catholics? Would

money have to be invested in a belief that the Protestants had literally pursued with fire and the sword? Could it be forgotten that during the Revolt, it was precisely in the fight against Catholicism that the country's independence had taken shape? At the same time, it was hardly fair that the Roman Catholics were forced to pay taxes that were used to maintain Protestant worship, in churches that had been confiscated from them during the Revolt.

And then there was also a very different issue; a pragmatic one, perhaps, but no less important nevertheless. Poor relief in the Netherlands was mainly organized on religious grounds; in principle, every church had its own poor to support. This did not just involve alms-giving, but also care for the elderly, foundlings, orphans and the sick. The funds that were used to pay for this relief often had a very complicated background. The source of the property and the origins of the capital in the funds sometimes lay far back in the mists of time. Moreover, complicated subsidies and obligations left it rather unclear as to whether these were ecclesiastical or public funds. Did all of this have to be turned on its head?

Nearly half of all the representatives participated in the deliberations; this alone shows how much importance was attached to the issue. Only one or two people saw religion as risky terrain that politics would be well advised to avoid. For example, the Catholic Van Hooff declared:

If he wishes to exercise his duty, a Representative acknowledges nothing but man as such; he must remain indifferent as to whether his Fellow Citizens are baptized or circumcised – whether they pray to ALLAH or JEHOVAH; he must feel that he has nothing to do with this, for all this lies beyond the domain of political power, and that alone has been entrusted to him.²⁰

Almost all of the others, however, let it be known in one way or another that they were convinced that religion was essential. Schimmelpenninck summed this up in a rhetorical question: 'Who believes in good faith in the possibility of a Republic that is composed only of Atheists?' The settlement of this point, moreover, was connected to everything else, just as religion, as another representative noted, was simultaneously something 'like fire and gunpowder; one cannot be too careful in one's dealings with it'.²¹

Initially, an attempt was made to pass the hot potato on to the committee that was drafting the new constitution, but this was rejected by a majority. There was then a discussion about how serious the existing situation actually was. With regard to this, stories came out about discrimination

against dissenters, and in particular against Catholics. At best, it could be maintained that the old Republic had only guaranteed a negative form of liberty, by allowing freedom of conscience. This was not enough: 'the so-called tolerance presumes the right to be able to *bestow* freedom of conscience'.²² After this, it was time to consider the practical implications of a separation between church and state.

To begin with, this might imply the dismissal of the 1,600-1,700 pastors who were maintained by the government – something that would almost inevitably have political consequences. The Batavian Republic was in the midst of a revolution, and by taking such a measure the government would gain another several hundred political opponents. On these grounds, the opposite strategy was considered: paying *all* of the clergy, including the Catholics. The office-holders would then come into the service of the state, as it were, while conversely, all ecclesiastical funds and church buildings would become government property. For most people, this was going too far. It was derisively remarked in relation to this that poets and musicians should therefore also be paid, given that they were also useful to society. Moreover, especially on the Protestant side, this would serve as a premium for 'disintegration': every church schism would have to be financed by the state.²³ Then it could not simply remain a case of paying salaries, because transforming religious life into a government service would mean, in the long-term, that education and poor relief would also have to be provided by the government; and there could be no question of assuming this duty, if only because this would far exceed its financial capacity. For this reason, a careful middle-way was chosen: there would be a forceful pronouncement of the principle of the separation of church and state, but for the time being, everything would be left largely as it was.

This somewhat murky compromise gained some symbolic precision in the last phase of the debate. Naturally, at that time, there was actually no room to do more than to indicate the path that people might wish to take. A first step on the way had to be taken, however, and this was to counteract all expression of religion in public space. Religion must remain confined to people's homes and the church. The external signs of religion, of whatever nature, should not be visible in the street: 'in the street, they are all equal Citizens'.²⁴ And not only that, but the public space had to become truly public, in the sense that all expression of religion should be hidden there: there should be no official robes, no monks' habits, no processions *and* no bell ringing! All of this was objectionable for people of different convictions and, moreover, only concerned external things that had nothing to do with true piety.²⁵ Thus on 5 August 1796, it was solemnly decided

that, although no Society can continue to exist, let alone to flourish, in which Religion is not venerated and protected, and in which virtue and good morals are not promoted, the separation of *Church* and *State* is nevertheless necessary in a Country where there is to be true liberty; also that one privileged or dominant Church is even in downright defiance of the first principles of *Equality*, on which *true Liberty* and *Brotherhood* are built.

[...]

that not every consequence that flows from the acknowledgement of this principle will be put into practice with the same haste or in the same way, and that it is necessary for an institution that has been rooted in our Country for so long and so deeply, and that has spread her branches far and wide, to be dismantled with great sobriety and care.

It is decreed:

That no *privileged* or *dominant Church* can or shall be permitted in the Netherlands any longer.²⁶

A separate committee was given the task of working out how to proceed with the disentanglement, but nothing more would be heard of it.²⁷

It is hard to overestimate the importance of the separation of the church and state. Of course, in practice, church and state had long had separate responsibilities; spiritual welfare and reason of state did not necessarily overlap with one another. This explains the famous Article 36 of the Confession of Faith (*Nederlandsche Geloofsbelijdenis*, 1561) of the Dutch Reformed Church, in which the state was charged with countering 'all idolatry and false Religion' (read: Catholicism).²⁸ This also explains why various governments did not wish for more problems than they already had, and tended to apply themselves to promoting a firm 'colloquial ecumenism' between people of different convictions.²⁹ With the separation, practice had now been elevated to the status of law. The implications of this were of great symbolic importance, at the very least. Since 1641, for example, a visitation to the 'national writings' (*ationale schriften*) had taken place every three years, held by a sizeable committee that included representatives from the Reformed Church and the States General. The company would first investigate, in the Trêveszaal in The Hague, the eighteen volumes containing the documents from the Synod of Dort (1618-1619).³⁰ The following morning they would proceed by state yacht and barge to Leiden. Here they would be met by a reception committee and would go together to the city hall, where the thirteen volumes with the official Bible translation were kept in a chest with two locks. The volumes would be inspected solemnly by the members

of the committee, after which a dinner would be held. This ritual, in which the spiritual foundations of the Republic were expressed, despite all their nuances, was held for the last time in 1800. The documents were then filed away in the archives.³¹

In this way, politics separated itself from the bond with the church, in order to become 'true politics'. Politics had to become a domain that was accessible to everyone, just as public space had now been made 'neutral' by banning official religious robes and bell ringing. The paradox of the separation, however, was that it would result in religion acquiring more of a political meaning than before. Forces were now unleashed that would still have a profound influence on politics and political culture one-and-a-half centuries later. First, although a number of politicians had made the separation, this was not to say that large groups of believers willingly let it happen. Due to the attack on all societal organizations ('corporations') that came between the state and the individual citizen, it was only in churches that the population could experience and practise some social cohesion. For many Protestants, this was even an incentive to set the state back on the right path, just as for Catholics it was an invitation to go out and actually profit from the new liberty. Second, the hierarchy between the different churches was now abolished in principle, meaning that a new balance would have to be found between the different groups of believers. This would lead to numerous conflicts, especially a rapidly growing anti-Catholicism, which would have to be dealt with by politics (at least, by the public authorities).³² An end could be brought to the privileging of one church, but in practice, the separation of church and state was impossible.³³

The scope of citizenship

With the separation of church and state, the Batavians could hope that they had not overly antagonized the Protestants, and that they had won over the Catholics; but what was to be done about the Jews? An estimated 40,000 Jews lived in the Netherlands in those days, and some of them had entreated the National Assembly to extend full citizenship rights to them as well.³⁴ A small committee had brought out a report on this, which was presented at the meeting of 1 August 1796. The rapporteur, Hahn, had assumed the role of devil's advocate and had considered all of the possible counter-arguments in detail. There were major political objections, for instance: out of misplaced gratitude for the hospitality they had been granted, Jews

were still quite devoted to the House of Orange; moreover, wealthy Jews had invested their money in English funds – and the Netherlands was at war with the English. Perhaps a greater objection was that the Jews themselves did not want to become Dutch. Indeed, they wanted to return to the Promised Land and wait for the coming of the Messiah. According to the report, this was not decisive, if only because all Christians considered this a fantasy. Moreover, people should not interfere with this; it was simply freedom of conscience. The *really* difficult point was perhaps that they were so ‘different’:

It is true, Citizens’ representatives, that there is much that is annoying, and even something repugnant, in the attitude, the language, the dirtiness, and the other mistaken habits of many Jews; but it is no less true that all of this is coincidental by nature, and can thus be gradually cured and discarded.³⁵

Much, then, would be solved by the advances in civilization that were promised by the new freedoms. It was thus proposed that the requested citizenship should be granted. In the last week of August, 31 representatives took part in the debate. Naturally, noises were made to the effect that this tricky issue should also be passed on to the committee that was drafting the constitution. In addition, some voices asked whether the whole issue was really important, given the fact that due to the *Declaration of the rights of man and the citizen*, the Jews already had the civil rights they desired; but the problem could not be solved so easily.

A number of problems were deeply entangled. To begin with, there was the question of what the Jews actually were: did Judaism constitute a religion or a nation? If the former, the whole issue would fall under the decree on the separation of church and state that had just been passed. But if the latter were true, then there was a bigger problem: after all, no separate nation or corporation was permitted within the ‘one and indivisible’ Republic. And this was at issue here, because in Amsterdam, for example, the two Jewish communities, the Portuguese and the High-German, had regulations – including not only obligatory membership, but also prohibitions against marrying gentiles – that had been officially ratified by the city of Amsterdam. This would therefore have to be changed, unless, of course, people adhered to the old idea that Jews were foreigners who had been received in the Netherlands with more or less good grace, but who were still ‘temporary residents’ and would, for the most part, have to remain so.

Even if the Jews were accepted as citizens of the state, what did 'full civil rights' mean; what was meant by 'citizenship of the Netherlands'? Who actually had the authority to grant or refuse this? And if the National Assembly granted citizenship, was Amsterdam – a city that was still formally independent – then subsequently obliged to grant citizenship of the city? Was it possible, for example, that Jews would be given the right to vote, but no other rights; could citizenship be 'split', as it were?³⁶ And with this, problems arose that would have to be solved in a new constitution, but this would not happen for a long time.

Those representatives who were less happy with the notion of embracing the Jews as brothers and fellow citizens then came forward with a sly tactical argument. They pointed out that just a few months earlier, it had been decided that citizens were forbidden from petitioning the National Assembly as part of a corporation. Yet now people were discussing the collective recognition of the civil rights of a whole 'nation'. This contradiction was resolved by assuming that Jews were considered to have demanded civil rights as individuals, and would thus also be granted these rights as individuals.

It was subsequently decided that the principle of civil rights for everyone had actually been declared already, so that it was now, in fact, largely a question of establishing this clearly. This was difficult to disagree with; the Jews were also people, they were 'fellow men'. Moreover, political ideals demanded some act of brotherhood, particularly given the wretched state of poverty in which many Jews found themselves. And so on 2 September 1796 – with 45 votes to 24 – the decision was made to adopt a decree in which the 'Equality of the Jews' was proclaimed:

No Jew will be excluded from any of the rights or advantages that are attached to Batavian citizenship, and he may enjoy those that he desires, if he possesses all of the qualities, and satisfies all of the conditions, by which according to the general Constitution, every Citizen of the Netherlands shall benefit.³⁷

It was once again emphatically stated that this did not entail a collective action, on the grounds that 'Society is not a collection of *corpora*, but of individual Members'. Furthermore, the Jews were at liberty to form a religious community, but the civil administration was not permitted to give any regulation on this the power of law or statute. At any rate, the decree did not have much effect. The *parnassim* (trustees of the congregation), led by those from Amsterdam, showed no intention of bringing their

regulations into line with the new situation, and urban authorities showed little concern for the exhortation to treat Jews as equals henceforth. In Amsterdam, though, there was an immediate ban on the setting up of Sukkah booths on public roads. All kinds of organizations, such as the National Guard and the guilds, continued to refuse to accept Jews.³⁸ In the Second National Assembly (1797) two Jews were elected, the first Jews ever to be elected in a national parliament, but further ramifications would take much longer to materialize.

Despite this, it was an important decree, because it clarified in symbolic terms how the concept of the 'fatherland' was taking shape. In this there was no longer a place for the House of Orange, still less for the 'aristocrats' – the term that was now used to refer to everyone who had objections to Batavian politics.³⁹ Every revolution has purifying mechanisms such as these: the removal, if not the destruction, of everything that appears to stand in the way of an ideal.⁴⁰ Here, however, a 'nation' had been admitted to the fatherland, despite the fact that there was a wide gulf between the Batavians and the Jews. One supporter of the granting of civil rights hinted at this gulf in the remark:

One must no longer be able to distinguish Jew from Christian, and the *Beards and the Eastern tabards of the Parnassins* should be seen no more OPENLY than *the Cloaks and Jabots, the Choir-robcs of the Christian ministers*.⁴¹

This ideal had to overcome people's doubts. Speakers in the National Assembly wore themselves out with appreciative words, not so much about the Jews as about their own benevolence, so as to conceal the trouble that it was causing them. Somewhat too often, it was said that the Jews were also 'human'; it was bellowed slightly too loudly that these 'fellow men' also had a right to the rights of man and the citizen. In fact, no one was especially keen on the idea – neither the Jews nor the patriots. But in part, it had been an unanticipated consequence of the separation of church and state, and in part it was a revolutionary duty: the French ambassador had made it clear that the Batavians should follow the example of the emancipation of the Jews in France (1791). And so the Batavians threw caution to the wind, closed their eyes and thought of the 'fatherland'.

The scope of citizenship was not unlimited. This was shown, for example, by the attitude to slavery.⁴² In the colonial possessions, in both the East and West Indies, there were almost 100,000 slaves, at a rough estimate. France had also set an example on this issue, by abolishing slavery in 1794. This inspired the following words of praise from a poet:

No, noble French Nation!
You let your godly origins
Show in your noble deeds;
Full of joy, you stretch out
Your white hands to your black brothers;
The teachings of JESUS
Flow benignly from your lips;
You tame the savage mores
Of the uncivilized Negroes;
The liberty of God's children
Adorns you like a wreath of honour
That delights the heavenly choir.⁴³

Particularly in the second half of the eighteenth century, the charges grew against the 'hateful' enterprise of the slave trade and the abuse of slaves by their owners.⁴⁴ It was to be expected that the Batavians, on the grounds of the rights of man and the citizen and inspired by the French example, would bring this to an end. All the more so as the first Speaker of the National Assembly, Pieter Paulus, had emphatically rejected the slave trade and the possession of slaves.⁴⁵ Paulus was no longer alive, however. Little attention was paid to the whole issue in the discussions in the National Assembly; the only principled debate took place on 22 and 23 May 1797.⁴⁶ At the heart of the matter was whether a passage against slavery would have to be included in the constitution. Numerous reasons were given for *not* doing this. After all, the consequence would be the collapse of the plantations in the colonies, as no agriculture would be possible there any more; white people were unsuited to agricultural work in those tropical regions. As a result of this, the fatherland was already in distress and would fall even further into economic difficulties. Moreover, it would even mean that the Batavian Republic would be threatened with the loss of its colonies, with which the prestige of the country was bound up. What made the most impression, however, was that France had abolished slavery, but had had to pay for this in 1794 with a bloody slaves' revolt in Saint-Domingue (present-day Haiti). And the Americans, who were also revolutionaries, had even emphatically declared that slavery would not be abolished for now. It was thus not so exceptional to leave the issue lying for the time being. Indeed, abolition would also be of little use: the English would immediately take over the slave trade, and the Batavian colonists would be crazy not to turn to the English in order to maintain their possessions. In short, the abolition of slavery was not something that could be achieved by one country; it was a meaningless action, a case of 'useless posturing'.

In opposition to this reasoning, which professed to steer a middle way between 'pure philosophy and true Politics', just one representative rose up, the Mennonite Pieter Vreede. He argued fervently that black Africans were also 'fellow men' who were being used as merchandise in an appalling manner. Was it permissible to put the earning of money in this way so far above virtue? Was it permissible to use the alacrity of other countries to hide one's own sins? Naturally, the shocking events on Saint-Domingue had shown that slavery could not be abolished suddenly. But the constitution should at least contain an article establishing that the Batavians 'should someday cease to be tyrants, and become human beings again!'⁴⁷ It was to no avail. For the time being, it was only decided to act as humanely as possible and, beyond this, to keep the options open.⁴⁸ The situation thus remained as it had been, which simply required that no decision be taken; whilst after the annexation of the Netherlands by Napoleon, taking a decision was no longer even an option.⁴⁹

The Batavians struggled even less with the question of whether women belonged to the fatherland of equality. This was different in France, although the answer there was a harsh one. In France in 1791, Olympe de Gouges had made a *Declaration of the Rights of Woman and the Female Citizen*, in which she succinctly concluded that under the *ancien régime* women had been disdained but powerful, whereas in the Republic women had gained respect, but had been excluded from politics.⁵⁰ This assessment was endorsed in broad outlines by later historians.⁵¹

Citizenship was split into an active and a passive part. The poor, women and children were seen as dependent on others, and could therefore hardly possess active civil rights. The term 'citoyen' was a political title that was conferred only on men. The nation was one big family as far as men were concerned, but a 'nation of families' when it came to women. In 1793, women were forbidden to engage in political activity; in November of the same year, Olympe de Gouges lost her head to the guillotine.⁵²

In the Netherlands, it did not come to this: neither with respect to the demands for equal rights, nor the bloody refusal of these. The most striking plea for women to be given full admittance to the regime of equality was made by an author known only by his initials, who in 1795 published a small pamphlet in which he asked, in quasi-naïve fashion, why the rights of man should not also apply to women; unless, of course, one did not consider women to be members of society. To this 'P.B.v.W.', in any case, it seemed extremely rational and desirable that women should rise 'out of the circles of slavery' and be able to exercise their civil rights to the full; that is to say, to be able to vote, to elect and to be elected.⁵³

Nevertheless, in the Batavian Republic, citizenship – in very silent fashion, in fact – remained limited to men, even though half the seats in the public stand of the National Assembly were reserved for women.⁵⁴ It was thus assumed that women were also interested in politics, but exclusion from participation in practice was even considered so obvious that it was not formally stated anywhere: the political interests of women were promoted by men.⁵⁵ As a consequence, it was still for the best if women were to marry. This might explain the proposal in the National Assembly that government positions should mainly be given to married men. This would not only promote marriage, and thereby the source of prosperity – having a large family – but would also prevent

the most beautiful, the most lively and most Noble part of our species, those jewels of Nature, [from becoming] barren shoots, useless, even oftentimes harmful Furniture of Society.

That proposal was rejected, however, with the argument that:

In this Republic, the state of marriage is more widespread than in most Countries of Europe, and this Assembly, with complete peace of mind, can entrust the care of the population to our Batavian youth's warm love of the fatherland and to the unrelentingly obliging nature of our Dutch beauties, without doing injury to the same discretion, as it were, through an official's promise to fulfil such a pleasant duty of citizenship...⁵⁶

The other side of the denial of civil rights to women was thus the male 'duty of citizenship', marriage. At home, husbands would hear whether their insights tallied with those of the family's female members.

Women were thus excluded from the political order, but this does not mean that they fell completely outside the political culture. The pursuit of a higher level of civilization was closely connected to Batavian Liberty, and in the long term, the latter was even dependent on this. It was thus of the greatest importance to raise children well, and this was pre-eminently a task for mothers.⁵⁷ Certainly for women from the better circles, there were also more and more opportunities to enrich their knowledge, share their insights in societies and in print, and participate more generally in bourgeois society (or, at least, in parts of it).⁵⁸ In that respect, indeed, the political domain was extremely important, but its quality was in fact only guaranteed by having a high-level, civilized nation. In this way, women could play an irreplaceable role, and in this manner they formed part of the political culture.⁵⁹

On the basis of discussions about the separation of church and state and the scope of citizenship, we have thus sketched a few of the contours of the new political culture of 'representative government by the people'. The ultimate aim of such a government, however, was to give shape to the nation state. To be sure, the Batavian revolutionaries had supposed that such a state had been created in 1795, but at the same time they were aware that the ideal had not yet been reached. This was demonstrated by the fact that although the First National Assembly managed to put together a draft constitution, when this was put to the electors in the summer of 1797, it was rejected by a large majority. The Second National Assembly subsequently gathered in September, but it only succeeded in adopting a consistent constitution after a large number of political opponents had been removed by means of a *coup d'état*. With this, an official end was brought to the old order of the Republic, something that was perhaps most visible in the reorganization of the country: the original seven independent provinces were replaced by eight new departments, the new borders of which were drawn up without taking account of differences in religion, custom and tradition, or history.⁶⁰ The protests against this were waved aside with the argument that this mixing was desirable on the grounds of 'achieving uniformity, which will gradually be introduced in all matters, and which must provide the support for the one and indivisible nature of the Republic'.⁶¹

The author of both the new constitution, the '*Staatsregeling* [Constitution] for the Batavian People' of 1798, and the reorganization of the country that was as ahistorical as it was rational, was a former pastor, W.A. Ockerse. He was profoundly convinced that the history of the world had taken a new turn in those days. In 1797 he announced that even formidable natural phenomena paled at the political changes that were now occurring:

There rapidly followed an infinite number of the most momentous political phenomena, like the shadows in a magic lantern. Rarely was the noise of political change quietened, the thunder of the Canons rumbled continuously in our ears. The Temple of Sciences shut its doors, the fearful *Muses* took shelter. From afar, the timid Philosopher was a sensitive beholder of the terrible struggles of men, in which he respectfully observed the heavenly doings of the INFINITE. This spectacle, the only one of its kind, more immense than the eruptions of Vesuvius, more significant than *Xerxes'* or *Alexander's* military expeditions, more instructive than everything that previous centuries had taught us! – entirely occupied his spirit.⁶²

Anything but a timid philosopher, Ockerse applauded the eruption of Vesuvius and dreamed of building a new mentality on the lava. This, too, formed part of the new political culture.

The national character

Ockerse had written an *Ontwerp tot eene algemeene characterkunde* (*Schema for a general characterization*) of the Netherlands, published in three volumes between 1788 and 1797, in which he had asked himself how the political behaviour of the Dutch might be explained. For this, he chose not pure historical research, as was usual, but a 'modern' approach: an investigation into the 'national character'.

Internationally, investigations such as these had become fashionable in the course of the eighteenth century. National characters were examined, whereby numerous factors – such as the climate, legal system, history, the composition of the population and the economy – were analysed in order to reveal the fundamentals of the nature and character of a people or nation.⁶³ Ockerse was familiar with this literature. The key problem with this was how to find a relationship between a nation's own identity, for one thing, something that had remained constant over the centuries, and the enormous variation within a population, such as in appearance, behaviour, language and customs, as well as the unmistakable changes that had occurred in the course of time. Characteristic of the Dutch in general, it was traditionally said, was a love of liberty. This had been traced back to several remarks made by Caesar and Tacitus about the Batavians.⁶⁴ Other, unmistakably different peoples had since come to these regions, but particularly among the aristocracy, this original quality was said to have been retained. The large numbers of migrants who had subsequently poured into the Republic were largely coming for this freedom, and had thus added to the pattern by means of their convictions. In this sense, they had become 'true' Dutch.

This was not Ockerse's analysis. According to him, the population of the Netherlands was a 'mishmash', as immigration had led to 'continuous mixing'. As a result, it actually had no distinctive characteristic or quality; all that could be established was that the Dutch had no passions, and they hardly even had any vices. And, very strikingly, the Netherlands had no 'national pride'.⁶⁵ This had made it possible – despite the adverse climate and the poor, boggy soil – to conduct trade with everyone, and thereby provide a sizeable population with food and even accumulate considerable wealth.

This was the *principium vitale*, the 'vital principle' of Dutch society.⁶⁶ It also meant that politics was characterized by the need, if not the necessity, to maintain harmonious relations, to shun territorial expansion, and to maintain peace with the surrounding powers. Ockerse thus explained behaviour in terms of a rational response to the circumstances.

How, then, was it possible that the Netherlands had not become a perfect republic in the wake of the celebrated Revolt in the sixteenth century? That was due to the fact that the revolt had been abandoned mid-way; the principle of aristocracy had not been pulled out, roots and all, but, on the contrary, under the leadership of the House of Orange, had become more broadly established in society. Society was not only tainted by this, but the country also became the plaything of international politics. If a real Republic had been established in the sixteenth century, things would have been different; but now,

we are a weak, helpless, exhausted, inwardly divided, outwardly despised, unhappy people; a people with no fixed principles, without resilience, without standing, exposed to the vagaries of our neighbours, threatened by those we ourselves made great, dependent upon the uncertain fate of the great European peoples, and only in a position follow the despot's lead, and to become what others wish us to be.⁶⁷

This negative appraisal did not simply reflect the fact that in 1797, the Netherlands had very little control over its own fate. Lying at the heart of the problem, in Ockerse's view, was the deep inability of his compatriots to complete the revolution at the end of the eighteenth century. This was not the fault of the population as a whole, as such; after all, they exhibited all kinds of qualities of the new era: they loathed the aristocracy, were strongly in favour of 'representative government by the people' and were even somewhat enlightened, however superficially. The key problem, however, was the ceaseless and masterly tendency of the people to elect incompetent and unsuitable representatives: schemers and cowards, driven by their own interests and factionalism. The political history of the country in recent years had thus been one of a 'scandalous scene of scheming, bribery, conspiracy, subversion, faithlessness, and cunning trickery'.⁶⁸ And looking to the future, he foresaw only greater disasters, although he failed to specify these: 'here my quill falls from my trembling hands!'

The inability to elect the right representatives – which, as we well know, is a complaint that would remain closely associated with democracy – was

solved with a radical *coup d'état* on 22 January 1798. In a short space of time, a constitution (largely written by Ockerse) was adopted, and in March it was welcomed with a cheer by a 'purified' parliament. The new *Staatsregeling*, the first constitution of the Netherlands, was accepted on 23 April in a popular referendum. All in all, the nation state had been introduced with a firm, if not particularly harsh, hand.

This constitution was as revolutionary as it was clear.⁶⁹ The actual *Staatsregeling* was preceded by a number of 'fundamental principles relating to citizens and the state', in which several requirements were set out vis-à-vis the representatives. All political and official roles were only temporary, and representatives would have to be accountable to the sovereign people 'at all times'. The representatives were elevated to a new aristocracy, be it based not on birth, but on merit: 'The choice of one Citizen over another is grounded solely in greater virtue and ability'. It was their task to make the people into a nation:

The Representative Power makes such institutions, by which the National Character will be changed for the better, and good morals will be advanced.⁷⁰

The radicalism of the new rulers was soon considered to be too counter-productive. Paradoxically enough, it was largely their determination to press ahead that made them susceptible to the charge of being driven by a 'hunger for power', just like the regents of the *ancien régime*; and with this, they fell on their own swords. On 12 June 1798, a second *coup d'état* brought people to office who certainly wished to continue with the task of forming the nation, but in a more peaceful manner. If the first *coup d'état* had simply had background support from the French, this second one had been demanded; in a number of steps, the country was subsequently brought under more intensive French control, and in 1810 it was finally annexed. This brings us to the question: to what extent was the new nation state, in its short lifetime, the result of a battle between aristocracy and democracy, as it used to be said, or between 'republican plural and democratic singular', as it has more recently been described?⁷¹ At issue here is not the question of the extent to which it concerned a war of ideas, nor, equally, whether some of these ideas had been borrowed directly from or imposed by the French. It appears to be much more important to look more closely at a number of contextual developments: to be sure, developments in the Netherlands took place in a relatively path-dependent manner, but the trends were international in nature.

Money and belief

In the period between 1780 and 1813, the *ancien régime* was dismantled all over Europe. The old order had been largely based on agriculture, but its politics had been highly complex and had assumed many different forms. There were strong monarchs who were supported by a military aristocracy or an old-fashioned bureaucracy. Their power was too limited, however, to be exercised without a certain level of cooperation from the population. This was all the more reason to add to the monarch's authority by giving him an additional role in ecclesiastical life. Here, too, we should bear in mind that there were huge differences. The Habsburgs ruled over Catholics, Protestants, Orthodox Christians, Jews, and even a number of Muslims. In England, Catholics were excluded from official public posts, the king was head of both the Anglican Church in England and the Presbyterian Church in Scotland, and ruled over Catholics in Quebec and Malta, Greek Orthodox islanders in the Aegean, and over Hindus, Muslims and Buddhists in South and South-East Asia. All of these relationships were wrenched apart by endless wars, both in Europe and on other continents. Everywhere, the need for more money forced regimes to call for more assistance, while at the same time without ceding power in exchange. This attempt to square the circle failed, and the system of legitimacy and order rapidly collapsed. In the vacuum that consequently arose, the idea of 'representative government by the people' flourished. As a result, nation and state gained a whole new meaning.

The governance of the churches also gained a new connotation: no longer was it mainly intended to give a certain degree of consecration to the sovereign, but now it was largely to symbolize and strengthen mutual relations within a national community. This process could be seen in Prussia, Austria and France. All of the new regimes brought more tolerance for minority religions within their states, but coupled with the aim of establishing tightly-controlled state churches, if not a united church. Money and belief were two sides of the same coin. The Netherlands was drawn into this process. Both on its own initiative and forced by international developments, it took the same path and thereby began to resemble other countries more than before. The question, however, was whether the country was in a position to muster the enormous effort that would now be required.

In 1758 David Hume had published his essay *On the jealousy of trade*, in which he proposed that everyone would profit from the increase in trade. The exception, he added, would be the Dutch, who, after all, lacked

extensive territory and natural riches, and who had become wealthy largely by financing and transporting the trade of others. But with a universal rise in prosperity, these functions would undoubtedly be assumed by neighbouring countries. Little could be done about this; the only comfort he could offer was that this process would not begin immediately, but might take several generations, especially in view of the head start that the Dutch had managed to build up.⁷²

As it turned out, however, the country did not have so much time. In 1763 the Amsterdam stock exchange collapsed, after unwarranted risks had been taken in the financing of the warring parties in the Seven Years' War between England and France (1756-1763). A torrent of pamphlets and political cartoons was let loose in England, in which the Dutch were portrayed as greedy, faithless, fat merchants. It became worse when the Dutch supported the Americans in their struggle for independence against England, leading to war between 1780 and 1784 (the Fourth Anglo-Dutch War). The war was a disaster, and formed the background to political radicalism ('patriotism'). A decade later, France was to draw the Netherlands into an almost continuous fight with England, initially by requesting an enormous sum of money for 'liberating' the country, and subsequently – in addition to taxes – by forcing the Netherlands to cease all trade and shipping with England from 1806 (in the framework of the Continental Blockade). This severely disrupted the economy, and the country, which was already weighed down by large debts, was saddled with expenses that it could no longer bear. These financial problems, which were essentially enforced by the protracted wars, formed an important context.

Moreover, for a long time, expenditure had already been exceeding income by many millions. Slowly but surely, the country lost its ability to cover the shortfalls with loans; its credit – that is to say, the credibility of the Republic – was eroded. The expenses that were associated with interest payments and defence ran to around 80 to 90 per cent of the budget. It was impossible to cut this in practice. That also undermined the growth policy that the Batavians had envisioned. In this way, slowly but surely, the country lost its *raison d'être*.

It thus became increasingly inevitable that financial policy would be shifted from the towns and provinces to the national level. Only this would allow the country to meet France's demands and retain the confidence of its creditors at home and abroad; only in this way would it be possible to retain some independence.⁷³ The unitary state had arisen, for a large part, from the political class's desperate attempts to retain some credibility and independence as a country. As early as 1804, it was exclaimed:

'Our Republic is bankrupt! What a scandal for the Dutch name, what a death-blow!'⁷⁴ This problem also explains the expansion in the number of personnel at the national level, from around 175 people in 1795 to around 1,050 in 1810, of whom twelve, and eventually 336, were initially occupied with financial governance.⁷⁵ The first public budget was only drafted in 1798, and a modernized fiscal order would follow in 1806.

In order to improve cohesion in the country, women were called upon to provide assistance and Catholics were admitted to the political order. The separation between church and state was an attempt to rid ecclesiastical conflicts of their political significance henceforth. The state's interference in the churches even intensified, precisely in order to settle these conflicts as quickly as possible, or to prevent them. This became particularly visible in the relationship with the national church. One problem was that there was, in fact, no Reformed Church, given that religion had been declared a matter for the provinces at the Union of Utrecht (1579). As a result, there were actually ten provincial reformed churches. The state would force the reformed churches into a process of centralization, however, comparable to that which the state had undergone. In the Office (ministry) of Internal Affairs, there was a separate directorate of Worship, in which one official, J.D. Janssen, would play a crucial role in the organization of the relationship between church and state from 1805 onwards. This directorate would grow into a separate Ministry of Worship (1808), which would continue to function, give or take a few changes, until 1870. The church thereby became more or less a branch of the government's services. Not only did the state make all kinds of payments, but the appointment of ministers also had to be put to the government. The conduct of ministers was monitored by the state, and finally, Janssen was supposed to 'ensure that the minister serves the advancement of goodness and the augmentation of the welfare of Society'.⁷⁶ Never before had secular authority over the spiritual world been so great. This was an indication of the power that the state, despite all of the turbulence, had managed to gain in a number of years. It had become strong enough to annex the churches, as it were, and to deploy them in a grand social project: to give a degree of consecration to the virtue of the nation.

The power of the state found no parallel in the ability to put the finances in order. The value of the promissory notes fell relentlessly, and in 1808 the interest payments on them were postponed. The end followed in 1810. Napoleon opted for a so-called *tiercement*; that is to say, only a third of the interest would be paid, whereby the obligations would effectively lose two-thirds of their value. As had been predicted, this

development was disastrous; and with this, the curtain fell. The nation state had arisen, to a great extent, as a consequence of international processes over which less and less influence could be exercised. Despite brave arguments that the restoration of independence in 1813 was the result of self-liberation, that, too, would largely be a consequence of international politics. The question that subsequently arose was that of which elements of the political culture that had developed during the Batavian revolution would be retained.

2. A New Society is Being Created Here

1813: The Nation State

In the summer of 1823, two students – Jacob van Lennep and Dirk van Hogendorp, aged 21 and 25, respectively – decided to make a long trek through the Netherlands. It was a kind of inspection tour of the country, which, since Napoleon had been driven out in 1813, had existed for a decade as the Kingdom of the Netherlands.¹ They set out in the final week of May and arrived at the beginning of July at a number of simple settlements, located in the middle of an otherwise somewhat barren region of peat and moorland in the north-eastern Netherlands. These were ‘colonies’ that had been established by the Society of Benevolence (Maatschappij der Weldadigheid). The Society had set itself the goal of fighting poverty in the Netherlands by having paupers develop desolate areas, thereby giving them an opportunity to work their way up to being independent tenant farmers. The mood of the walkers may well have suffered due the bad weather – it was cold in those days and rained constantly – but they were deeply distrustful of the fine tales of the colonies that were doing the rounds, and what they witnessed confirmed their suspicions.

For one thing, they were not pleased that all of the colonists were obliged to attend church on Sundays, something that they saw as ‘religious coercion’. Moreover, the church service started much too late and the behaviour of the churchgoers left much to be desired. The pastor preached on Psalm 126 – ‘Those who sow with tears will reap songs of joy’ – an appropriate text, given the circumstances. He proved to be ‘very Reformed, but too florid, which meant that he sometimes didn’t make sense’.² Despite attempts to convince the students of the fine ‘civilizing labour’ that was being done there, they largely saw the downsides. For example, they thought the education being given to the colony’s children was much too broad. What, they asked themselves, was the use of geography, national history and stylistic exercises to people who were

destined to walk behind the plough or take up a shovel? Are they not making them too discontented with their fate? Are they not turning their thoughts to matters that are not relevant to them? – Religious school education naturally cannot exist whilst children from different creeds come to the same school, and thus read (trashy) moral tracts instead of the Bible. – I know that such a thing is almost unavoidable; yet a *new* society is being *created* here.³

Several days later, they arrived at the even more distant Ommerschans, where the Society of Benevolence ran an enormous workhouse. The people in the colonies they had previously visited had, in principle, come of their own accord, but this place involved the forced barracking of the unwilling and the powerless: men, women and children who had been plucked from the street and sent by the police. Here they had to learn how to work, under a military regime. The stories that Van Lennep and Van Hogendorp heard sounded tragic. It was not possible to earn enough, hunger and disease were prevalent, the supervision was too weak to prevent inappropriate sexual behaviour, and the discipline was arbitrary. Perhaps the worst thing was that people were sometimes sent to this institution unjustly, without a means of redress. The two students were truly distressed by their visit to the institution. Van Lennep even recorded a long poem in his diary, in which he reproached the whole enterprise of the Society for creating only misery under the cloak of Enlightenment:

But the wicked race of hypocrites
Brings about disaster with resounding screams
Of love, virtue and humanity.

Here the students were confronted with one of the major issues facing the Netherlands at this time: the structural poverty of a significant part of the population. At the same time, their reaction clearly showed their instinctive aversion to 'blueprints' – systematic, rational projects for dealing with problems. The students saw this as 'liberalism', which for them was tantamount to a break with the past that was as irresponsible as it was revolutionary; in short, everything to which they were opposed. At the same time, it was also clear that they had no alternative. Given that the finances of traditional ecclesiastical poor-relief institutions had suffered greatly under the financial-economic woes of the Batavian-French period, a return to old solutions would be well nigh impossible.

More generally, across Europe people were searching for a balance between old standards and new perspectives, without finding much solid ground. This gave the first three decades of the nineteenth century a unique character. There was a prevailing need for stability and order, and with this there was no demand for blueprints. Indeed, blueprints carried the dangerous notion that the state could be changed at will and that society could be ordered in line with previously formulated ideals. It had become clear, however, that the world that had existed before the French Revolution could not be brought back, and that adjustments were inevitable. What

was more, some already foresaw that a new revolution was coming – the industrial revolution – with consequences that were impossible to predict.⁴

Based on these views, people were searching for a politics that occupied the middle ground between preservation and reform; one that took account of the values of the past whilst simultaneously doing justice to the ‘spirit of the age’. Among conservatives, the conviction was growing that preservation and reform were inseparable, as Burke had already stated: ‘A disposition to preserve, and an ability to improve, taken together, would be my standard of a statesman’.⁵ A real politician and true patriot would start from the existing situation and try to make the best of it. Just as conservatives became somewhat more willing to accept reform, progressive thinking was characterized by a certain degree of moderation. In 1819, the French essayist Benjamin Constant explained that international relations were now determined by peaceful trading relations. The state was no longer forced to keep citizens in permanent military service, as it were. Under the conditions of ‘modern liberty’, each individual was free to make himself as happy or to be as idiotic as he pleased, and to live in ‘la sécurité dans les jouissances privées’: the security of private pleasures.⁶ Politics should thus be kept at a certain distance; it should be forced to exercise restraint.

This resulted in a relatively broad movement that sought the middle ground, the *juste milieu*, between reform and preservation. Known in France as *doctrinaires* and in England as the Whigs, they were neither radical-progressive nor reactionary, but sought their power in a kind of ‘middling-ness’.⁷ Large swathes of the old elite, supplemented with newcomers from the upper-middle classes, joined forces, barred the door through which the latter had just passed and pursued a practical and pragmatic policy that was strongly focused on economic recovery, buttressed by an ethics of ‘productive virtue’: the most important contribution of a citizen no longer lay in public debate, but in his contribution to the economic well-being of the nation.⁸

In the Netherlands, too, after the country had regained its independence, there was little demand for a return to a situation such as that which had existed before 1795.⁹ Neither was there a demand for grand visions; the predicament in which the country found itself was already tricky enough. The lawyer and historian Thorbecke characterized the political culture of the period as follows:

In the oscillations and multifarious changes that our State underwent from 1795, the political mood and political convictions were weakened, if not erased, even among the nation’s most eminent figures [...] Forbearance, not participation, seemed to be a citizen’s duty.¹⁰

This also explains why, albeit with a certain degree of caution, sovereignty was given in 1813 to a king, and one from the familiar House of Orange.¹¹ A king promised certainty in uncertain times, something that was seen as essential for guaranteeing order and stability, also from an international perspective. The republican caterpillar thus transformed, somewhat unusually, into a monarchical butterfly, with thanks to the example of Louis Napoleon.¹² Indeed, this first king of the Netherlands had shown how tradition could be combined with activism, thereby making the monarchy acceptable and even somewhat natural for the old and new regents, and for the population. The king was expected to get the country up and running again, and this was also a responsibility that he took upon himself.

Union intime et complète

Cautiously at first, but soon more firmly, King William I had taken hold of the reins.¹³ He had enjoyed an eventful career after the forced departure of his family from the Netherlands in 1795. He had offered his services to various countries, with moderate success. In 1802 Napoleon had presented him with the Principality of Fulda in Germany, where he had learned to rule, but the region was taken away from him again four years later.¹⁴ The year 1813 found him in England, hoping to gain that country's support for his return to the Netherlands – a hope that was ultimately rewarded. The region over which he would become sovereign was somewhat small, however, both in terms of his ambitions and in terms of the function he had to fulfil in the eyes of his allies: to be a barrier against a possible new French attempt at expansion.

At the end of the eighteenth century, people had already considered the possibility of uniting the Northern Netherlands with the Southern Netherlands, which had been governed by the Austrian emperor since 1713. Austria now gave up its claims, however (and focused on Italy). In the discussions that preceded the Congress of Vienna, William I took advantage of this situation, not only by bringing together north and south under his leadership, but also by linking them to his dynastic desires for regions in Germany (the Rhine Province), whereby his kingdom would be joined to areas where his family had traditionally had titles. England supported these ambitions in part, while simultaneously keeping his enthusiasm in check. The government in London wanted to achieve an order in Northwest Europe whereby Prussia and the Netherlands would share responsibility for restraining France. Militarily, Prussia was considered somewhat stronger

than the Netherlands, meaning that the Rhine Province was granted to the former country, not the latter. To compensate him for the loss of his ancestral lands in Germany, however, William I was granted the Duchy of Luxembourg; and in order to sweeten the pill, Luxembourg was elevated to the status of a grand duchy. For safety's sake, a Prussian garrison was stationed in the city of Luxembourg. All in all, the Netherlands functioned as the core of the English sphere of influence on the continent. Lying behind this was the notion that England was the natural champion of international Protestantism, to which the Netherlands, a number of German states in the North and Switzerland belonged.¹⁵

In this way, William I assumed sovereignty of the Northern and Southern Netherlands in 1815, as King of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands.¹⁶ He would have to bring about a '*union intime et complète*' between the two parts of the country. The peoples involved had little say in the matter: the union was presented as an order from the Great Powers.

After one-and-a-half decades as the new United Kingdom of the Netherlands, it was time to take stock of the country's position. In 1829, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Verstolk van Zoelen, whose wisdom matched his proficiency in dealing with a stubborn king, wrote a comprehensive memo for his sovereign on the nature and position of the new kingdom.¹⁷ According to the minister, it was time to realize that the Netherlands could again assume a place in the world that might be no less glorious than that which it had occupied in the Golden Age. He offered one example to support this ambition:

No event in the history of Holland had an impact on the destiny of Europe and of the world like that of the Battle of Quatre-Bras, in large measure fought by the Dutch alone. Without the deeds of that day, victory at Waterloo could not have been achieved, and perhaps a French emperor would still be on the throne. No pitched battle or sea battle at the time of the Republic determined the fate of our globe like that of Waterloo, in which one in four were Dutch. And when the earliest dawn of our rebirth brings such events, shall we then await our future with trepidation?¹⁸

The Netherlands, in short, should no longer put up with the fact that five or so 'first-class countries' were making the running. To that end, the Netherlands would have to work with 'second-class countries' and, with this, keep a number of axioms in mind: England was deadly as an enemy and essential as a friend; France had been and was still a 'natural enemy'; and though the interests of the Netherlands overlapped with those of Prussia in

numerous respects, the relationship with that country had been difficult from the outset. Prussian politics was difficult to interpret and the country was jealous of the Netherlands; here, little else was to be done other than to make the best of the situation and, in any case, to see the country as being 'on the same line as Prussia'.¹⁹ Above all else, however, the Netherlands must not let itself be carried along by the dynamics of international power relations, but must pursue an independent politics, focused on promoting its own economic interests and ambitions.

It is interesting that this memo, which was intended to lay the foundations of foreign policy, subsequently paid so much attention to domestic issues. Always lying at the heart of this was the relationship between the Northern and Southern Netherlands. According to Verstolk, the fact that within the United Kingdom of the Netherlands there were large differences in history and culture, language and belief, landscape and economy, was not threatening in itself. This was the case for other states, too, and could even be seen as a fortunate division of labour:

If particular individuals, by the sharing of labour, achieve a higher level of perfection in the manufacture of the objects with which they favourably occupy themselves, this basic principle works in a parallel way with nations. The more the latter diversify, the more they gain in standing. And a nation that only trades must yield to a state of similar strength in which trade, industry and agriculture flourish.²⁰

The union was not only desirable, but also essential: 'Without Belgium, Holland's independence in the current European situation would remain a complete fantasy'.²¹ The most important problem that this brought was that the kingdom was more religiously divided than the Republic had been. It was thus regrettable that no universal form of Christianity and accompanying 'simple worship' could be imposed on the population. In any case, for the meantime, it would be necessary to guard against the Catholics' usual 'fanaticism and thirst for power'. After all, the United Kingdom of the Netherlands was a Protestant country, despite the fact that a significant majority of the population – around two-thirds of the Kingdom – was Catholic. That fact alone made a monarchical order crucial; without a king, the country would lack an animating principle.

With this, the importance that was attached to the monarchy also explains the laborious tone that was adopted in the memo on a thorny issue: the question of whether the principle of ministerial responsibility should be introduced. The British had such a principle, and some also

supported its introduction in the Netherlands. The advantages were clear. A king was sometimes unwilling to govern, or was not in a position to do so, due to youth, old age or stupidity, for example, 'cases that, according to the unanimous testimony of the ages, are frequently to be noted'.²² To prevent ministers from ruling too arbitrarily, it was wise to have them accountable to parliament. The argument against this was that parliament would thereby gain a hold on the actual governance of a country, and a 'democratic element' would creep into the political system. This might 'move fainthearted ministers to give in to the unrealistic demands of the angry crowd'; something that, of course, would be welcomed by no sensible person.²³ This touched upon an issue that was to prove an increasing encumbrance to the relations between the political class and the king.

Domestic and international politics were thus interwoven in Verstolk's memo to a remarkable degree. With this, three points stand out. First, it was assumed to be obvious that international politics should be at the service of the economy. Second, religious politics was crucial for holding the country together. And third, the point was indeed raised – however cautiously – that the king might perform more effectively if he were to surround himself with more support, among other things by modernizing the constitution and by behaving a bit less like an absolute monarch.

Religious politics

From the very outset, King William I had his hands full with the Catholics in the South. Some of them had immediately refused to submit to his authority. In 1815, for example, the bishops had written to inform him that as far as they were concerned, there could be no 'freedom of religion', as had been stated in the constitution of that year, as this would be in conflict with the pronouncements of the Council of Trent (1563). They thereby rejected in principle the separation of church and state. In the course of the 1820s, however, some Catholics in the South began to sympathize with the views of the French priest Lamennais, who argued for the severing of all bonds with the government. Indeed, as was evident in the United States, this would give the church the greatest potential to develop in society in unimpeded fashion. This standpoint even made it possible for these Catholics to join liberal critics of the king in pleading for a number of freedoms, such as the right of association and freedom of speech.²⁴

In the king's view, orthodox ultramontanistism, which was focused on Rome, was dangerous, whilst liberal Catholicism was risky. He kept well abreast of

the 'Staatskirchentum' in Germany, where churches were treated as socially influential 'associations' that were kept under close supervision, as were all people and associations that could upset the harmony of the nation. The idea was that a 'religious denomination' did indeed have the right to manage its own internal affairs (the *ius in sacra*), but that the sovereign had the right to recognize religious denominations, supervise them, protect them, and also to contribute to their finances (the *ius circa sacra*). In line with this, in 1816 William I had imposed a regulation on the Reformed Church. The situation in the Lutheran congregations was then tackled, where a more orthodox Restored-Lutheran Consistory 'was, in some sense, at war with the Evangelical-Lutheran congregations'.²⁵ In 1818 a regulation was imposed on the Lutherans in harsh fashion, bringing them under the strict supervision of the state; although the king did not go as far as his brother-in-law, Frederick William III of Prussia, who in 1817 had remoulded members of the Reformed Church and Lutherans into one religious denomination, a so-called *Union*.²⁶ The extremely divided Jewish community was also forced to unite; from 1814, decisions in these circles were made by a National Committee, which was renamed three years later as the Principal Committee on Jewish Affairs.²⁷ The Baptists, who had traditionally kept themselves at a remove from the state, managed to avoid such meddling, and the Remonstrants were too few in number to warrant interference. The Catholic Church was a more intractable matter, but from 1815 discussions were also held with the Vatican so that this church could also be regulated.

This policy was based on the idea that a state would benefit from believers who came to an understanding, as Christian brothers, for the sake of the 'peace and prosperity of the state, the flourishing of religion, the promotion of morality, and the encouragement of peace and harmony'.²⁸ This political view was grounded not only in pragmatism, but also in a romantic religiosity, as in German idealism. In this, a distinction was made between the essence of Christian belief and the form that it had taken on earth: the church was a form, and the differences between the churches were the consequence of man's handiwork and therefore imperfect. William I was a typical representative of such religious-political convictions, with which he had become familiar in Germany. In a personal piece, which he wrote in the course of 1827, and which much later became known as the *Opstel des Konings* (*The King's Essay*), he summarized his ideas, largely inspired by his ambition to – after organizing the Jews and the Protestants – finally bring the Catholics under his regime.

His discussion starts with the view that the youthful United States would eclipse the old, divided Europe; and it was thus all the more important to

strengthen Europe. The Vienna peace talks (1814-1815) had made it clear that it had to be possible to realize the 'principes de concorde et d'amitié' in practice. This would make it possible to use the money that was now being spent on armies to advance prosperity, thereby giving the people a share in the 'douceurs' of life. In order to organize this, he advocated the establishment of an 'Aréopage Européen', a consultative body of all states that could meet in Switzerland, for example, under the leadership of the pope, who would thereby be acknowledged as the 'chef visible de la chrétienté'. This would mean, however, that the Vatican would have to renounce all of its claims to secular power: the Catholic Church would be split up into national churches and subjects of the various governments, as had also been the case for the Protestants. Though why, the king continued, should not this be taken a step further? In the different countries, all Christians could be brought together in one church, whereby the pope would also recognize Protestant monarchs as 'chefs spirituel de leurs états'. This was not to ignore the religious differences, of course, and it was by no means something that could be achieved overnight. But was it not important, in the framework of a European 'paix perpétuelle', to achieve a 'paix religieuse' as well? In which case it would be wise to avoid becoming bogged down in endless theological discussions, but to approach the matter more politically and concentrate on the shared foundations of Christianity: the gospel. Whilst there might be different opinions regarding transubstantiation, the forgiveness of sins and absolution, for example, were these actually truly significant, given the fact that all Christians drew the same moral conclusions from the gospel, both regarding their behaviour in the present and their hopes for the hereafter? The Catholic Church would thus be wise to remove a number of obstacles standing in the way of greater unity. For example, common church attendance would be facilitated by switching the mass to the vernacular; and in particular, priests should be permitted to marry, which would bring an end to the 'inconvéniens et scandales auxquels le célibat a obligé des prêtres'. Europe would become the very picture of brotherhood, united in the worship of one God.²⁹

This was not just idle daydreaming: the fact that international consultations were working reasonably well, William I's success in keeping the various religious denominations in his own country under control, and growing interconfessionalism in Germany all made it possible to view this as a practical path. At the same time, the king seriously underestimated how the religious differences between Protestants and Catholics were intensifying at precisely this time. Protestants began to see or suspect Jesuits

everywhere, just as Catholics started to behave as if they were engaged in a final battle. In 1832 Pope Gregory XVI issued the encyclical *Mirari vos*, in which he turned against all those who saw Christianity largely as moral teaching, and those who thought that celibacy should be abolished. He also rejected freedom of conscience and freedom of the press, which led only to calamities in both the church and the world. He was not prepared to accept the separation of church and state, thereby condemning Lamennais, and liberal Catholicism along with him. There was thus a rapid and significant divergence of ideas: the introduction of a concordat, concluded in 1827 between the Netherlands and the Vatican, would not deliver anything for either side. One of the most important decisions that had been made under the Batavian Republic, the separation of church and state, was therefore undermined by the king's Napoleonic religious politics on one side, and by the Vatican's increasingly significant refusal to reconcile itself to a separation on the other. The problems with the Catholics were concentrated mainly in the Southern Netherlands; but problems would also arise with the Protestants in the North.

Secession

It had already been apparent for some time that there was a growing gulf between official teaching and personal belief; that *Konfession* and *Bekennntnis*, as they were known in Germany, were diverging. Everywhere, movements were springing up that were known as 'Réveil' or the 'Awakening', consisting of people who were pained by this gulf and were attempting to find ways to express their Christianity in a new culture of piety.³⁰ With this, they turned away from the path that had been taken by civilization – namely, that of natural law and Enlightenment, human hubris and the renunciation of God. In 1823, Isäac da Costa, a Jew who had converted to Protestantism, published his *Bezwaren tegen den geest der eeuw* (objections to the spirit of the age). His great-uncle, the English economist Ricardo, had met him in Amsterdam a year before it was published, and described him in a letter home as someone who was as intelligent as he was stubborn, and as completely reactionary in a political sense.³¹ Both the tone and the content of *Bezwaren* were intended to cause a stir, perhaps encouraged by the passage from the Bible, 'I came not to bring peace, but a sword' (Matthew 10:34). In any case, in Da Costa's view, it was inevitable that any Christian who took his belief seriously would give offence and cause annoyance to others:

In the times in which we live, many otherwise right-minded people believe that we should not insist upon those important values, so that we can avoid causing offence. As if the whole of the Gospel and Revelation did not offend Jews and Deists. In this way, we should cease all preaching of the Glad Tidings, so as not to offend such people.³²

He then declared himself in favour of the upholding of the decisions of the Synod of Dort (1618-1619) and to be opposed to tolerance, Jesuits, educational reforms, the abolition of slavery, the Society of Benevolence and all those other plans put forward by 'devotees of the *public*, for *public* welfare, for *public* benevolence etc.'. ³³ With this deep aversion to 'the public', he turned his back directly on what had traditionally been the *raison d'état* of every state and, in any case, against the policy of the king. At the same time, he also declared his resolute opposition to a constitution, so long as there were no 'perfect people, and perfect representatives without passions':

Till this day, in my mind, I would much rather entrust a citizen's safety to the conscience of a Monarch who is accountable to God, than to an oath that has been made by a sovereign in a human act on such a holy affair. But always, and in every case, my heart abhors the principle whereby the homage that is owed to the King of Kings is transferred to a chimerical being that we have agreed to call the people, and whereby the watchmen become subordinate to the straying sheep and not to the supreme Shepherd...³⁴

And melodramatically, he declared: 'We honour and love our King not because we give him his power, but because it comes from Heaven!' As far as he was concerned, the king did not have to uphold the constitution if his conscience told him that this would be better for the preservation of the reformed creed.³⁵ William I could do without such support. Prosecution by the judiciary was considered but not pursued, so as to avoid drawing even more attention to the pamphlet. For a while, however, the secret police had to report on everyone who came to visit him.

A few people defended Da Costa, but most simply considered him eccentric and avoided him as much as possible.³⁶ The political culture of those days allowed for some difference of opinion, but the limits of what was considered to be appropriate were closely drawn. One could be for or against the principle of ministerial responsibility, but to reject the constitution as such was clearly going too far. Furthermore, it was ominous that Da Costa had referred to 'a chimerical being that we have agreed to call the people'.

This could be read as a rejection of popular sovereignty – which it certainly was. Even more serious was the suggestion that the population as such was not an entity, and that such a quality could only be granted to a truly Protestant Christian nation. And again, this implied that not every citizen belonged to the nation. The question was whether more people with these kinds of ‘objections’ would start to rebel.

At the beginning of the 1830s, Reformed congregations in what were usually modest places in the countryside turned against the policy of the ecclesiastical authorities. This initially appeared to be one of those obstinate, orthodox movements, such as those that the government had noted and suppressed among the Lutherans, Catholics and Jews. This movement, however, was more stubborn. In October 1834, in the village of Ulrum in the Province of Groningen, 137 men and women signed an ‘Act of Separation or Return’. This stated that the Reformed Church had lost its reformed character, as established at the Synod of Dort. They therefore felt compelled to leave the Church and start their own denomination. As an historian would later put it, ‘They left weighed down by the burden of their sins, feeling a deep longing for personal redemption. They were introverted, anxious people, deeply influenced by the puritan movement of the *Nadere Reformatie* [Second Reformation]. They wanted one church, which would bring the gospel of mercy to fallen sinners’.³⁷ Within a year, it is estimated that the movement involved a total of 20,000 people. This was exactly what the government had so wanted to avoid, particularly because it concerned the Reformed Church, the ‘national church’ that lay at the heart of the structure of the Netherlands. As a result, the authorities responded with a firm hand: prison sentences and hefty fines were handed out to pastors, the secessionists’ services were interrupted by the police, and sometimes known supporters of the movement had the very unpleasant experience of having soldiers billeted with them.³⁸

The secessionists were people for whom heaven and hell, sin and redemption, election and resurrection were existential concepts. Their perception of these appeared to be separate from their worldly surroundings. But that would be too simple. The country’s elite saw the movement as one that was mainly supported by very simple people, who, like sheep, had been swept along by false shepherds into falsehood and superstition. However, detailed research has revealed that the social composition of the movement was extremely varied, and prominent local artisans and important farmers were often among its leaders. These were people who had seen few of the changes that had occurred during the Batavian-French period; indeed, these changes had sometimes even been too rapid to reach the countryside. In the

new kingdom, however, the independence of the rural towns, which had been longstanding and quite extensive, evaporated. With this, well-to-do and respectable people had lost prestige, influence and power to a centralizing and bureaucratizing national government.³⁹ The more pressing and unreliable (for it was secularizing) that this worldly authority became, the more that devotion to spiritual authority grew. This had no political objective – on the contrary, it represented a withdrawal from ‘the world’ – but it had political consequences. After all, the state considered the church to be part of the political order, as part of the government’s services. As such, the Secession was not only a protest against the church, but also resistance against the state.

This implied that many members of the elite were not sympathetic to the Secession. Also playing a role in this was the idea that every schism in Protestantism could only benefit the Catholics, as was the notion that the Reformed Church should not be abandoned and left to theological vagueness and caprice. Lying behind this was also the fact that the Secession represented a threat to the ideals upon which the Netherlands was built. A number of such motives were best expressed by a former servant of the king, Guillaume Groen van Prinsterer, who was occupied with publishing the *Archives ou correspondance inédite de la maison d’Orange-Nassau*. As such, he came into contact with the mystical relationship between God, the Netherlands and the House of Orange on an almost daily basis. In 1837, he published a booklet on the Secession in which he showed great sympathy for his orthodox fellow believers, and expressed his indignation at the way they had been treated: ‘It was as if the secessionists were seen as deserting slaves’.⁴⁰ He also criticized the leaders of the Reformed Church, however, on the grounds that they had allowed themselves to become officials of a Napoleonic state and had not refused to compromise their faith: ‘Heaven is open to all who do not commit any gross external sins, with a liberality that is constantly growing’.⁴¹ Groen also paid heed to a worrying development in the area of education, which had become ‘unchristian’, with at most only one hour of catechism per week. For now, all this was limited to church matters, but sooner or later, he predicted, the conflict would shift to the political sphere, or, as he wrote, ‘assume a political colour’. Then it might become linked to all kinds of issues, to everyone who felt oppressed or hard done by, and through a sense of shared ‘danger and interest’, grow into a concerted opposition.⁴²

The booklet caused something of a stir. One judge advised a solution that has become a classic in the relationship between a secular state and deep religiosity:

For every difficulty that has been caused to the Government by the disputes, I would point to the manner in which more and more insane people are cured or see their condition improved: and that is gentleness.⁴³

This was putting things too lightly; after all, the situation actually involved a direct attack on the functioning of two pillars of society, the church and the king. At the Ministry of Worship, officials anxiously contemplated whether the secessionists had powerful protectors among the more orthodox believers in the elite. Even more dangerous was the fact that some liberals also wanted to abolish the state's hold on the churches: 'These [latter people] find their support in the spirit of the age, and the attractions of *laissez-faire*'.⁴⁴ In this way, a monstrous alliance might emerge that would undermine religious politics and, with this, would strip the nation state of one of its foundations. The danger was averted by gradually replacing the hard-handed response (which did not work, in any case) with a lighter one. With some pushing and pulling, a number of secessionist congregations were brought so far as to accept, with reluctance, the constitutional rights of the king (especially the right to 'recognize' church denominations as such). However, a number of secessionists would leave the nation state. In 1846 and 1847, they left for Michigan in the United States, a country where it was possible to have a free church in a free community, due to the absolute separation ('the inseparable wall'⁴⁵) between church and state.

Two final remarks should be made in this section on the relationship between religion and the state. At the end of the eighteenth century, it was anticipated that the coherence of a community would no longer be guaranteed by a church, but would emerge more or less spontaneously, grounded in a more modern, individualistic religious life. In 1778, Ockerse, the former pastor, had concluded in his *Algemeene Charakterkunde*:

In most European countries and in other civilized parts of the world, longstanding prejudices have been cast aside, people have learned to think more reasonably and more moderately about religion, and a civic tolerance has been introduced, which cannot fail to cultivate Society and companionable life in the most fruitful manner; and the most useful effect of which can be seen in the increased gentleness of the current system of government in the general encouragement of the people and industry, in the more liberal practice of all kinds of religious systems...⁴⁶

Thus, according to this vision, the separation of church and state had even made politics possible in a modern sense, both to advance 'companionable

[social] life' and to safeguard the political domain from outdated and intractable conflicts. Ockerse, however, also identified the disadvantages of this development; in many cases, for example, the religion that was left lacked substance, which had again led to immorality. Levels of impudence had risen among both women and men, and amusement had become the primary goal of life. 'Laxity and debauchery have become a kind of nobility, in the absence of which one can hardly achieve *entré* into the world'.⁴⁷ People did still attend church, but seemed to consider this duty as perfunctory. For Ockerse, however, this was not an obstacle to enshrining the separation of church and state in the constitution, which implies that he accepted that progress would inevitably have its downsides. In the following decades, the discussion about this would remain a substantial part of the political culture in a wider sense.

The separation of church and state had not so much liberated the political domain from the *odium theologicum* as it had shed light on the limits of politics as such. Once the excitement of the Batavian Revolution had died down, for the greater part of the population, the link between one's daily experiences and the sense of one's own life and that of the community lay in religion. An outsider, the French ambassador Boislecomte, considered this issue in depth, and in 1840 put forward an interesting opinion on it.

According to him, the Netherlands was a country in which religion and politics had been closely intertwined since time immemorial. Two factors now made this connection even more intense than it had been in the past. These were first, the way in which the population had no or hardly any influence on politics, and therefore sought and found 'sa passion et son intérêt' in religious issues.⁴⁸ This was reflected, for example, in Da Costa's views. The second factor was the eruption of a competitive feud between ministers and priests. While the constitution promised the granting of equal rights to Catholics and Protestants, this was hardly visible in practice. Boislecomte even did the calculations and showed how few positions the Catholics (a third of the population) had been granted: none at the king's court (which consisted of 53 members), five seats in the House of Representatives (a total of 55 members), no seat on the city council of Utrecht (as opposed to twenty Protestants), and three on the city council of Amsterdam (as opposed to 36 Protestants), to name just a few examples.⁴⁹ The more the Catholics pressed for equal rights, however, the more stubbornly the Protestants defended themselves. As a result of this alone, the pastors, who continued to exercise significant influence over the population, went from being guardians of the conscience ('directeurs

des consciences') to 'chefs politiques', particularly in local communities.⁵⁰ Boislecote therefore concluded that intolerance was growing.⁵¹

The attempt to force religion back into the social sphere and private life had thus failed; or, to put it better, whilst it had worked for a short time, religion was returning to the heart of the political culture. This heralded the beginning of a confessional age, also at the international level.⁵² The process could not be avoided; it was too interwoven with the general changes that were occurring in the world – both in response to numerous changes and as a result of the new possibilities that were being created by modernization. Even if King William I had followed a different policy, he would have only been able to delay it, as would become evident under his successor.

Belgium

The policy of modernization and centralization, which had been started under the Batavian Republic and which had gained in strength under Louis Napoleon, was taken forward in various ways. Cities, for example, did not regain their old autonomy; when the burgomaster of the country's capital, Amsterdam, angrily and desperately said to a minister: 'But Sir, it is not possible to rule in this way!', he received the answer: 'That is also absolutely not the intention. All that being asked of you is to govern'.⁵³ The actual abolition of the guilds went ahead with vigour, uniformity was brought to the taxation system, public primary education was introduced everywhere and its quality improved, military conscription was introduced, as was a registry of births, deaths and marriages (1811), the law was re-codified and the administration of justice reorganized, a uniform system of weights and measures was introduced (1799; established definitively in 1821), a definitive system of Dutch spelling was introduced (1804), a modern bank of circulation was founded (the Nederlandsche Bank, 1814), and there was an energetic programme of road and canal building in order to improve the infrastructure.

King William I personified this policy. In this, he joined an international wave of uniformization and nation-forming that had begun at the end of the eighteenth century. In the Netherlands, however, this process had an especial urgency, with an eye to the homogenization ('amalgamation') of the king's northern and southern regions. Necessity and personality went together in a politics that initially still paid lip service to the constitution, but that gradually left no doubt as to whether the king was sovereign in his role as father of the nation; or, at least, that he did not permit too much opposition.⁵⁴ William I thus occupied himself with the governance of the country in very

detailed fashion. Nothing could be done without his approval; he conferred and removed official functions and posts. As a result, the whole political enterprise became a hotbed of gossip and rumour – an essential technique for keeping abreast of the king's mood and what everyone was up to.

In the North, in fact, this was accepted. The Members of Parliament (MPs) were caught in a regime in which the unity of the fatherland was the be-all and end-all of deliberations, in terms of both form and content. An unusual amount of courage was needed to bring up a matter that might, even to a small degree, give rise to disunity. Differences of opinion were usually dealt with informally and in closed circles. That was 'the politics of the fatherland', as opposed to 'public politics'.⁵⁵ That meant that public debate was dependent upon the press. In this respect, however, a remark made by the English essayist, economist, man of letters and diplomat, Bowring, is interesting. Bowring came to the Netherlands in 1828 and even received an honorary doctorate from the University of Groningen one year later. He was a polyglot; the story went that he understood two hundred languages, half of which he could also speak. He mastered Dutch, in any case, and kept well abreast of Dutch literature. In a published letter that he wrote while travelling, he expressed his opinion that the quality of the newspapers in the North left much to be desired, and that this was actually illustrative of the dominant political culture:

Here people lack the publicity that acts as a curb on politics, and yes also, in a broad sense, on private crimes. Every institution in the Netherlands appears to presume that it has virtuous officials, and thus removes these as far as possible from the control of public opinion. But the greatest fault, one that has a negative effect on everything, is the constant making of new legislation: the government interferes in thousands of matters that should no doubt be left to the citizens themselves. Nothing is in itself more contradictory than to burden the great machine of the State with trifling matters that pertain to everyday life. The glaring omission here is the lack of oversight over the major issues – the tiring focusing of attention on details – the wasting of attention on matters of little importance – the use of a microscope instead of a telescope – walking through the lowlands instead of climbing the hill. Everyone will assure you that the King lives the life of a galley slave; and that is doubtless magnanimous on his part, and shows his devotion to his people; he thereby makes himself extremely useful, and deserves all the gratitude of his subjects. Nevertheless, the fruitless torture of the spirit never ceases: it would be better if he were to grant himself and his people the mercy of a short respite.⁵⁶

The political culture in the South was much livelier, to the extent that the government frequently took action to deal with it: numerous lawsuits were brought against the press, and prison sentences and hefty fines were dealt out in unsparing fashion. This not only caused resentment, but in particular, it also undermined the legitimacy of the authorities, which already lacked deep roots. Considering this situation, Bowring foresaw a rebellion.

When the rebellion eventually came, it was nevertheless a great surprise. At the Muntschouwburg in Brussels, the opera *La Muette de Portici* by the French composer Daniel Auber featured on the programme. This was a spectacular piece that glorified the Neapolitan revolt against the Spanish in 1647. The aria *L'Amour sacré de la patrie*, in particular, had the public in raptures time and again. At the end of the performance of 25 August 1830, an excited crowd pushed through the streets of the city and smashed the windows of a number of Dutch authorities. That was the beginning of a revolution, one that rapidly assumed its own dynamic. By the autumn, the revolutionary command had taken power in the South. In November, the House of Orange was barred from the throne for good, and in February 1831 a constitution was proclaimed. The country won international recognition, and in July of the same year Leopold I took an oath on the constitution. William I thereupon invaded Belgium. The North defeated the South in the legendary Ten Days' Campaign, but under strong international pressure and the threat of military intervention by France, William I was forced to accept a ceasefire. The separation thereby occurred as suddenly as the union of the two countries had done.

Looking back, it has often been suggested that the Belgian Revolution was inevitable, although there are various reasons for doubting this. Two points, in any case, should be noted here. First, the separation was not the outcome of 'Belgian' nationalism: nationalism would be its result. In the opposite way, in the North, the traditional 'feeling for the fatherland' would be transformed completely: as such, the Ten Days' Campaign represented not the birth, but certainly the baptism of a passionate nationalism.⁵⁷ Second, the separation could occur thanks to the detached position of the Great Powers, for various reasons. For example, Russia – the son of William I was married to a sister of Tsar Alexander I – was occupied with the situation in Poland, Austria was having problems in Italy, England was caught up with Ireland, and Prussia had no desire for a conflict with France. In that respect, the success of the separation was the result of a combination of circumstances.

For a long time, the king of the now-halved empire hoped that changes in international relations would allow him to regain authority over the

South. He did not agree to a definitive arrangement of the separation between the Netherlands and Belgium, such as that which had been agreed by the Great Powers, until 1839. As a result, he kept a sizeable army mobilized, which severely undermined the state's finances. Parliament initially followed the king in this 'politics of perseverance' (*volhardings-politiek*), but it slowly discovered how expensive this proved. Parliament was incapable, however, of getting a hold on the utterly non-transparent manner in which William I kept the state income and expenses out of sight; whereupon, slowly but surely, the political culture in the North also began to stir.

The economy

In 1813, the king had become sovereign of a country in which trade had ceased and the government was almost bankrupt. By means of a very energetic policy, he brought some order to the finances, pursued industrialization, got trade going again and encouraged the radical improvement of the infrastructure.⁵⁸ Around 1820, assisted by favourable developments in the international economy, deterioration and stagnation had been turned around into cautious growth. A study of 1829 even concluded that the situation of the Netherlands was 'prosperous'.⁵⁹

This was not the case for everyone. The economy's structure, with its relatively weak industrialization and sizeable services sector, made it very susceptible to market trends. In particular, agriculture (responsible for approximately a quarter of the gross national product and in which more than 40 per cent of the population was employed) was very strong, and its significance would only increase in the following decades.⁶⁰ The major problem lay in the west of the country, where a large proportion of the working population in the cities was condemned to poverty, or only managed to survive with difficulty.

This problem had already exercised many minds at the end of the eighteenth century. In the 'Basic civic and state principles' that had preceded his constitution of 1798, Ockerse had thus included a number of provisions that were intended to address this. He had stated the following:

Society, always looking to advance the wellbeing of all its Members, provides the industrious with work and the Incapable with support. Malicious idlers can make no claim to this. Society promotes the complete suppression of begging.⁶¹

In principle, then, poor relief was no longer an issue for private (read: ecclesiastical) organizations, but a task for the national state, which wanted to ensure that this area was organized rationally. This was based on the notion that not only was the fragmentation of poor relief undesirable, but also that these institutions had failed to prevent the formation of a growing army of paupers. Evidently, the politics of charity had been overly generous, and should have done more to force people to be independent. This also explains the phrase about 'begging': every member of society had a duty to contribute to the general welfare. The ambition that the state was assuming here was unheard of, and neither, in the given circumstances, was much achieved. That is, until the issue was addressed by a remarkable man, whose 'deep originality could only partly be explained by a lack of refinement': Johannes van den Bosch.⁶²

Van den Bosch had had a career as a soldier in the Indonesian Archipelago, and had also run a successful plantation there. Having made his fortune, he turned back to the Netherlands in 1812, and then in 1813 immediately made himself available for a position in the new kingdom.

He was increasingly intrigued by the problem of pauperism. In his view, the situation in England showed that national prosperity did not automatically lead to a fall in poverty; on the contrary, the richest country in the world also had the largest number of paupers.⁶³ This was thus Van den Bosch's strongest argument for not viewing poverty in the Netherlands as a temporary problem that had been caused by the French occupation, but as the result of a long-term development, by which the working class had become an impecunious class that was no longer in a position to get work, nor to earn a sufficient amount with it. According to him, this was a consequence of the over-accumulation of capital in few hands. In fact, this was money that had been deducted from the earnings of workers, who had been forced back to a subsistence level. As a result, the masses now had to endure a fate that was only comparable to that of slavery. Indeed, there was a perfidious relationship between the propertied class, who did nothing useful, a class of paupers who lived off the former, and a middle class who had to work for the other two. This was socially unacceptable. Just as the economic infrastructure had been tackled, something had to be done about the social infrastructure.

Van den Bosch estimated the number of destitute in Europe to be sixteen million souls, of whom 190,100 were in the Netherlands. Based on the international literature and the available figures, it was reasonable to assume that 48,070 of these would be incapable of working due to sickness or old age. The remaining 142,030 people, including 50,000 'beggars and vagabonds',

must be set to work in some way or another. His precision was compelling. In 1818 he published a comprehensive discussion with these sorts of insights and calculations, linked to the proposal that the whole problem be dealt with by creating a single 'national institution for the poor'.⁶⁴ Buoyed by his experience as a plantation owner in Java, he proposed that the urban poor be transferred to desolate areas in Drenthe and Overijssel, where prosperous agricultural businesses could be set up on reclaimed land. Just as William I had transferred his experiences in the small principality of Fulda to the United Kingdom of the Netherlands, Van den Bosch applied his plantation experience at the national level.

His proposal met with universal acclaim. A Society of Benevolence was founded in order to implement it; the king became the Society's patron, and his second son Frederick the chairman of the board. Local committees were set up across the whole country and thousands of donors recruited, land was purchased, and in the same year, construction started on the first homes for the colonists. The first colony, also founded in 1818, was named 'Frederiksoord' in honour of the royal family. The colonists had to work hard, but Van den Bosch kept things as humane as possible:

There is only one way of keeping the colonists under control, namely to ensure that they live well here, but at the same time, that they do exactly what is required of them.⁶⁵

A stream of extremely detailed regulations followed, from the obligatory preparation of manure on Saturdays to church attendance on Sundays, on penalty of a two-penny fine.

This formidable enterprise was accompanied by an imposing publicity campaign, in which Ockerse, who had been appointed director of the Society's office, played a key role. He was chiefly responsible for the publication of the Society's journal, *De Star*, in which the objective of the enterprise was explained with some frequency: namely, providing work for 'all Poor who are capable of working'. From this followed that:

The business of the Society of Benevolence is the business of the Netherlands; and while in the period in which we are living, some of our compatriots are still uncertain, some day, as those who know their fatherland well are fully assured, this maxim will be agreed upon by all.⁶⁶

Here, an idea from the constitution of 1798 was taking shape; here, the humble part of the population was being drawn into the folds of the nation

state; here, indeed, a 'new society was being created', as Van Hogendorp and Van Lennep had observed.

In the framework of the systematic modernization of the Netherlands in almost every area, *De Star* paid particular attention to the attempt to mould the impoverished masses into citizens who would be able to provide for themselves. Dependence – so went the message – was slavery; independence was freedom, and was only to be achieved through labour. This was the modern gospel of productive virtue.⁶⁷ In part, this ethos stemmed from a patriotic mentality that had been strengthened by Napoleonic bureaucracy. At the same time, it dovetailed beautifully with the king's ambition to improve the quality of the 'nation'. The movement's dynamism was equally indebted to progressive and conservative motives and traditions alike.⁶⁸

The success of the Society of Benevolence was more modest than intended: the agricultural land was too poor to allow for profitable exploitation, and urban paupers were not always the most suitable colonists. In order to keep the whole enterprise going, Van den Bosch sought refuge in constant expansion. Similar colonies were set up in the Southern Netherlands (Wortel in 1821; Merksplas in 1825),⁶⁹ the national government forced urban orphanages to send children to its colonies, enormous workhouses for beggars were set up under its care in Ommerschans and Veenhuizen, and factories were built in which people could be set to work who were unsuited to agricultural labour. In 1843, a year before Van den Bosch died, the population of the colonies had risen to around 11,000. Financially, it was a shaky empire at best. Substantial loans were taken out and ever-larger government subsidies were needed to finance the interest and repayments. It became a kind of pyramid scheme, sustained by a tireless Van den Bosch and his royal protector, 'who is not accustomed to encountering much opposition', as a brother of Van den Bosch put it.⁷⁰ In 1859 the state took over both workhouses (and sold Ommerschans in 1890); the Society of Benevolence exploited the remaining colonies on a modest scale (making its first profit in agriculture in 1869); and today, the remains of this archipelago of virtue and discipline form a tourist attraction.

In 1830, the king called Van den Bosch from the Society of Benevolence for an even more important task: restoring the profitability of the colonies. A central motif of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands' economic policy was the attempt to bring about a three-pronged system: industrial development in the South, shipping, trade and commerce in the North, and the joint exploitation of the colonies as a source of colonial wares (such as coffee) and a market for industrial products (such as textiles). This system failed to get going, however, mainly as a result of the situation in the East Indies.

The trade relations there remained focused on Asia (rice and tobacco) and there was too little money in circulation to pay for Western imports. As for the trade that did take place, the competition from the English in particular was significant. The preparedness of the Javanese to work as hired labour was thought to be limited, and the preparedness of Western entrepreneurs to invest heavily was practically non-existent. The colonies therefore tended to be a financial drain, especially given a devastating war in Java between 1825 and 1830. In any case, the Minister of Finance was of the opinion that:

Sooner or later we will lose all of the colonies, whether to internal rebellion or to foreign attack; we should therefore no longer increase our outlay and should simply take what can still be got from them.⁷¹

In 1830, after an intense debate, William I sent Van den Bosch to Batavia to stop the losses and organize the urgently needed improvement in the finances. This was all the more necessary in view of the fact that as a result of the Belgian secession, income from taxation had fallen sharply and significant expenditure was associated with the use of the army.

Van den Bosch now did what he had done in his colonies in Overijssel and Drenthe, but on an even larger scale: he set people to work. In a letter, he summarized his ideas as follows:

The Indies is a profitable colony of the Netherlands, and the population there must be governed fairly and justly. That is to say, its domestic or religious institutions must not be encroached upon, it must be defended against all abuses, and, as far as possible, it must be governed in line with its own ideas; but for the rest, the interests of these countries must be completely subordinate to those of the Mother country. Behold my opinion on the system that should be brought to the fore; if I knew another that would make Java happier, I would champion it.⁷²

Whilst he used the term 'system', to a large extent, his policy was a composite of pragmatic solutions, such as the policy he had continually used in his Dutch colonies. What it came down to was that he once again introduced 'forced cultures', whereby the Javanese, under the leadership of their own aristocracy, were forced to cultivate all kinds of products. In this way, a form of exploitation developed whereby ten million Javanese were set to work in order to boost the prosperity of two-and-a-half million Dutch people.⁷³ Between 1830 and 1870, this 'cultivation system' (*cultuurstelsel*) made a considerable contribution to the Dutch economy: at the beginning of the

1830s, the 'credit balance' already amounted to around 3 per cent of the gross national product, or put differently, was equal to somewhat more than 30 per cent of the total income from taxation, a figure that rose to almost 50 per cent in the subsequent decades.⁷⁴ In 1834 Van den Bosch returned to the Netherlands; arriving in May 1834, he was made Colonial Minister in the same month, and became a kind of king's chancellor for economic affairs. As a token of appreciation, he was made a baron in 1835. He had ensured that in addition to agriculture, the 'credit balance' had become the mainstay of the Dutch economy.⁷⁵

	1831/40	1841/50	1851/60	1861/70
Credit balance (millions of guilders)	150.6	215.6	289.4	276.7
As a percentage of GNP (on an annual basis)	2.8	3.6	3.8	2.9
As a percentage of central government's income from taxation	31.9	38.6	52.6	44.5

Source: J.L. van Zanden and A. van Riel, *Nederland 1780-1914*, 223 [Table 5.1]

If one takes stock of Van den Bosch's activities, one cannot avoid a comparison with the ideas of Saint-Simon. This French publicist also started from the notion that something had to be done about the fate of 'la classe la plus nombreuse et la plus pauvre'. This solution could only be achieved by accepting 'la modernité industrielle et du progrès', and even by promoting it. The form that is thereby taken by politics is actually unimportant; it is about having capable people in power. Politics becomes policy, based on scientific insights, and is left to the specialists, 'une classe spéciale qui imposera silence au langage'.⁷⁶ It is only possible to act effectively if one knows the direction the future will take. This would be summarized in concise fashion by a follower of Saint-Simon in 1831: we are on the verge of establishing an industrial monarchy in France, just as Charlemagne established a military monarchy.⁷⁷ The words could have come out of Van den Bosch's mouth.

In France, these ideas took shape under the regime of Napoleon III, during which the followers of Saint-Simon were able to cover the country with railways – the ultimate symbol of modernity – and play an international role in the financing and execution of imposing infrastructural works, such as the Suez Canal (1859-1869) and the Panama Canal (1881-1889). King William I played a very similar role in the Netherlands, for example by founding the General Netherlands Society for the Support of Industry in 1822 (Algemeene Nederlandsche Maatschappij ter begunstiging van de

Volkswijl, which in 1830 became the Société Générale de Belgique) and the Netherlands Trading Society in 1824 (Nederlandsche Handel-Maatschappij, the distant predecessor of today's ABN-AMRO bank). These institutions, led in crucial places by people who had been inspired by the gospel of Saint-Simon, provided support to auspicious companies and were a driving force in the modernization of the economy. As the 'visible hands' of capitalism, these substantial enterprises were founded to make up for the shortcomings of the market. In fact, they were state enterprises under the patronage of the House of Orange, which played a central role in economic policy but were completely removed from any form of democratic control.⁷⁸ The Society of Benevolence was the social equivalent of this economic structure, as it were; and after this, Van den Bosch managed to combine the two in the form of the cultivation system.

Although the prospects in 1830 were not unfavourable, despite the loss of Belgium, the king's policy became deadlocked, and would eventually come, groaning and creaking, to a halt. The wave of nationalism that had precluded any criticism of William I had ebbed away, and people were once again critical of the non-transparency of the government finances. Much was hidden from parliament's view (both in the area of state debt and colonial profits); variable expenses (particularly those relating to defence) were put to the House every year, but the fixed expenses were only submitted every ten years. These were the only times when a decision could actually be made; in 1819 and 1829 this had already led to difficulties, and new ones had arisen due to the sharply rising cost of the 'politics of perseverance': so long as the king continued to refuse to accept Belgian independence, the army would remain mobilized. Half of all income was needed simply to pay the interest on the state debt. This fed the rise of a 'financial opposition', and almost every financial proposal was accompanied by an increasing tug of war. In fact, attempts were made along the way to curb the personal power of the king and to get a hold on financial policy by urging the introduction of ministerial responsibility.⁷⁹ In 1839, there was deadlock. In December of that year, the English ambassador reported to London that the debate between the king and parliament was no longer about money, but about changing the constitution.⁸⁰

William I saw all of this as an attack on his sovereignty, and obstinately refused to grant every concession. While Van den Bosch, who had provided him with so much money as Colonial Minister, had defended the budget, the House of Representatives refused to approve it. Van den Bosch thereupon resigned; a truly remarkable turn of events, given that by doing so, he had in fact respected the principle of ministerial responsibility – even though it

was precisely this that had become such a point of contention.⁸¹ Even more remarkably, after his resignation, *every* MP, from both the Senate and the House of Representatives, visited Van den Bosch at home and asked him to return to office; a unique event in parliamentary history, be it one that ultimately failed.⁸² Nor did he give in to the king's requests and the king finally let him go, with great thanks. Van den Bosch now became Count van den Bosch and Minister of State.

As if all this had not been enough, in the same period, it became known that the king, who had been a widower for two years, intended to marry Henriëtte d'Oultremont de Wégimont. Admittedly, she had been lady-in-waiting to his now deceased wife for 25 years, but she had two major disadvantages: she was Belgian *and* a Catholic. This created great unrest among the population, and there was also criticism from within the royal family. The crown prince led part of the opposition and financed the publication of a troublesome pamphlet, *Het huwelijk van Willem Kaaskoper en Jetje Dondermond* (*The marriage of William the Cheese-seller and Jetje Big-mouth*). The king kept the country in a state of tension for months, while diplomats sent alternating reports to their capital cities on the king's family vicissitudes and his fight with parliament. On the latter point, William I finally made a concession: criminal responsibility of ministers was introduced, and every royal decision was to be signed by one or more ministers. The possibilities for proper financial oversight also became greater. He would not be budged, however, from his intention to marry. This was universally considered a 'public disaster' and completely at odds with the 'true national feeling'.⁸³ There were even rumours that the deeply disappointed people would break up his palace stone by stone. Finally, in October 1840 he abdicated in favour of his son. His reign thereby came to an end, and lapsed into dust and ashes. The old king departed for Germany, where he married d'Oultremont in February 1841 as the 'Count of Nassau'. The country that he had left behind judged him harshly: he had broken his promises of 1831 to consider constitutional reform, the way in which he had dealt with the Secession had resulted in 'dreadful religious disputes', and he had led parliament 'up the garden path' for years.⁸⁴

At root, this misfortune was due to a serious misunderstanding: namely, the notion that a policy of modernization could be introduced in the absence of the consent of the people, anchored in a constitution. The authoritarian policies of centralization and uniformization provoked more and more resistance, while William I had few effective options to curb this. In this way, he lost first the Southern and then the Northern Netherlands, and only abdication was left. This episode shows how important the constitution had

become in a relatively short period of time: despite all the uncertainties, it formed the immutable core of the new political culture.

His successor, William II, took over the role after much of the major conflict over parliamentary budgetary rights had died down. Moreover, he was not an unfriendly man, and he brought an end to the hated religious politics. He showed much sympathy for the Catholics and cancelled all kinds of ongoing juridical trials against the secessionists. To his ministers, who had pressed for some continuity, he said:

You always think you are the ruling church; that is over; *tous les cultes sont égaux*; -- I don't want to interfere with religion, and you are always grinding on about it.⁸⁵

Peace returned, but the question was for how long. People feared that in time, politics would become the continuation of the various religious battles, such as between the Catholics and the Protestants, and between Protestants with very divergent views. So long as the elite managed to limit the right to vote, and with this maintain a wide gulf between state and society (the *pays légal* and the *pays réel*), this issue could be deferred. The king was an unknown factor, however; he was more flexible than his father, but also more unpredictable and, moreover, he enjoyed a more unsavoury private life than was usual in those circles.⁸⁶ Many were convinced, though, that the 'spirit of the age' would force a decision here.

That things went well for some time was perhaps largely thanks to – or to be blamed on – the dominant mentality in society, certainly in the circles of the ruling regents and landed aristocracy. There was a certain aversion to alternative ideas and outspoken opinions, and it was not appreciated if matters were brought to a head.⁸⁷ Only in the domestic sphere was there complete freedom on this point. Some suggested that this quality of the domestic sphere should be transferred to the public sphere. In 1822, for example, the translation of a German work was published, in which the anonymous author argued that the sad state of the world could be explained by the fact that 'the male sex holds the female sex outside the realm of natural and Christian law'. If girls were brought up to undertake 'every occupation and activity in social life' they would be in a position to take over the world, as it were, to civilize society actively and to follow a pure form of religion. This plea did not fall on fertile ground, however. Not only did the author mix the 'rights and duties' of men and women, but according to several reviews, worse still, the household – the private sphere – would no longer be the domain in which there were no politics or differences of

opinion, where everyone was free. The only thing left of any value would thus be sacrificed, and this was too high a price.⁸⁸ Whilst in the past, women had been given an important task in the political culture by being entrusted almost exclusively with bringing up the new generation, now it was proposed that the 'household' should be a safe haven in which to shelter from the raging storm outside. In some cases, this was extended to the notion that women should not only remain outside politics, but that they should not occupy themselves with intellectual work. Even reading books was considered to be risky. In 1818 Fenna Mastenbroek devoted an entire play, no less, to the issue of 'women and books', in which she had an enlightened man defend his wife's love of reading:

What right have we to debase women to be lesser creatures than ourselves? They also have the capacity to develop their souls, and refine their hearts. [...]

...I am happy, at the present [time], if, after a troublesome day, my Maria hurries gladly towards me, smoothes – through her warm jests and sweet cheerfulness – the smallest wrinkles of discontent from what are often difficult and sorrowful occupations, amuses me so pleasantly, always acquires more charms, makes so light of all worries, and educates our Wilhelmina herself and brings her up as an honest Dutch girl; then I gladly acknowledge that this abundant good, at least in part, is the fruit of those hours that she has devoted to reading well-written, useful books.⁸⁹

With this plea, which was as sympathetic as it was cautious, women's emancipation, as far as it came up at all, was mainly focused on obtaining more space for intellectual and cultural pursuits.

This preference for peace was also reflected in the reception of foreign scientific and political-theoretical debates. The English were considered too sceptical, the French too excitable and the Germans too gloomy. In this way, people remained satisfied with their sedate lives.⁹⁰ Van Heusde, who was considered to be the most important philosopher in the Netherlands in the first three decades of the nineteenth century, believed, for example, that Kant's philosophical reflections were at odds with the nature of the Dutch people: 'For our people, philosophical thinking must have the characteristics of simplicity, common sense and devoutness'.⁹¹ Not only common sense, but even mediocrity was also seen as virtue. What would a country of geniuses be liked, wondered a national rhetorician and education policy official? Largely a battlefield of men, all fighting each other.⁹² Johannes van Bosch, a key figure in the political system, himself took pleasure in philosophizing.

He worked for many years, for example, on a 'philosophical discussion' on the immortality of the soul (which he would never complete), and he also worked on a book that would be called *De filosofie van het gezonde verstand* (*The philosophy of common sense*).⁹³ At the same time, however, he was deeply convinced that it was better to maintain a wide gulf between theory and practice, certainly where religion, politics or economics were concerned. In 1831, he wrote from the East Indies:

When, some day, our enlightened philosophers agree with each other and show through experience which form of governance allows the greatest possible happiness for every sort of person, it will also be time to put their theories into practice. But until that time, we should refrain from experimentation, nor should we slay hundreds of thousands to make them wiser or force them into another religious system from that which they profess.⁹⁴

It is thus unsurprising that such a well-informed foreign visitor as the Frenchman Victor Cousin, after a journey through the Netherlands in 1836, remarked that nowhere had he come across ideals: 'They are more of an honest than a great people'.⁹⁵

The most fundamental critic of this way of thinking was Thorbecke – but he had studied in Germany, and had thus been deeply influenced by the philosophy there. In a memo of September 1840, he wrote:

Theory – practice. Practical action: the people think that is letting themselves be swayed by the circumstances. Practical action: according to them, it means not acting of your own accord, but allowing yourself to be steered. Practical action is thus acting without rules.⁹⁶

Thorbecke formulated an alternative aphorism: 'Theory does not need practice, but practice needs theory'. He had a coherent vision of the way in which the flight into sedateness and geniality should be halted. In this, he was a rarity, with such qualities that the Prussian ambassador tipped off Berlin in 1840 that he was a man to watch for the future.⁹⁷ Thorbecke had already become involved in the public debate, but he was still only at the beginning of his career in politics. This would begin quietly in 1844, after the death of Van den Bosch, who had represented the Province of South Holland in the House of Representatives since 1842. Someone would have cover the vacancy until 1845, when regular elections would be held. With a modest majority of votes, Thorbecke was selected.⁹⁸ The changing of the guard could

hardly have been more symbolic: Van den Bosch was the representative *par excellence* of the political culture of the age, Thorbecke of the one that would follow. Van den Bosch had no time for popular sovereignty and very little time for parliament: the 'machine gouvernementale' worked best if a limited number of skilled people were in control.⁹⁹ Thorbecke would design a different engine room, and his time would not be long in coming.

3. Everything is a Motley

1848: Parliamentary Democracy

On 15 April 1853, twelve gentlemen solemnly presented a petition to King William III during his annual audience at the Royal Palace in Dam Square in Amsterdam. Several weeks earlier, Pope Pius IX had announced that the Dutch Catholics would no longer be governed as a mission area, but would have a regular system of church governance.¹ Within a few days of the news being announced, the country was in uproar. This, numerous pamphlets, leaflets and news-sheets asserted, was a conspiracy by Rome. The Netherlands was to be handed over to the Jesuits and the liberty for which they had fought tooth and nail in the Eighty Years' War would be abolished.² The government, led by Thorbecke, had kept a cool head in the storm and refused to take action against the papal decision: 'Nothing should have been done, we had no right to do anything'. Indeed, the new constitution that had been introduced in 1848 guaranteed freedom of religion. The House of Representatives had either resigned itself to it or endorsed it. Across the country, however, petition movements arose in which around 200,000 people – to put this in perspective, the Netherlands had a population of around 3 million, 80,000 of whom had the right to vote for the House of Representatives – asked the king to prevent this in some way or another. The question, however, was whether the king could do anything, given the provisions of the constitution.

The twelve men, led by the pastor and poet Ter Haar, presented William III with the petition which had been signed by 51,431 people in Amsterdam, partly collected in the Nieuwe Kerk located next to the Royal Palace in Dam Square. The petition stated that civic and religious liberty was 'a fruit of the Reformation'. The Dutch had fought hard for this liberty, whereby 'an indomitably Protestant character had been etched on our History'. According to Ter Haar and his people, however, Rome saw 'the mainly Protestant Netherlands as a colony ripe for total re-conquest'. This would lead to 'grave clashes' between Protestants and Catholics and, with this, 'threatening disasters and dangers for the State itself'. Would the king therefore only withhold his approval from all of this – a request that ignored the fact that, according to the constitution, neither the king nor the government nor the House of Representative had anything to approve in this affair.

The government had advised the king that, when receiving the petition, he should simply reassure the petitioners that he would protect everyone's

religious interests and leave it at that. This was not what would happen, however; the king showed himself moved by the presence of so many loyal men, and noted:

That His government had given him many a grievous moment; but yet His Majesty still found cheer and encouragement in the warm-hearted – almost, His Majesty would say – childlike, truly childlike devotion of his people. ‘And on this day, my Lords!’ – the King thus continued – ‘Make it known to all, whomever you represent – this day has made the bond between the House of Orange and the Netherlands even more closely interwoven and more dear to my heart.’

This was the text that appeared in the daily papers, although in reality he appears to have spoken more candidly and critically of the constitution that tied his hands.³ At this point, Ter Haar really got going. In an inimitable plea, he informed the king that of course the Catholics also had rights, but ultramontanism had to be stopped – he seemed to make little distinction between Catholicism and ultramontanism. And the constitution guaranteed, on the one hand, that the different religions would be treated equally, but on the other, that it was impossible to act against the threat of Catholic ‘supremacy’. This meant that there was a contradiction within the constitution. The implication could be little other than that the constitution should be adapted, but Ter Haar disguised his call for this somewhat by expressing his sympathy for the ‘difficult position in which Your Majesty is placed as a Protestant Monarch and Constitutional King’. The distinction made in passing here between these two qualities of William III sounded ominous.⁴ After this, events unfolded rapidly. The next day, the government, which had been treated with such explicit contempt, asked William III to make a public statement of his confidence in the government; if not, it would resign. The king, who had already held several discussions on how to act in such a case, gave word two days later that he would accept the government’s resignation.

The events in the Netherlands seemed to echo similar developments in England. There, too, a strong growth in anti-papism had become evident in the 1840s. The point of contention was the increase in the subsidy given in 1845 to the Royal College of St Patrick in Maynooth, a Catholic seminary in Ireland: ‘the subject on which the public seemed to be going mad’.⁵ The announcement in September 1850 that an episcopal hierarchy had been introduced in England – an action that became known as the Papal Aggression – added fuel to the fire. Thousands of petitions streamed in demanding

counter-measures and calls of 'No Popery!' could be heard everywhere. Here and there, the windows of Catholic churches were smashed.⁶ In contrast to William III's sympathy for his Protestant children, Queen Victoria was profoundly shocked by the unchristian behaviour of people who called themselves Protestants but showed themselves unworthy of this name.⁷ Her government, however, felt obliged to steer a minor bill through parliament, the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill of 1851, which forbade bishops from using certain titles, especially if the name of their diocese matched that of an old county.

After the fall of the government, a minor anti-Catholic law was also introduced in the Netherlands: the *Wet op de Kerkgenootschappen* (Law on Denominations) of August 1853. The most troublesome provision of this was the renewal of the ban on the wearing of ecclesiastical robes in public places, which allowed the police to prevent not only processions, but also religious funerals. Whereas the law in England was purely symbolic (and was repealed in 1871, having never been used), in the Netherlands, judicial action was brought against violations of the provisions several times.⁸ Catholics thus had freedom of conscience but no real freedom of belief, even though this seemed to have been promised by the new constitution of 1848.

The Protestants, however, were also dissatisfied with the outcome of their movement in April 1853. The anti-Catholic paper *De Fakkel* stated a year later: 'What has become of the *Aprilbeweging* [April movement]? It is a faint, sad memory, an echo that died out long ago, a ridiculous thing'.⁹ The liberal journal *De Gids* stated, by contrast, that passions had been unleashed that could no longer be suppressed:

We have since been brought to the edge of an abyss. The passions continue to rage. The gulf between the Catholics and the non-Catholics gaps wider than ever. The fire of religious hatred continues to blaze with unsuppressed ferocity. The sons of a common fatherland go forth, divided into two opposing army camps. From the words that are spoken, the pages that are written, the deeds that are done – everything shows this to be the case.¹⁰

The Netherlands thus seemed to be a country that was tottering on the edge of an abyss, in which religious differences managed to unleash considerably more emotions than political differences of opinion. This was remarkable in view of the fact that the new constitution of 1848 had specifically placed religion outside the political domain, thereby resuming the direction that had been taken in 1798. Politics was defined in a new way: it was no longer about tolerance, but about rights. Besides, this politics left no room for direct

influence on the part of groups from the population, given that the centre of political debate was located in parliament, and that respect for separate constitutional responsibilities had been declared the be-all and end-all of the political order. Finally, politics had to confine itself to a limited arena, so as to hinder the liberty of the citizens as little as possible. Politics was therefore above all constitutional politics, and anything that fell outside this was a matter for society as such (and civil society, to the extent that it was organized). Seen this way, the *Aprilbeweging* was not a political matter, and it only became one as a result of the king's abuse of his position. This clearly shows that five years after it had been introduced, the spirit of the new constitution had not yet permeated everywhere – not even as far as a key bearer of constitutional principle, such as the king.

This uncertainty was not only a problem in domestic relations. If the centre of the political culture is unclear, this has repercussions for a country's position in international relations. Domestic and international politics can be distinguished from one another, but they cannot be separated; certainly not if one considers that the constitution of 1848 had been intended precisely to serve as proof of the Netherlands' ability to solve its own problems, and therefore maintain its rationale for existence.¹¹ If it were shown that the country's solution only partly worked, then independence would become problematic, certainly if one considers that in the mid-nineteenth century the turbulence on the continent was increasing rapidly. The coalition that had toppled Napoleon had unravelled, the balance of power had been upset, and the vacuum was filled by power politics. In that light, what was the kingdom's position in Europe? More pressingly, did a small country even have a future in a world that was becoming more interconnected in numerous ways, certainly economically? At stake was whether the policy that had been formulated in 1829 – pursuing its own economic interests and ambitions, while remaining aloof from the dynamics of international power politics – could be taken forward. After all, a 'politics of independence' such as this could only succeed if it had the respect of other countries. And this was already lacking, given the stubborn politics of William I, the muddled performance of William II and the irresponsible behaviour of William III.

All this meant that around 1848 various problems arose simultaneously, which above all were closely interwoven with each other: the right of the Netherlands to exist in a Europe that was defined by power politics, the redefinition of politics to do justice to the 'spirit of the age', the reordering of the relationship between state and nation and also of that between religion and politics. And as if this were not enough, certain matters needed to be addressed in view of the threat of social revolution, owing to a number of

economic problems that had surfaced at that time. Many feared that the industrial revolution would prompt a return to the French Revolution and that this time it would be even more terrifying than half a century ago. Now, however, it was not a king but a citizen who had to apply himself to these problems: this was Thorbecke's moment.

Realpolitik

After the loss of Belgium, the Netherlands was no longer a moderately important country, but more of a sovereign principality. This raised the question of whether the country was still even 'viable': at some point France might conquer Belgium, it was obvious that the Netherlands would be drawn into the unification of Germany, and England would then content itself with taking over the colonial possessions. To be sure, an attempt to unify Germany had failed in 1848, but the question was whether this process would not be resumed again after some time. The Netherlands took this issue lightly at its peril, given the fact that the Province of Limburg was a member of the German Confederation, as was Luxembourg, of which the king was grand duke. Although France had traditionally been the hereditary enemy, this was not so much ousted as slowly overshadowed by concerns about the relationship with Prussia.

Thorbecke, who knew and appreciated Germany better than many of his compatriots, asserted in 1837 that the Netherlands could learn much from Germany; in science and culture it had become 'the leading country, the heart of Europe'. But the Netherlands must be able to continue to develop in its own way:

There is no country with which we politically have so many interests in common as Germany. Does it follow from this that we must let ourselves be incorporated into the German body politic, or become a member of the German Confederation? The opposite is true. As an independent country, we can engage in business with and for Germany; but we cannot, at the cost of our own individual power and destiny, and all that we owe ourselves and others, subordinate ourselves to Germany as part of a whole.¹²

But it was difficult to be convinced by this argument, certainly after Thorbecke had acknowledged that there was a 'kinship of the spirit and blood' between the two countries, so that only a reference to the glorious Golden

Age of the past could still give some force to the dogmatic statement, 'We are Dutchmen; we are not Germans'. The main problem with this opinion is that the past was presented so illustriously that the present appears rather pale in comparison.

Moreover, it would naturally remain to be seen whether this conclusion would also be acknowledged on the other side of the border, certainly after high idealism had been supplemented with, if not replaced by, power politics. In 1853 Rochau published his *Grundsätze der Realpolitik*, in which he argued that the failure of '1848' should not be seen as permanent. The liberal wishes and national desires that had been expressed in that year were power-related factors that could be pursued again in future.¹³ The concept acquired a specific connotation, however, when Bismarck came to office as Minister President of Prussia in 1862. He had already let it be known that it was wiser to take facts into account than ideals – and subsequently set out to strengthen the army drastically. To parliament, a huge majority of which was opposed to this, he maintained that the major questions of the age were not decided by speeches and majority decisions, but by force.¹⁴

It even remained to be seen whether Thorbecke's argument would be accepted in his own country. It is not difficult to find pamphlets that contained open doubts about the willpower of the Dutch to remain themselves and free. One or two wondered openly whether the country had not already given up:

To that end, war is no longer necessary. We can simply wait until our people, having become even more fearful and senseless, are overcome by impotence. Then, perhaps, in a day's battle, while at the ends of the earth people are still proclaiming the glory of the Dutch name and the Dutch lineage, this lineage will be lost through destructive tyranny.¹⁵

Another author, Veth, delicately pointed out that the national anthem, with its lyrics by Tollens – 'Whoever has Dutch blood flowing in their veins / Free of foreign blemishes' – had been set to music by a German, Johan Wilhelm Wilms. Given the great kinship between the two peoples, it was actually quite likely that the border between the two would become increasingly blurred and that pan-Germanism would also be extended to the Dutch population.¹⁶ A less troubled view assumed that the Netherlands was above all 'a big grocer's shop' and should therefore also behave like one.¹⁷ However realistic this might have been, it suggested little ambition.¹⁸ No wonder that people would later refer to the decades-long 'unmistakable identity crisis' in which the Netherlands found itself.¹⁹

In those years, we can see the beginning of one way in which the Netherlands intended to stand its ground in international relations: by presenting a model of harmony. This was made clear, for example, at a discussion in the House of Representatives in 1848 on the provision of extra credit for the mobilization of troops, which was unavoidable given the extremely unstable international situation. On this, a relatively progressive liberal politician put forward the following argument:

I desire that the Netherlands be prepared for war and for the Netherlands to make herself ready to fight the battle that may come in a worthy manner. I do not desire, however, that these things be done by material means, such as those proposed to us, by laying a small number of bayonets in the European balance; but by generating moral forces, by promoting a sense of public responsibility and cultivating harmony, and above all, by acting upon the conviction that the Netherlands has institutions that are worth fighting tooth and nail for.²⁰

The ploughshare was preferred to the sword – a free adaption of 1 Samuel 13:30. This politics was in fact ‘apolitical’, given the choice of a moral register: the homogeneity of a nation that drew its power from its moral qualities. This moralizing went hand in hand with a farewell to power politics: ‘It is more splendid to be the most virtuous than the most powerful people in the world’.²¹ Although this sounded somewhat grandiose, it did not differ greatly from a thought recorded by Thorbecke in his later years. In a notebook, he wondered what the destiny of ‘*small* and middle-ranking States’ in Europe might be; the answer being, ‘Their calling is to multiply the variety and intensity of development in civil and political liberties, in industry and in intercourse, in intellectual refinement’. And he would later add: ‘Middle-ranking or small States that lie between the Great Powers are the natural guardians of the peace and of the interests that are linked with this’.²² Small states such as the Netherlands were thus the ‘proving grounds’ of civilization, and based on this quality, they might hope to be spared from international power politics. Their fate lay in the hands of the Great Powers. The ambition to become ‘the most virtuous people in the world’ had thus become a kind of foreign policy, which naturally had the most impact on domestic relations: the social repression of agitation and deviation and a great appreciation of moderation, a quality that can so quickly degenerate into mediocrity.

Under Bismarck’s leadership, Prussia had annexed Schleswig-Holstein in 1864, followed by Hannover, Hessen, Nassau and Frankfurt two years later. It now covered the whole eastern border of the Netherlands. Would

Prussia stop at this? In the Netherlands, the noises were largely reassuring: it would not come to the point where Dutch independence was threatened. One writer completely demolished this argument. In 1867, Eduard Douwes Dekker – known by his pseudonym, Multatuli, and one of the few great ‘mal-contents’ of Dutch culture in the nineteenth century – wrote a pamphlet entitled *Een en ander over Pruisen en Nederland* (A few points concerning Prussia and the Netherlands), in which he explained that there was no single reason *not* to be concerned about the developments in Germany. Prussia could not be stopped, and war with France was already on the horizon. To the notion that the Netherlands would remain independent because it was more useful to Germany as a neighbouring state than as an incorporated province, Douwes Dekker responded as follows:

Precisely! *If* we remain independent, we will not be incorporated. If the weather is fine, then it won't rain. We should remain convinced of this truth, and with the pious first King of Prussia, we should say: anyone who doesn't believe that ... had a very unseemly mother.²³

For the time being, the sun continued to shine. The Netherlands had an opportunity to deal with its own problems in relatively undisturbed fashion. And there was yet another favourable circumstance: the industrial revolution reached the country late and, moreover, took place slowly.

The economy

Rapid industrialization brought riches to the few and misery to the many. Any glance at the English Midlands, the Ruhr in Germany or Wallonia made that clear. Of the substantial literature on this suffering, the most interesting contribution is *Die Lage der arbeitenden Klasse in England. Nach eigener Anschauung und authentische Quellen* (*The condition of the working class in England*) of 1845 by Friedrich Engels. It is both a report and an indictment, both a product of classical political economy and a foreshadowing of the *Communist Manifesto* of 1848.²⁴ It paints an unsettling picture of a population that had been robbed by the bourgeoisie of all normal human order and connections. ‘Civilization’ is actually a social war of all against all. People had also been poor in the past, Engels argued, but the massive transition to what would later be called industrial capitalism had led to a situation in which the lion's share of the workers found themselves on the borderline between survival and ruin. Any little thing – a slackening

of work, a new machine, the whim of a boss – could push a worker below the line. This socio-economic insecurity had transformed workers into demoralized ‘proletarians’.²⁵ And again, this had the result that the working class differed from the bourgeoisie in almost every respect: they had a different language, different ideas, manners and customs, different ideas on religion and politics. They had become ‘ganz verschiedenen Völker’.²⁶ Also in 1845, the same idea was expressed by Benjamin Disraeli, a politician from the opposite side of the political spectrum, in his novel *Sybil: or The Two Nations*: the poor and the rich were ‘two nations’ who neither knew nor understood each other, as though they lived on different planets.²⁷

England was seen as the country where developments took shape that would also affect the Netherlands, sooner or later. Not only was this clearly Van den Bosch’s opinion, but it was also Thorbecke’s concern. The latter had become a professor of statistics in Ghent in 1825, a subject that included political economy. In the Southern Netherlands he saw the first indications of what had taken place in England, ‘the factory of the world’, and which would inevitably come to characterize the rest of the continent. The introduction of machines, he asserted in a lecture of 1830, had led to workers being robbed of all independence, and with this they had lost all self-respect, while the middle class had melted away and a small group of rich had formed. This was an historical phenomenon, which, ‘like a powerful current [...] cannot be halted by any opposition, and follows its course past every obstacle’.²⁸ This gave rise to two questions. The first was whether this was a temporary, transitional phenomenon or a structural development. For the time being, in Thorbecke’s opinion, knowledge of economics was insufficiently developed to have the last word on this. The second question was largely a problem: the industrial revolution was at odds with the political development that had been unleashed by the French Revolution:

It is remarkable that at the same time as learning, public opinion, morals and public institutions are conspiring, as it were, to promote an equal division of welfare, justice and wealth in industry, a state of affairs has taken hold that is the source of the greatest and most glaring inequality. While in the relations of the State and permanent property the interests of the many are being asserted against the so-called aristocracy and monopoly, against all predominance of the one or the few, while the dreadful revolt of entire peoples against these burdens and spectres lies still fresh in our memories, in the area of industry, the most exclusive form of privilege is rearing its head, so as to again subject the many to the few more severely than ever before.²⁹

Should the developments that were visible in England also occur in the Netherlands, the nation state would not only be split along religious lines, but also in terms of class – and, moreover, with very unpredictable interactions between the two. If at the end of the eighteenth century the study of the national character had been important, now ‘political economy’ had become important, as it involved studying the relationship between politics and economics.

Such study became all the more urgent in view of the fact that the positive economic trends of the first decades of the nineteenth century ground to a halt in the 1840s; the economy only got going again in the 1860s. The general development can be seen from the figures on the gross domestic product (GDP):

Growth in GDP, in percentage per year

	1830-1840	1840-1850	1850-1860	1860-1870
GDP	2.34	1.11	0.59	2.38
GDP per head of population	1.41	0.40	0.07	1.51

Source: J.L. van Zanden and A. van Riel, *Nederland 1780-1914*, 248 [Table 6.3]

The Netherlands followed international trends in this respect, whilst lagging behind somewhat. There was no impressive growth in industrialization. This was largely the consequence of the central role of agriculture in the economy, low real wages (partly a result of this), and the scrapping of William I’s protectionist policies. Trade and industry profited little from rising domestic demand and experienced the difficulties of international competition, which intensified precisely at this time. Industry was no ‘motor’, and due to the substantial state debt, money could only be released for major investment in infrastructure in the 1860s. The slow pace of industrialization can also be seen in the unchanged structure of employment: in 1849, 31 per cent of employment was to be found in industry; in 1889, it was 32 per cent.³⁰ A related phenomenon was the almost unchanging size of the towns; only after 1870 would some towns start to grow rapidly.³¹ As a result, the country saw hardly any of the disastrous effects of rapid industrialization and urbanization.³² For example, there was barely any difference in the mortality rates for the working class on the one hand and the middle and upper classes on the other. Constant economic improvement from 1860 and a sharp increase in hygiene standards led to a steady increase in the length of people’s lives: a man who was born at the beginning of the

nineteenth century had a life expectancy of 38 years, a number that would increase from the generation born in 1860 onwards, rising to 71 years in the mid-1930s.³³ To put it another way, the conditions for the formation of a proletarian class were initially lacking in the Netherlands, and would only make themselves felt in the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

That is not to say that a large part of the population did not have to contend with socio-economic insecurity. This was particularly the case in the 1840s, a period that is known internationally as the 'hungry forties' and in the Netherlands as the *zwarte jaren* (black years). In the middle of that decade potato blight struck, making the population's most important foodstuff extremely expensive. From the summer of 1845, the correspondence between various levels of government was taken up with substantial concerns about the 'lack of this foodstuff, which has become well nigh essential for the working class', and its possible substitution with rye, buckwheat, beans and rice.³⁴ These concerns even pushed aside the more usual reflections on the 'national spirit' and the relationship between Protestants and Catholics. In 1846 there was a disappointing rye harvest across Europe, followed by several years with severe winters. This was accompanied by quite a sizeable influenza epidemic, while in 1848 and 1849 there was a cholera outbreak in the Netherlands. Emigration rose in this period, the number of marriages fell, and in 1847, for example, the number of deaths exceeded the number of births. Unrest broke out here and there, and food riots had to be suppressed by force of arms.³⁵

This situation gave rise to great concern. No one had forgotten the French Revolution, of course; it was no coincidence that internationally, 'terminer la révolution' – the motto of the French politician Guizot – was the guiding principle of politics. But was this actually possible? Tocqueville had made a great impression with his *De la démocratie en Amérique*, the first part of which had been published in 1835, the second in 1840. His main conclusion, quoted with some emphasis in *De Gids* in 1846, was that the growth of 'democracy' was sustainable, universal and unpreventable. Thinking in these terms, it was inconceivable that the Netherlands would escape it. As the storm clouds gathered, 'our little piece of land' would also be tested by a repeat of the French Revolution, and probably one similar to its most terrible phase, the Terror.³⁶

Revolution was thus being taken into account everywhere. It seemed to begin in Switzerland, although here it was more an outburst of religious conflict than a social one. In the autumn of 1847 a short war erupted between the liberal and Catholic cantons. In Europe the event was interpreted as the opening shot in a war between the supporters of the 'new intellectual

order', political, economic and scientific freedom on the one hand, and on the other, the defenders of views that had had their day, of institutions that only continued to exist out of habit, but that would collapse after a relatively small shock.³⁷ The battle between light and darkness, movement and stagnation, then flared up to its full extent in 1848: in February in Paris, and in March in Italy, the Austro-Hungarian countries and even in Prussia. The international character of the phenomenon was shown not only by the fact that there were revolts in almost every capital city on the continent, but also that the crowned heads of Europe kept each other up to date in an epistolary explosion, assisting each other in an attempt to retain the 'monarchical principle' and thereby the order of the Congress of Vienna.³⁸

In fact the main outlines of this order were retained, if only because the outbreak of a massive European war was avoided. Perhaps the most important consequence of the revolution was that with this, the French Revolution came to an end. The realization slowly dawned that each nation could interpret international movements in its own way, and that the ballot box was a more appropriate means for this than the barricade.³⁹ This applied, of course, to the middle classes, from which the leaders of popular movements usually came. The various workers' organizations largely drew the conclusion that they could expect little from 'politics': an electoral law was no substitute for bread. The labour movement would thus put more of its hopes in the creation of its own world and its own trade associations, and the steady expansion of cooperatives for production and consumption. With some exaggeration, we can say that the working class began to organize their own social world, and in a way to form their own nation. The 'social politics' that would emerge in the last quarter of the nineteenth century can thus be seen as an attempt to bring the two 'nations' into one nation state. For the time being, improvements in living conditions were mainly due to the liberalization of international trade, which led to a sharp increase in economic growth and a fall in food prices. This led to an increase in employment and real incomes, and the 'black years' gave way.

1848

In the Netherlands, too, all of the conditions were satisfied for the unleashing of a rebellion: a hungry population and an increasingly radical middle class. Here, too, there were processions and demonstrations that demanded lower taxes, cheaper food and more democracy. It is perplexing, however, that people tended to expect these improvements from personal intervention

by the sovereign: only a 'people's king' was thought to be strong enough to force the elite to make concessions. At this point William II did actually intervene, and he made real headway. Fearing the march of revolutionary French armies, he made agreements on coordinated defence with the King of Belgium, the parvenu who governed part of his former kingdom. After also hearing reports of the major concessions that German kings had made to popular movements, he was firmly convinced that he could not afford any domestic problems. He therefore, as he explained to foreign diplomats, 'went from being very conservative to being very liberal within twenty-four hours'.⁴⁰ He commissioned a committee led by Thorbecke to draft a liberal constitution and with this, as it were, to accommodate the intellectual heart of the unrest. Thorbecke started work on 17 March; ten days later, the committee had completed the text, and after some pushing and shoving, parliament approved the constitution in August. It was solemnly proclaimed on 3 November 1848.⁴¹

The way in which the constitution was brought about had taken the sting out of the rebellion: the liberals, who had thus seized control, almost immediately distanced themselves from radical popular leaders and suppressed a rebellion in Amsterdam just as effectively as their predecessors.⁴² In the Netherlands, an important constitutional change thereby preceded an acceleration of the modernization process, just as such changes had been brought about elsewhere by the industrial revolution. One major problem was that the new constitution was supported by the liberals, but they made up only a relatively small number of the politicians. And while the intellectual superiority of Thorbecke was uncontested, people – even from his own ranks – feared his unapproachable attitude and the awkward style of his behaviour. Intellectual power is not the same as political power. Due to the numerical weakness of true supporters in the House of Representatives, Thorbecke was dependent on support from the Catholics, for example (due to his policy on freedom of belief). In this period, this was no recommendation. In addition, the liberals were not initially buttressed by a clear victory over the incumbent dignitaries. To be sure, the latter had suffered a loss of face, but their power was anything but broken. In the period between 1848 and 1877, no fewer than 81 of the 100 ministers were of noble or patrician descent, and the most senior officials – such as royal commissioners and those in the diplomatic service – were almost exclusively from these circles (there were so many counts and barons that it was almost impossible for an esquire to break through).⁴³ One blessing in disguise was that King William III (who had acceded to the throne in 1849 after his father's death) would have liked to repeal the constitution in

order to augment his personal power, but he did not obtain enough political support for this: even reactionary politicians saw that they could not get anywhere with this man. A development such as that in France, where Napoleon III had managed to establish an authoritarian regime in the 1850s (although it was supported by plebiscites), was virtually impossible in the Netherlands.⁴⁴

In 1848 the constitution had undergone a radical change, but the same was only partly true of the political culture as a whole. In a commentary in November 1848, the *Leeuwarder Courant* thanked the king, whom 'the people have to thank for the precious gift of an exceptional extension of their rights and liberties'. At the same time, the newspaper was mainly concerned about the consequences. For the first time, parliament would be elected directly (rather than being appointed by the king or elected indirectly).⁴⁵ This saw the return of a problem that had also surfaced in 1795, although only for a short period: the nature of representation.⁴⁶ What qualities should a representative have, who or what did he actually represent, and ought he to represent the Dutch people in person or was the emphasis on the representatives together, 'representation' in a collective sense? The answer to such questions was linked to views on the relationship between the representative and the enfranchised citizen: did the representative have a mandate, or was he a delegate? It was also connected to opinions on the nature of parliament, on which two views took shape. Some considered it to be the representation of the nation, whereby the concept of 'representation' was seen as a reflection of the nation, a kind of portrayal (*portret* in Dutch, *Darstellung* in German). Others saw parliament as the protector or advocate of the interests of the nation, if necessary against the sovereign and the government (*advocaat* in Dutch, *Vertretung* in German). In this way, then, parliament could be a representative *of* the people and *for* the people. In both cases, though, the question arose as to how 'representative' parliament should be: should every kind of opinion be represented in parliament, should every interest have its own spokesman?

The answers to these questions were somewhat divergent, and what is more, they would change over time. But in 1848, for the time being, the idea prevailed that only the very best ought to be elected. The *Leeuwarder Courant* drafted a 'wish-list': representatives must be men 'who were driven by a true feeling for the people', but who also had 'a clear understanding' and who were 'suitable for the position in all respects'. They need not have a specific political programme, but above all should be prepared to 'help, in a most open-minded and most worthy way, to lead the Dutch state, in all its aspects, to as favourable and ideal an end as possible'.⁴⁷ Although politicians such

as Thorbecke clearly considered the lack of a political profile undesirable, for the time being these criteria could count on broad approval. Much more difficult was the relationship between parliament and the government (the 'crown') on the one hand, and between the king and the ministers within the crown on the other. To be sure, these were set out in the constitution of 1848, but they would only start to function as intended after a number of fierce conflicts. The way in which King William III, who had only followed his father in 1849 after some hesitation, had rid himself of his ministers in 1853 was just one example of this.⁴⁸ In this respect, theory was ahead of practice.

Protestant politics

The nature of 'representation', along with the role and functioning of parliament, would partly be battled out in discussions on the interpretation of the constitution.⁴⁹ This was already tricky enough, but it became even more complicated because as a result of this, a separate debate rapidly gained in significance. This concerned a question that the liberals would have liked to leave to civil society, but that nevertheless became a major political issue: what was in fact the nature of the nation state? The battle on this issue could be personified in two politicians: Thorbecke and Guillaume Groen van Prinsterer.

The two politicians knew each other from their studies at Leiden University. They had drifted apart in the 1830s and each had become the other's principal opponent, but at the same time they continued to feel connected to each other in a strange way. It was precisely through their mutual struggle that they gave each other meaning. Characteristic of this was how Thorbecke repeatedly dreamed of Groen in June 1870; and how on Thorbecke's death in June 1872, Groen wrote to his confidant and successor, Kuyper: 'For a few days, I have been somewhat unwell again. The death of Thorbecke has *affected me tremendously*. This is for *you* alone. Others would not understand this; you do'. Kuyper answered sympathetically: 'He is a member of your family, who has passed away. Through the leadership of our Lord, he was the greatest figure in the circle in which you moved in this country. The gravity of his character was essential for the balance in your life'.⁵⁰

With everything they had, Thorbecke and Groen represented the battle for the political culture and the nature of the nation state between 1840 and 1870. Was the Netherlands, as Thorbecke would have it, a small country that should play a sort of pioneering role in the process of civilization, a role that would be guaranteed by paying careful attention to constitutional

procedures? Or was the Netherlands, as Groen maintained, a Protestant nation that had emerged from the battle for a pure form of Christianity and dependent on the bond between God, the Netherlands and the House of Orange? In the first case, there was a clear division between state and nation; in the second, by contrast, state and nation should converge as much as possible. In the first case, a 'constitutional politics' had to be developed; in the second, a 'Protestant politics' needed to be designed.

This latter task was not a simple one, mainly because to potential supporters it was so obvious that the Netherlands was a Protestant country. In 1850, for example, the anti-Catholic paper *De Fakkel* could still write simply: 'The party of the *juiste midden* [lit. correct middle] in the Netherlands is that of *Protestantism* in the real and true sense of the word'. The phrase 'juiste midden' was not a reference to the French concept of the *juste milieu*, which in any case was mainly aimed at liberals, but should be read as meaning 'normal', 'obviously dominant'.⁵¹ It rapidly became clear, however, that Protestantism, though unanimous in its rejection of Roman Catholicism, was split by major differences of opinion. But something had to be done, in this paper's view, given that as a consequence of 1848 parliamentarians had alienated themselves from the nation: 'Most members of the *States General* live apart from the people, in a refined, that is to say, in a formal, often chimerical world. They are strangers in their own country'. They had stripped the country of every aspect of its identity, meaning that there was no 'prevailing spirit' any more: 'Everything is a motley...'⁵²

Groen van Prinsterer was the man who became the most important spokesman of political Protestantism. He wore his fingers to the bone writing countless opinion pieces and letters to his sympathizers. With all this publicity, of course, he also drew the fire of his opponents, such as the liberal historian Fruin, who wrote two detailed pieces about him in 1853 and 1854. Fruin found it remarkable that Groen's opinions seemed to be derived so directly from a number of Catholic authors:

The ultramonantists are the true and original anti-revolutionaries. They devised the system and have embraced it to the utmost. Conversely, the Protestants have only changed it and adapted it to their own doctrines, not without rejecting much of the content and distorting much that was excellent. This is because the anti-revolutionary state only fits in the Catholic view of the world, but is in conflict with Protestant ideas and principles. [...] it cannot be repeated often enough: if Groen and his fellow believers want to be consistent, they will arrive, surely enough, at ultramonantism.⁵³

Groen was an eclectic politician who drew his arguments from all kinds of places, and at the European level the battle against the expulsion of religion and the church from politics was indeed mainly being fought by Catholic authors. Where Catholics and Protestants agreed, despite their mutual differences, was on their resistance to the 'spirit of the age', which they saw fundamentally as the breaking of holy bonds in favour of individualism.

Individualism had already been identified at the beginning of the nineteenth century by the French essayist, Benjamin Constant, as the core characteristic of the new liberty.⁵⁴ In 1840, his compatriot Tocqueville published the second part of *De la démocratie en Amérique*, in which he endorsed Constant's view but also referred to its downside.⁵⁵ In an aristocratic society, he argued, everyone had a fixed place in a whole, with people below them and above them, before them and after them. For example, one knew which family one was from, and from this one could assume that the course of one's descendants' lives would not be very different from one's own. Everyone therefore had fixed points of reference. Tocqueville, however, thought that democracy brought an end to this: everything was set in motion, the fixed points had disappeared, ancestors and descendants had lost their natural meaning, and social relations had become blurred. Whilst people were the masters of their own fate, at the same time they were no longer connected with anyone or anything beyond themselves. The conclusion was not a happy one: democracy condemned every person to the loneliness of his own heart.⁵⁶ While such an analysis led some to ask what might be done about this, for Groen, the question was whether it was granted to man to withdraw from all bonds.

With his defence of the Secession in 1834, Groen van Prinsterer had already positioned himself somewhat outside the elite consensus, but his trumpet blast against the modern age was *Ongeloof en Revolutie (Unbelief and revolution)*, published in 1847. This book was based on fifteen lectures that he had given in his library for twenty or so friends and acquaintances.⁵⁷ In the book, he made it clear that everything that was not based on submission to God's word led only to disaster. The essence of this disaster lay in the notion that:

everything is subjective and individual. Everyone has their own beliefs, their own opinions, for many so unstable that in their own minds and hearts, with the shifting of circumstances and the changing of the year and the day, they are repeatedly followed by and alternated with other opinions that pass equally rapidly.⁵⁸

This was the hubris that had led man astray from the path taken in the Reformation, that had led to the calamities of the French Revolution and that was still dominant. In rejecting the separation of state and church, Groen was in agreement with Burke, who saw belief as 'the basis of civil society, and the source of all good, and of all comfort'.⁵⁹ He found particular kindred spirits among authors such as Haller, Bonald and Lamennais, even though they were all unfortunately Catholic (although he would later exchange Haller for the Lutheran Stahl). He then suggested that some might consider the Reformation the beginning of a development that had led to the French Revolution. After all, all of the important bonds had been torn then, and man had permitted himself to hold his own beliefs. That was a common view, particularly in the Catholic literature. Groen retorted, however, that this was utterly wrong; the Reformation was, 'so to put it, the *antithesis* of revolution'.⁶⁰

In order to rid himself of the reproach that Protestantism had in fact unleashed modern individualism, he then appeared to seek the essence of Protestantism in the role that it gave to the state. Naturally, in Groen's view, the state was not a treaty of association that was concluded at will on the basis of popular sovereignty. After all, that would inevitably result in a state that interfered with everything, usually through the invocation of all kinds of fine things, such as the 'General Welfare and the Common Good and National Happiness'.⁶¹ In practice, such states treated their citizens as puppets and did not recognize any point of reference beyond the state itself: 'Everything that previously, through its excellence or firmness, used to provide support and a basis for the dutiful upholding of legal rights and liberties, is torn asunder or levelled out'.⁶² On the contrary, the state should be seen as something that had grown historically, as the bearer of sovereignty. Church and state ought not to prevail over one another, but should work together fraternally to resist unbelief and to promote obedience to God's word and His institutions, as had been the case in the old Republic of the United Netherlands. For this reason, he described his views as 'Christian-historical'.

In this general framework, Groen sketched out the problem of individualism, and his views ran parallel with those of Tocqueville, if one understands that what Tocqueville called 'democracy', Groen called 'unbelief'. According to Groen, the breaking of the aristocratic ordering of society, as Tocqueville would describe it, had led to great disorder:

The words Nation and Fatherland are used incessantly. But what is the Nation, and what does the Fatherland mean, when men misunderstand

and destroy the bonds on which the unity of history, Religion, morals, customs and principles between our ancestors and descendants, is based? [...]

... What is the People, once Society has been dissolved? With the disappearance of a higher point of reference, money becomes the only cement in society. The population will be divided, like two powers, into the rich and the poor; the well-off and the proletariat. Even the name *Volksmassa* [the masses] will indicate arrogant contempt. A name that is not incorrect; the ranks and classes are like the bones of Society; and what shall be left, when these have been broken, but a lifeless lump, a mass? A collection of taxpayers and conscripts in the hands of the Government.⁶³

And this decay of state and society would continue until a natural border had been reached:

there is a principle of disintegration that will not cease until everyone has become isolated, loners, *individuals*; a word that could only have been born under the influence of the revolution, and that expresses its destructive character in both naive and powerful fashion.⁶⁴

The more this argument developed, the more pressing the question became of what might be done to ensure that this process ended happily. Groen believed that history was progressive and could not be turned back. In this sense, he was not a reactionary. Nor did he believe that some kind of anti-revolutionary *coup d'état* would be the solution. This was because such a cure would be worse than the complaint; it would be a 'revolution', no less. This meant that he also accepted the existence of the 1848 constitution as a given, just as at the time of the *Aprilbeweging* in 1853, he had not supported the conspiracies to repeal the liberal constitution. In practice, this meant that only one path remained to turn around the process of individualization and to achieve change: namely, the conversion of the nation. This was hindered, however, by the refusal of politics to collaborate, and the Reformed Church's resistance to activism of whatever nature.

In fact, there remained the protest against the 'democratization' of state and society, which he could see only as the continuation of the revolution. For this reason he described his political views as 'anti-revolutionary'. He accepted the state as it had developed to date, but he desired an end to further development. Thus he declared his opposition, for example, to Thorbecke's organic laws, which regulated the position of the municipalities and provinces, on the grounds that in this legislation he could see only a centralizing

state that harmed the legacy of the past.⁶⁵ He was likewise opposed to Thorbecke's attempts to bring poor relief under state supervision, on the grounds that by doing so the state did an injustice to the independence of countless poor-relief institutions and forced its way into an area where it had no business, namely, that of Christian charity: the driving principle should be 'not the *regulation*, but the *eradication of charité légale*'.⁶⁶

Groen became best known, however, for his position on education. If the state could not be moved to adopt a more anti-revolutionary policy, then all attention should be focused on the quality of the nation. The liberals, and a substantial number of the Protestants, wanted children to learn the gospel, but did not want them exposed to theological differences of opinion. This would promote the unity of the nation. Groen was opposed in principle to such a form of public education, in which children would only be presented with a 'Christianity above divisions of belief' in order to avoid mutual sensitivities.⁶⁷ He was extremely vexed by the insipid bourgeois-liberal moral teaching that the nation received, which could only lead further down the path of unbelief and revolution. When it was shown that a more doctrinal orthodoxy in public education could not be forced through, he went to battle, pleading with great effort and passion for the founding of Protestant schools. This point regarding education, in particular, was played out by this frail, often sick man with such unlikely harshness that from the end of the 1850s, he was virtually isolated.⁶⁸ Indeed, the major problem was that the nation was divided by this issue, all the more so given that it would not be possible to withhold any potential rights given to Protestants on confessional education from the Catholics. The Protestant character of the Netherlands would thereby become very weak, if not lost altogether. Even Groen's supporters thought that this would be going too far. The more isolated he became, the more he presented himself as a 'martyr to truth'. Increasingly, he revealed the truth of a remark made by Thorbecke, who had once said that Groen 'thinks himself the chosen mouthpiece of divine truth'. And increasingly, he came to the sad conclusion, three years before his death, that: 'After forty years of fighting and suffering, I have become a *stranger* in my own country'.⁶⁹

Liberal politics

Thorbecke wondered, presumably in the same period in which Groen drew this sombre conclusion, what his place in history would be: 'Perhaps in the future, an historian will pay tribute to me by saying: Thorbecke made

liberalism a governing power in the Netherlands'.⁷⁰ It is easy to fulfil this wish. The question, however, is what was understood by 'liberalism' in this period.

In the first half of the nineteenth century, liberalism was universally seen as a term that designated a meta-political movement; more a question of a philosophy than a political programme. In practice, therefore, 'liberalism' could lead to very different views. This explains why later historians would refer to the 'Proteus-like' character of the liberal movement, and why it was stated that 'the liberalism of some liberals did not lead to much'.⁷¹ This, however, misunderstands a central idea shared by the liberals, that people should not be controlled by others, but by general rules that applied to everyone. Only legislation was able to limit the arbitrariness of the individual. This explains the focus on constitutions; liberalism turned on constitutional thinking.⁷² In a constitution, competencies and responsibilities were divided up carefully, just as in a more general sense a clear distinction had to be made between individual and community, state and society, and also between politics, religion, science and economics. Only by keeping the different areas of life separate could an end be brought to unjust claims to power. Liberalism was thus engaged in the 'art of separation', and liberal freedom was its outcome.⁷³ This key principle could then be elaborated in very different ways, of course. That is the background to the complaint, already heard early in the nineteenth century, that liberalism is 'much more of a motto than a principle, a banner under which supporters of different opinions and demands gather'.⁷⁴ In the Netherlands, Thorbecke brought an end to this vagueness, both through his writings and, where possible, even more so through his political actions.

Thorbecke had studied in Germany and had been deeply engaged in idealistic philosophy. In 1822 he had drawn the conclusion that every man was a completely independent being who could develop his own individuality.⁷⁵ And in stark contrast to Groen, he was convinced that such a process was possible thanks to the Reformation. The Roman Catholic Church appealed to the authority of its traditions, but the Reformation had won freedom in order allow men to investigate the truth – their own truth. Precisely in this way, Protestantism had brought Christianity to a 'more advanced stage of development'. In this sense, Thorbecke saw Groen as having reverted to Catholicism, precisely through his longing for the upholding of the old confession of faith:

This also explains the inclination of present-day so-called Protestantism towards the principle of the Catholic Church; towards a closed, sacrosanct, unchanging set of dogmas and rules, which one need only receive and accept.

The form of the Catholic Church is unity, introversion and stagnation, while that of the Protestant Church is diversity and movement. [...]

The striving for that which is unchanging [...] leads, as soon as it wants to give the temporal an eternal character, to a misunderstanding of both that which is temporal *and* that which is eternal.⁷⁶

Thorbecke preferred not to write more about the eternal, which he considered too personal to dwell upon at length.⁷⁷ By contrast, he had outspoken opinions on the temporal. In a political sense, this was an age in which a process of democratization was taking place, whereby all of the old distinctions were breaking down and everyone had become a 'citizen'. On this, his opinion thus ran parallel to that of Tocqueville.⁷⁸ For Tocqueville, this process led to the disturbing question of how free individuals would be able to break through their 'solitariness' in order to form a society. Thorbecke was less pessimistic, something that stemmed from his belief that this freedom was limited.⁷⁹ This limitation was a consequence of people's increasing mutual dependence due to modernization, meaning that hardly anyone could withdraw from society, or would want to. But in deference to individual freedom, the readiness and ability to form a community should be promoted, or at least not suppressed. That was precisely what had happened in the past, however: citizens had been excluded from politics, although this was the domain in which a community took shape. As a result, they had been unable to form a 'political consciousness'. The central ambition of Thorbecke's constitution of 1848 was thus to arouse this consciousness. When presenting the draft constitution to the king, Thorbecke wrote:

We are convinced, Sire, that in order to be able to preserve the Netherlands and the constitutional monarchy, our institutions require, above all else, a different and infinitely larger degree of support from the citizen than has until now been the case. A *Staatsregeling* cannot create the political feeling and will that are needed for this; but it can suppress them, or arouse and promote them. The [old] Constitution excluded the power of the people; it must now endeavour to admit it into every vein of the State. This will happen both through the extension of the individual freedom to develop and act, and through an honest system of Representation in National, provincial and local affairs.⁸⁰

Ideally, this should lead to universal suffrage: 'citizenship is essentially the right to vote...', Thorbecke had written in 1844, convinced that 'the principle of universal suffrage is part of the political history of our age'.⁸¹

Suffrage should only be limited on the grounds of 'certain personal, and possibly temporary, unfitness'. The right to vote was a right, be it only under certain conditions. Unfit people were those who were dependent on others, those who were fit to vote were so simply because they were independent – which would be demonstrated by their ability to provide for their own maintenance. And here a problem arose, because while political developments were tending towards an extension of citizenship, economic developments seemed to be going in the opposite direction. Thorbecke was conscious of the fact that capital was being concentrated in the hands of the few, meaning that the labour of the majority of the population was well nigh 'fruitless'. Whilst class privileges had been abolished, the population would be once again divided up into a small group of people who were becoming increasingly richer, and a large group that was becoming increasingly poorer. In other words, political liberalism was at odds with economic liberalism.⁸² Thorbecke drew attention to the problem of this antithetical development: 'One promotes equality, and the other makes inequality ever greater'. But he knew of no solution to it, and sighed: 'Who will find the tone that will resolve this dissonance?'⁸³

Thorbecke assumed that the need to take an active part in the activities of the state was a natural human tendency. This proved to be a misconception: in 1854, only half of those who were enfranchised turned out, and two years later it was said in some political circles that the 'test of 1848' had actually failed. Perhaps the franchise was even too wide.⁸⁴ In any case, this did not add to the enthusiasm to extend the right to vote: as a percentage of the adult male population, the number of enfranchised only increased from 11.0 to 11.3 per cent between 1853 and 1870.⁸⁵

Quite apart from the question of whether the enfranchised were fulfilling their important civic duty, there were three groups that did not count as full citizens on the grounds of the independence criterion: workers, women and slaves. If at the time of the Batavian Revolution, there had been discussions, however discreet, as to whether these groups made up part of the political community (such as had been promoted in principle by the concept of 'popular sovereignty'), during this period such voices were almost silenced. To be sure, there was a growing focus on the position of these groups in society, but this was far removed from the notion that they should be given an active role in the state.

Workers would profit from liberal policy in the area of the economy, which would continue from the mid-nineteenth century. The abolition of excise tax on basic necessities – particularly bread – made their life more bearable, and the policy of free trade promoted economic growth and

therefore employment. From the 1860s, the nominal wages of all groups of workers, in both agriculture and industry, would rise sharply; actual wages even doubled between 1853/1855 and 1880, having been almost frozen for centuries. Given the rising cost of living, this had actually meant a declining trend. Now, however, for the first time there was a modest improvement. The rise in the consumption of meat and an increase in the average height of army recruits pointed to this new trend.⁸⁶

At the same time, there was increasing sensitivity to poverty and the living conditions that went with it. In 1853 a doctor wrote a bitter piece on the indifference and aloofness of 'the rich'. They were able to nestle down peacefully in their soft pillows and gather their wives and children around them: after all, they need not fear a typical poor man's disease such as cholera.

And it is true that the poor suffer a lack of everything that constitutes a necessary and natural requirement for life, and suffer this lack by their own fault and largely due to their position; but for the greatest part, due to the negligence and indifference of others, and due to the lack of regulations on their behalf or the bad implementation of these.⁸⁷

This is still strongly based on the idea that poor relief should be organized better, and that poverty should be relieved by charity. Not much later, however, the idea would win ground that the people had a right to a better life. In 1864, in *Idee* 451, Multatuli painted a picture of a people who lacked everything: food, refinement and happiness. According to him, this was the fault of liberalism, which in 1848 had not only made the king 'sacrosanct', but had put ministers in his place who were 'responsible' in name only. In fact, power had been spirited away, and there was no one to whom people could take their legitimate grievances:

There must be a *domicilium citandi*, to whom the People can go to demand justice if they are repressed or neglected (for example, by us). Imagine for a moment that assembly, rebellious shouting, arson and looting were legal and moral things ... in front of *whose* house should the People assemble, in *whose* name should rebellious songs be sung, *whose* windows should be broken, *whose* house looted?

Multatuli had little time for 'parliamentarianism', but if such a system were inevitable, the situation could only be improved by holding truly free elections. The first step must thus be to abolish the 'ridiculous' system of

census suffrage: 'might not someone who is *hungrier* than another also cry out for food?' And why did women not have the vote?

If ministers fritter away the Nation's money so that taxes remain high, *they* also suffer under the pressure. If a revolt occurs as a result of bad governance, or war, or floods, *they* also suffer under these calamities.⁸⁸

He found few supporters with these ideas.

The idea that women should continue to be excluded from the vote was even considered so obvious that it was not recorded in legal texts. It was known that some women did play a background role in politics, although as a spouse or mistress of a sovereign. Indeed, many politicians must have had the thought that the Netherlands would have been better off under Queen Sophia than her husband, the preposterous William III. Sophia van Württemberg corresponded with a number of important European statesmen and scholars, she wrote for the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, she was friends with Mrs Groen van Prinsterer and she had great respect for Thorbecke. But she was an exception, and had very little influence. In general, the democratization of politics in the transition from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century had led to gender lines being drawn even more sharply than before. Moreover, from the beginning of the nineteenth century, the distinction became ideological. The result of this was summed up in 1894 in a manner that was as concise as it was clear in that high-point of bourgeois refinement, the *Meyers Konversation-Lexikon*: 'Dem Manne der Staat, der Frau die Familie'.⁸⁹ According to this, politics was no longer a matter that was mainly pursued by men, but exclusively a matter for men. At the same time, the family became the place where men could find a haven from politics, which was always presented as 'hard' (whereas the family was 'soft').⁹⁰ A distinction was made between intellect and emotion, and the two were divided between the state and the family, men and women. We should allow for the fact that this may have largely concerned ideological questions, however, and that normal life was considerably richer and more varied.⁹¹

The more that a few voices were raised in support of female suffrage, the more their exclusion was legitimized with a variety of detailed reasons.⁹² One important reason was the republican argument that a true citizen must be able to defend liberty by force of arms. In view of the increasing significance given to biology, this could easily be extended to the general weakness of women, both physically and mentally. The first women's associations therefore tended to limit themselves to calling for more space for intellectual interests, although they warned each other that this might lead

to male incomprehension and loneliness.⁹³ Only gradually would the focus be expanded somewhat to include the possibility of pursuing education and even obtaining paid work. However, 'a skilled, highly refined and truly noble woman', who otherwise remained anonymous, wrote in the leading liberal journal *De Gids* in 1850 that this was not about independence – there should be no 'so-called emancipation' – as that would harm the state *and* the household. It was no coincidence that the creator of heaven and earth had made a distinction between men and women. For a woman, then, it was no humiliation to follow and serve, particularly if a woman did not experience this task in life as a slave, but accepted it through a 'conscious choice, out of pure *love*'. 'Liberty and necessity' were thus reconciled at a higher level by means of dialectical reasoning. In practice, this meant that women had to seek socially useful work in the broad area of childrearing, education and poor relief. This view was legitimized with long citations from John Stuart Mill's *Principles of Political Economy* (1849), a book, the writer cautiously remarked, that in any case offered food for thought.⁹⁴ This was thus a progressive view.

The few pleas not to exclude women from the political domain were mostly made during 'constitutional' moments when intensive discussions took place about the foundations of society, such as in the 1790s and the 1840s. Only around 1900 was the natural assumption that the political terrain was reserved for men effectively challenged on a large scale. This may have been largely the result of the growing importance of politics and the status that was linked to it. As a result, the exclusion of women became increasingly painful. The other side of this argument is that in the first half of the nineteenth century, politics still had only limited meaning as the moral heart of society and was not yet capable of an 'authoritative allocation of values', and thus had less meaning at this point than it would later gain.⁹⁵

And should politics have more grandiose ambitions, then it was entrusted to Multatuli to criticize them. He wondered, for example, what actually was the nature of the fundamental change that had been established first in the 1798 constitution and then in the constitution of 1848?

In the place of noblemen and marquises, we have schoolmasters and shopkeepers; pedantic rags instead of shiny vanity; a shopkeeper's spirit instead of prejudice of birth; farmers' pride instead of noble pride; rusty copper instead of gilt.⁹⁶

Everyday life should not allow itself to be supplanted by politics: 'The Human being comes before the citizen'.⁹⁷

Women did, however, form part of the political culture. If questions arose that were associated with deep emotions, then the contribution of women was even welcome. In the protests against the restoration of the episcopal hierarchy in 1853, for example, it was stated emphatically that women had also signed the petition for the king. This was felt to improve the quality of the petition, even though this was because women were outstanding representatives of *real* life, bearers of what has been called 'the politics of sense and sensibility'.⁹⁸ They tended to get some space in civil society, the ground between the 'citizen' and the 'human being'. This was also shown by their active contribution on an issue that, besides alcohol abuse, was perhaps the greatest shame of civilized nations: slavery. The discussion about this issue only got going in the Netherlands at a late stage, however, and would not be characterized by the same intensity found in England or France.⁹⁹

In 1854 there were around 60,000 slaves living in the Dutch colonies: more than 38,000 in Suriname, 10,000 in the Antilles and around 12,000 in the East Indies.¹⁰⁰ Under pressure from England, the slave trade was banned in 1814; parliament decided to abolish slave labour in the East Indies in 1859, and a similar decision on slavery followed for the West Indies in 1862.¹⁰¹ Accordingly, a transition period of ten years was agreed, whereby slaves remained under government supervision while they were educated as citizens. Slave owners received compensation, financed by the proceeds of the cultivation system.

While some sympathy for emancipation had already been shown during the constitutional phase of the 1840s, the pressure to abolish slavery in practice only became more intense in the course of the 1850s, largely stimulated by English activists.¹⁰² Women made a key contribution to the various associations that exposed slavery as fundamentally in conflict with humanity. They did so by describing in detail the suffering and death of slaves, whereby 'compassion' was evoked and intervention became a moral duty. The classic example of a 'humanitarian narrative' such as this was Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin or Life among the Lowly*, published in 1852 and translated into Dutch in the same year.¹⁰³ Inspired by this book, in 1854 Baron van Hoëvell wrote an outraged account of the terrible treatment of slaves in Suriname.

The Netherlands is a Christian country – but it condemns thousands of its children, born under its flag and entrusted to its protection, to a situation that is more calamitous than that of the fate of a brute creature. The entire people trembles in fear when the smallest assault is made

on their religion [a reference to the *Aprilbeweging*] – but they are not ashamed to allow, on their authority, these people to be debased to the lowest level of material and moral misery. Every Sunday their temples echo to prayers and hymns to the king of all eternity – but every day, in part of their [colonial] possessions, to God's mercy rise the sighs and cries of distress, the screams of despair of men and women who, innocent before the moral judge, are tortured at the tyrant's hands.¹⁰⁴

The greatest fame in this genre would be achieved by Multatuli for *Max Havelaar: Or the Coffee Auctions of the Dutch Trading Company* (1860), in which he turned not so much on slavery, but more generally against the extortion and exploitation of the native population of Java under the cultivation system. When he wanted to give his acquaintances a good picture of the content of the book, just before it was published, he wrote: 'I've thought of a comparison that will give you a sense of its drift. It is a *protest* against our position, just like *Uncle Tom's Cabin* against Slavery'.¹⁰⁵

At such moments, in which politics touched upon a sense of natural justice or the meaning of life, politics was less an exclusively male affair and there was more room for visible female involvement. Multatuli would not rank among the great contrarians of his age if he had not pursued this to absurd lengths. For example, he played with the notion of liberating the colonial empire in Asia with a legion of girls and women, thereby bringing an end to all injustice in 'Insulinde'.¹⁰⁶

But this link between female, deeply human qualities and political issues proved to be fragile. Around 1870, women lost their role of honour as a kind of external conscience.¹⁰⁷ To a significant extent, this was a consequence of the fact that 'female' subjects were also slowly gaining a place in politics. In this process, professional politicians would also adopt a more emotional tone and style, and in this sense, too, would make politics less 'male'.

Representation

The *Staatsregeling* of 1798 had determined that: 'The Representative Body is that which represents the entire People...' (Article 30). In 1814, this was formulated concisely and powerfully as: 'The States General represents the entirety of the Dutch people'. This provision had not been changed in 1848 and had been kept to this day.¹⁰⁸ Its meaning, however, was susceptible to major changes over time. In 1798, the people had been sovereign; in 1814, the

king; and in 1848, Thorbecke had taken some of the king's sovereignty away and granted some of it to the States General. This shows that the concept of 'representation' was a topic of constant debate.

In order to clarify a number of views on representation, it is obvious that we should take a look at England, which was the country that provided such an enviable example. Already in the eighteenth century, Burke had made his famous statement that parliament should not be seen as a 'congress of ambassadors from different and hostile interests'.¹⁰⁹ The moment that an MP entered Westminster, he joined a body that deliberated upon the common interests of the whole country. Someone who had been elected was therefore no longer seen as promoting specific interests or the interests of their own constituency. That led to the question of whether parliament was composed in such a way that every interest in the country formed part of its deliberations. The colonists in the United States did not feel represented, in any case. Furthermore, like everywhere else, women and children were excluded, Catholics were only given the right to vote in 1829 and Jews in 1858. The number of MPs that some rapidly growing industrial towns were allowed to elect was not proportional to the size of their populations or their socio-economic interests, quite aside from the disproportionate enfranchisement of the different social layers of the population. This system was defended, however, on both principled and pragmatic grounds. The pragmatic defence was the idea that all interests, in some way or other, as if led by an 'invisible hand', would be championed by someone in parliament. The principled defence took the form of the idea that it was not an MP's task to start from their own interests, but, conversely, to promote the common interest. This implied, for example, that they would also take into account the interests of people who had not voted for them, as well as the interests of constituencies other than their own. This was the principle of 'virtual representation'. Parliament as a whole was not a representation *of* the people, but *for* the people.

In the 1850s, this principle was rejected by John Stuart Mill and others. It was expecting a great deal of MPs, they argued, to demand that they only concern themselves with abstract notions of the common interest. Moreover, in the existing electoral system, only a very small minority of people had a direct link with an MP. That meant that one vote could count considerably more than another: if someone in a constituency had voted for the loser, his influence was effectively lost. This lay behind the plea for a new principle, that of 'personal representation': every voter must be able to feel directly represented in Parliament. This would also enable minorities to be heard in Westminster. After all, true democracy required a diversity

of opinion, expounded for the nation. Parliament should not be an image of the people, but a true reflection of them; not a painting, but a photograph.¹¹⁰

A few compelling arguments were added to this principle. An electoral system based on 'personal representation' would also offer independent candidates more opportunities to acquire seats in the House of Commons. This would provide a counterweight to the growing influence of political parties, which had an interest in not having too many independent men come onto the green benches. Moreover, one could expect that as the right to vote was extended to more people, the average voter would increasingly be less able in an intellectual, and perhaps even in a moral, sense. In *Considerations on Representative Government* (1861), Mill wrote that in the United States, it could be seen that 'collective mediocrity' was increasing at the cost of 'superior intellects and characters'.¹¹¹ The quality of democracy would only be guaranteed if more intellectuals were to enter the House of Commons, and this would only be possible by means of a transition to a form of 'personal representation'.¹¹²

There were various objections to these arguments, but they usually contained the primary argument that every alternative was much more complicated than the existing system, and the secondary argument that it was no coincidence that the British Parliament was renowned throughout the world, and fiddling with how it came about would not improve it. The journalist Bagehot asserted, in a view spurious although not incorrect, that intellectuals would not make better decisions *per se* than the political class that was currently in power. Intellectuals, for example, were not known for their collective ability to agree on something within a reasonable period of time. He thus predicted that the most important result of this would actually be unstable governments.¹¹³ Warm supporters of the new party organizations noted coolly that a majority was a majority for a reason: it was elected to bring something about, and had a right to the 'fruits of victory'. A minority would be unable to do this, and would not even rightfully be allowed to prevent it.¹¹⁴ Finally, the argument was made that the well-bred minority that was currently so concerned about the approaching mass of voters might better invest their hopes in gaining some kind of guaranteed representation. The actual protection of the rights of a minority benefited much more from preserving a political culture in a broad sense, consisting of

the sense of fair-play, the instinct of moderation, the traditional habit of never pushing a victory to extremes, the independent spirit with a Legislature of unpaid members...¹¹⁵

In the Netherlands, the constitution of 1848 had taken sovereignty away from the king, at least for a large part. Where sovereignty then lay in practice was unclear – which also meant that people did not know where the windows were to be smashed, as Multatuli had pithily put it. Thorbecke had no time for popular sovereignty, and thus had little choice other than to lay a heavy responsibility on the representative of the people:

The representative of the people may not suppose that he expresses the actual will of the people or the actual mind of the people of the day; but that which the nation would want, if what it wanted were just and good. In this sense, he must attempt to be a man of the people, an organ of national understanding and the national will; and in this sense, the national will is *sovereign*.¹¹⁶

Reading these words carefully, it is clear that the task of parliament, in Thorbecke's view, was to decide on what was 'good and just'; and so long as it did this, it could be considered sovereign. But this quality was thus only achieved under certain conditions. Gradually, however, parliament would try to escape from these constraints and consider itself the 'highest power in the country'; or, as Thorbecke described it, the 'Acropolis of our Fatherland'.¹¹⁷

The House of Representatives

Parliamentary representation was initially conceived as 'virtual representation'. In 1865 an authoritative author, De Bosch Kemper, formulated this as follows:

The representative body should not, like a daguerreotype, reflect the whole image of the people with all its selfish and superficial one-sidedness, but should be a gathering of the most noble and the most able.¹¹⁸

There was a certain style associated with this, both in terms of the mutual relations between representatives and in the nature of the debates. Parliamentarians could differ in their opinions, of course, but these differences should not become magnified, and they should refer as little as possible to dividing lines in society. After all, this would harm the notion that parliament as a whole represented the 'national will'. Gradually, however, the idea

gained hold that there could be significant differences of opinion regarding what this 'will' actually implied. The phenomenon of the 'opposition' gained a regular place in politics during this period.¹¹⁹ And, after some hesitation, this opportunity was seized with enthusiasm.

Until 1848 the MPs had naturally assumed a measured tone, and had satisfied all the conditions required by a society that was based on class. An improper word could rapidly become an insult. This brake was cautiously loosened a little. MPs began to refer to the space that they had in which to speak 'frankly'; but the way in which this happened had to be 'parliamentary'. Above all, a debate should avoid becoming 'personal', and arguments had to be clearly distinguished from emotions. This style was also imparted emphatically to newcomers in parliament, with great success. The parliamentary history of the Netherlands contains very few wild scenes. Anyone looking for excitement in the *Handelingen van de Tweede Kamer* (*Proceedings of the House of Representatives*) has to make do with one threatened duel in November 1854 (which was actually reduced to a misunderstanding by the duellers' Seconds outside the House, and thus did not go ahead).¹²⁰ It was therefore said, with satisfaction, that things were a lot more peaceful in the Binnenhof than in Paris, let alone that scenes might occur such as took place in Australia, 'where members of the people's representation make their feelings felt with the power of the fist or the heel'; or in America, 'where now and then they bring out a revolver'.¹²¹ The Dutch parliament always came out of such comparisons well, although at the same time, one does sense a longing for just a little more excitement.

Within this framework, however, Groen in particular pushed the limits of what was considered to be appropriate. While Groen was a very well-mannered man who always acted calmly in public and never spoke with a raised voice, at the same time he had a passionate character:

He always restrained himself, and he had to, because within him he smouldered or he boiled; he had an intensity of love and hate that, with less restraint, would have smothered the flames.

Although he was able to restrain himself when it came to form, this did not detract from the fact that when it came to content, he could express himself uncommonly harshly, switching effortlessly from irony to sarcasm: 'tormenting, hurtful, destructive'.¹²² In response Buys, a liberal commentator in *De Gids*, expressed himself more formally than was customary in order to criticize this:

Perhaps it is an indication that we, too, make too little distinction between speaking about people so far as their political principles are concerned, and a personal affront, when we candidly declare that the attack on the last minister of reformed worship was indelicate and undeserved; more a proof of prickly politeness than an element of the *παρρησία* [frankness] that is undoubtedly needed for parliamentary discussions.¹²³

The limits had thus been exceeded. Worse still, Groen often sought his power in 'gibes and irony', which were difficult to respond to and thus silenced debate.¹²⁴ Moreover, he withdrew from the debate when criticized, always maintaining that he was misunderstood. And this led to the following liberal verdict:

An excellent leader of well-organized guerrilla bands, no one can force him to abandon the field, but at the same time he is unable to win an inch of ground from the opposition party...¹²⁵

While Groen, unlike Thorbecke, was unable to realize his ideals, he also acted at the very least in a way that was contrary to the spirit of the constitution, especially by referring to the bond between the elector and the elected.¹²⁶ Thorbecke rejected the notion of a direct bond between the two. The principle was that of 'a freely elected people's representation, independently deciding in accordance with their own insight and judgement, without any bond with the voters'.¹²⁷ By contrast, Groen believed that there should be a harmony of views between the electors and the elected. This also explains his demand that candidates disclose their 'principles' prior to elections, something that went down entirely the wrong way with liberals. Fruin 'candidly' let it be known that this was at odds with 'political morality'. After all, it breached the intention of the constitution, which was not to bring people with specific convictions into parliament, but those of quality and character:

I wish, of course, that the statesmen that I help to bring to the House and to government have a sound understanding of political economy and government. But no less do I wish that they should be skilful and competent, and above all that they should be virtuous, and of an honest and true character. It is precisely in this that I see a great danger for every constitutional government, that the parties tend to be more attached to a *shibboleth* than to political morality, and that they pay more heed to the candidate's vote than to their character.¹²⁸

That would lead to a situation such as that in France, a country from which little good came. Buys, the leading political commentator of *De Gids*, agreed with Fruin. He first praised Groen for his contribution to augmenting parliament's authority, even if to this end he had used weapons that were not only new, but also 'forbidden'. The link that he drew between the elector and the elected, however, went too far.

Not satisfied with the emancipation of parliament, Mr. Groen – more than anyone, I believe – has also advocated the emancipation of the electorate; yes, even the people who stand behind the voters.¹²⁹

The liberals managed to make a subtle distinction between 'principles' and 'sound concepts'. They condemned the first as the expression of a divisive politics, and celebrated the second as the expression of personal character.¹³⁰ In this way, the Acropolis towered very high above the nation.

As photography became the norm, there was a parallel tendency to require that parliament provide as true a possible reflection of the various views in the country.¹³¹ This meant that the foundations of representation shifted slowly from 'virtual' to 'personal representation'. 'Personal representation' can be interpreted in various ways, and in the Netherlands it led to the idea that parliament should represent as many of the various political and philosophical 'outlooks' in society as possible. As a consequence, parliament was no longer an institution in which interests were weighed against each other, but increasingly became a stage on which principles were interpreted. This was closely connected with the construction of a durable bond between the elector and the elected.

Until deep into the nineteenth century, the electorate was led to a large extent by what is known as the 'politics of rank' or the 'politics of deference'. Voting was not so much a process of electing as of showing respect, and then preferably to a co-religionist. Candidates withdrew their candidature if they seemed likely to lose; after all, this would be a loss of honour. Voters allowed their voting behaviour to be determined by local dignitaries or by electoral agents who cleaned up the dirty work. Often candidates would present it as an honour *not* to show themselves in their constituency the evening before an election, so as to make it as clear as possible that they had done nothing to be elected, let alone tied themselves to a particular programme. In this way, elections took place in more of a religious-social than a political-ideological context, and were more an expression of respect for local or regional elites than concrete political convictions.¹³² The advance of principled politics was at odds with this. Not

only were candidates now forced to declare their views beforehand, but the enfranchised also interfered more in politics than had been intended. Moreover, principles gave rise to passions that could not be budged, that could hardly be compromised with, and that undermined the business-like weighing up of interests. Although this advance would later be seen as an increase in democracy, at the time many saw it as a major obstacle to the election of competent people's representatives, and a furthering of the divisions within the nation state.¹³³

It was chiefly Groen van Prinsterer who, in his battle with Thorbecke about the soul of the nation state, not only expressed the principle of an opposition in the most systematic way, but also the importance of principles and, on this basis, of a more direct bond with the voters (and even 'the people' who stood behind them) than the liberals had either foreseen or desired.

This complex of shifting relations was visible in the House of Representatives. Initially, where MPs sat – to the left or right of the Speaker – carried no political meaning.¹³⁴ They simply chose a place, relatively arbitrarily. According to the recollections of a parliamentary stenographer, the 'ideological' choice of a seat was a process that began in 1849 and was only completed in 1879.¹³⁵

This slow reordering also made it clear that some identification with one's own provincial interests was supplanted by the 'nationalization' of the political system.¹³⁶ Slowly but surely, representatives who had initially sat together because they came from the same region or the same province grouped together on a scale from progressive to conservative. 'Progressive', though, chiefly meant that the constitution of 1848 was accepted with great approval, that full justice should be done to a minister's duty of accountability to parliament, and that the separation of church and state should be maintained. Conservatives were more attached to a greater political role for the king and greater powers for provincial and local government. They wanted to retain a degree of monarchical authority and were opposed to the 'centralization' of the modern state. Church and state should continue to be separate, to be sure, but this should not be allowed to harm the Christian character of the state and nation. To the extent that the conservatives were Protestants, this meant that they believed that Protestantism had a historic right to ascendancy.

But if the division between progressives and conservatives was the main way of distinguishing between MPs, belief was also an important factor. The liberals initially appeared able to put their stamp on politics and thereby divide parliament into progressives and conservatives; religion played no

role in this. In the course of the 1860s, however, a number of politicians would paint such a classification as 'spurious': they wanted a division between liberals on the one hand and confessional representatives on the other. The differences of opinion between Catholics and Protestants within the confessional block complicated this, all the more given that these differences were felt very strongly within the population, as the *Aprilbeweging* had made clear. In any case, this battle for the mainstay of the political order – the constitution or religion – ultimately led to a concentration of MPs in four political families: liberals, conservatives, anti-revolutionaries and Catholics.

Two distinctive phenomena emerged in the process of this concentration. First, these families were characterized by their overall lack of ideological exertion. In Dutch political culture there was a remarkable scarcity of political-theoretical views of any substance and depth; Groen was an exception in this sense. Politicians also seemed to have little need for such views. Anyone who wished to get involved in politics in the nineteenth century could read Tocqueville or Mill, but there was little use in doing so. It was much more useful to keep abreast of encyclicals from the Vatican and, even more, of the almost inimitable differences of opinion in Protestant circles. A distinctive element of Dutch politics emerged in this period, namely that politics is partly the continuation of religious differences and theological debates. And again, this added to the increasingly 'ideological character' of political debate; heaven weighed heavily upon the Binnenhof.

A second phenomenon was the dying out of the conservatives. There were still MPs with very conservative views, of course, but the battle for the main axis of politics – the constitution or religion – left them no space for a distinctive position. Groen made a key contribution here, by painting everyone who did not agree with him as a 'liberal': in his view, anyone who did not really accept the faith was an irrevocable 'Jacobin and Radical', or well on the way to being one.¹³⁷ His fellow Protestants were also not spared, in line with the adage 'he who is not with me is against me'. His success in appointing himself as the most pure representative of 'Protestant politics' made it difficult for conservatives to appeal to their Christian background to legitimize their views. On the Catholic side, from the 1860s the Catholic electorate mainly sent conservatives to the House of Representatives, encouraged by the Vatican and their own episcopate. These men mainly saw themselves more as Catholics, however, than as conservatives. In this way, the remaining old-fashioned conservatives had no choice but to join the confessional families, or to establish themselves on the right wing

of the liberals. And again, this resulted in a constant tension in the two confessional families between a progressive and a conservative 'wing'. In the liberal family, this led to the question of how liberalism still differed from conservatism. This difference had been substantial in 1848, but it had since been blurred by the arrival of more conservative representatives in the liberal ranks. This led to discomfort; a radical liberal who entered the House of Representatives for the first time in 1869, for example, was struck by the 'small difference in ideas' prevailing there. Resolutely, he decided that 'the whole atmosphere of the House was conservative through and through, on both sides...'¹³⁸ Five years later, the press reported on how a politician had been asked by an electoral association to 'explain his political opinions in more detail'. The good man had honestly replied that he was both a liberal-conservative and a conservative-liberal. As the commentator in *De Gids* wrote, this reply had not satisfied anyone, as the words 'liberal' and 'conservative' did not mean anything any more.¹³⁹ The emergence of confessional political families thus also had important consequences for the non-confessional side. And a new classification therefore slowly emerged: secularists were described as 'free-thinking' or 'left-wing', and confessionals as 'conservative' or 'right-wing'.

This development meant that around 1870, while the liberal, Protestant and Catholic political families doubtless still existed, within the families there was great uncertainty, if not discord, on a large number of practical issues. What view should Protestants have on conscription, or Catholics on the construction of a railway network, or liberals on the introduction of income tax? In the liberal political culture of '1848' – in theory, at any rate – this had been clearly regulated: independent men would hold a rational debate on the matter and finally make a decision in the national interest. These men began to lose that kind of independence, however, and with this came the need to tie together all of these practical subjects in an ideological sense, to have opinions and views derive as naturally as possible from 'principles', and to summarize them in programmes.

The liberal commentator in *De Gids* observed this process and made another attempt to stop it. Nowhere had a consistent political programme been developed that was based on a meta-political religion or ideology and all in all, this would be virtually impossible.

In my opinion, the great error to date has been the following: that people started from the notion that general political principles, whether liberal or conservative, had to be bound to particular ideas relating to all major social reforms; so that one would only have to know which political

principle someone held in order to know their ideas concerning all those major reforms, whatever they might be. No assumption could be more wrong; experience repeatedly teaches us so.¹⁴⁰

This voice, however, slowly became a voice in the wilderness. Thorbecke died in 1872, Groen van Prinsterer in 1876; and with this came an end to the political culture that they had shaped since 1848. The new political culture would be built on programmes, parties and party leaders.

4. Following the American Example

1879: The Political Party

On a pleasant evening in April 1869 a pastor from Utrecht, Abraham Kuyper, gave a lecture in the Odéon building on the Singel canal in Amsterdam entitled *Eenvormigheid, de vloek van het moderne leven* (*Uniformity, the curse of modern life*). The title must have provoked amazement, because the idea that everything increasingly resembled everything else was by no means generally accepted. The prevailing view was one that until then had been elaborated in most detail by the English liberal philosopher, Spencer. Inspired by evolutionary theory, he had asserted that on the contrary, everything was becoming more varied over time.¹ The idea that uniformity was increasing was not completely new, though; in a novel of 1866, for instance, Allard Pierson had referred in passing to 'the deadly uniformity to which we are doomed by modern civilization'.² Most characteristically, this opinion was linked to the thought that very little could be done about it: the wave of modernization could not be stopped. And it was precisely on this point that Kuyper would put forward an entirely different view. He had already complained about the 'all-levelling life of society',³ but in his Odéon lecture, he let rip: uniformity was a curse of which the Netherlands, inspired by history and naturally with God's blessing, should rid itself.

It was a fine lecture, in which the French Revolution was blamed for systematically undermining all that was familiar, all that was typical, and along with this, personal individuality as well. The effects of the revolutionary slogan 'one and indivisible' were to be seen everywhere: old Dutch towns were losing their variety, which had grown organically over time, by constructing boring, straight streets and building large, uniform blocks of housing; the natural difference between young and old had been erased, young people were acting like old people – 'our children are no longer children' – while old people were playing at 'jeune garçon'; women were behaving like men and men were becoming effeminate; moreover, all men dressed the same everywhere, and whereas women's clothes were more varied, Paris nevertheless dictated the fashions; the language had been watered down and corrupted, and was becoming shoddy and standardized. A comparable process could be seen in social relations, whereby sections of society were becoming less diverse. Life had become impossible for honest tradesmen and hard-working businessmen for example, and society now consisted only of two layers, with a 'pitiful contrast between want and

affluence'. Even belief had been undermined by the wretched striving for a form of Christianity that was 'above differences in belief'. All this could lead only to a loss of character and, by extension, of national identity: we were becoming citizens of the world, 'we want to be accomplished children of our age'. It was all at odds with nature itself, which was characterized by 'the harmony of diversity', just as God's creation was a constant testament to 'the most infinite variety, the never-ending richness of diversity'.

Up to this point, despite all the rhetorical exaggeration, it was all recognizable, reasonable, and not lacking in humour even. But the more the examples mounted up, the more the question arose as to whether something could be done about it. To be able to answer this question, Kuyper looked back beyond the French Revolution. He told his audience – 'however daring it might seem' – that the church, in particular, was to blame for the situation: the church had prepared the ground for 'the domination of uniformity'. He was referring here to the Catholic Church, of course, which had enforced uniformity through violence and the inquisition:

Her belief had to be uniform, her governance had to be uniform, her worship had to be uniform, *one* language had to be used to speak her word in all parts of the world, *one* arrangement and form she gave to life everywhere.⁴

The Reformation had been a liberation in this respect, particularly because it entailed the replacement of the universal church with a 'multiplicity of forms' in the different national churches. This was not sufficient, however, because true freedom, *individual* resistance, the right to *character*, and thereby the freedom to live, is also being suppressed in our Reformed churches'. Kuyper hit a problem here, because did this analysis not imply that a church should leave its members free to determine the manner in which they professed the faith? Should churches thus allow 'doctrinal freedom', whereby every Christian would be completely free to determine individually what he wished to believe? That was impossible, because advocating this would mean 'abolishing the essence of the church'. A synthesis thus had to be found between liberty and authority, and he articulated this dialectical leap as follows:

One should not coerce or seek to unite on things where no unity exists in life. If there are those who, out of good will, agree with one another, let them join together and bravely profess the belief in their hearts; but then let the unity they express not exceed that which actually exists in

their community. Let groups and circles thus unite in full autonomy, those who know what they want, know what they profess, and for whom there exists unity in life and not unity in name.⁵

However unclear this might sound, his listeners must have immediately understood the practical implications: he was making a contrast between 'free parish life' and the power of the governance of the existing Reformed Church. That is to say, seen in a wider context than that of the division of power between the national church administration and local parishes, here Kuyper was asserting the principle of free association. Indeed, only this would make it possible to establish, 'through freely chosen relations, the true communion of souls'. Only by following this course would the Netherlands rid itself of the curse of modernity.

Having imparted the core of his message, the speaker could keep it brief when considering what all this meant for the struggles of the 'Christian-historical outlook' in the political arena:

[The movement's] duty is to preserve a form of autonomy for individuals, towns and provinces that is historical, not random, and that is in line with the laws of life, against all-uniformizing centralism.⁶

The electoral law would have to be changed so that delegates would no longer represent geographical districts, but 'districts of souls'. This would finally allow minorities to be represented, which would make it possible to break the government's monopoly on education. Whereas this was a substantial goal, more generally, an orthodox-Protestant politics should function as the salt of the earth:

But above all, 'each life has its own mould' is the energetic demand with which it fights the uniformity of the modern state; it shuns every alliance with different souls, every amalgamation, with whomever or whichever side it might be; always remains itself and wears its own colours proudly and freely.⁷

It was time to draw things to a close. In increasingly lyrical fashion, Kuyper argued that freedom was essentially freedom of belief. Holland had won this freedom in the Eighty Years' War, under the leadership of the House of Orange. The country had thereby been entrusted with an inheritance that, even though it no longer governed the world's oceans, was a blessing for the 'whole of humanity'. But then Holland did have to stay devout:

‘without religion, there can be no patriotism’. If ‘our nation’ did not wish to disappear, then ‘you should seek help where our forefathers sought it, and as free men bow down to no-one, but kneel down in prayer and teach your children to bow before God of our fathers’.⁸

Kuyper thereby distanced himself from the dominant political culture in almost every respect. Here, everything that the liberals had separated – especially politics and religion – was brought back together again. While the separation of church and state, which had been enshrined definitively in the constitution of 1848, was indeed maintained, personal belief and institutionalized religion were connected in a new way. To this end, use was made of a form that had made such an impression on Tocqueville in the United States: the association of free citizens. By combining the strengths of the faithful, civil society could induce the state to change its course. This in itself was already an important development, although it brought the risk that the nation state would be divided. The liberals had achieved a certain degree of homogeneity in this respect, by forging citizens into one unit at the political level: in principle, at least, all were equal citizens, united in a Christianity that was above differences of belief. Kuyper called upon the Protestants to appoint themselves the heirs, as it were, to the people who had won freedom in the Reformation and the Eighty Years’ War. This saw the emergence of the contours of a hard dividing line in the nation. Accordingly, the political culture – considered in a broad sense – would change significantly from the end of the 1860s. And Kuyper was responsible for this like no other.

Kuyper, who had earned 150 guilders for his lecture at the Odéon, became the most important politician of the new generation after that of Thorbecke and Groen.⁹ Perhaps this was not so much because he managed to acquire a powerbase by founding a newspaper (1872), a political party (1879), a university (1886) and a new church (1886), but because he was one of the few figures in Dutch history to split the country into supporters and opponents, both through the content of his political views and the heavy-handedness with which he acted in order to realize them. If that was not unusual in neighbouring countries – think of Guizot, Gladstone and Bismarck – this was a rare quality in the Netherlands and one that, until this point, had only been attained by Thorbecke. Just as the latter had done, Kuyper would manage to force his opponents to adapt to a new political culture.

As *Eenvormigheid* indeed made clear, Kuyper was a man of conservative views; the examples that he gave of the uniformity of modernity bear witness to this. Kuyper was no reactionary, however, but a modern conservative. In

Eenvormigheid, Burke's voice could always be heard in the background. This was by no means strange, because it was precisely in this period that Kuyper read everything by the English writer and politician that he could get hold of. Kuyper shared his opinion that it was futile to want to turn back the course of history, to return to a previous kind of society. That was to 'want the impossible! Because the past does not return; all turning back to past times is nonsensical: it is doomed from the start, for it misunderstands the rights of the present'.¹⁰ Least of all did this mean that every change should be agreed to beforehand. Burke's conservatism was above all one great plea for the process of change to be controlled, to allow it to flow organically out of the past, to moderate its effects and above all: to resist the idea that people could devise a better society, that an ideal could simply be put into practice. Indeed, this was hubris, overconfidence, a misunderstanding of history and God's infinite wisdom, and would only lead to disaster, as the French Revolution had shown.¹¹ The problem with this view was that it was very difficult for conservatism to develop its own political programme, to put into words what society should be like and to offer a representation of it. After all, it would then fall into the trap that had previously been dug for liberalism and for its even more dangerous child, socialism. This was the problem that Groen van Prinsterer had been unable to solve. He had therefore always refused to provide a political programme, despite urgent calls for him to do so.

Conservatism had to contend with yet another problem. In the Netherlands, conservatives had never wanted to abandon the idea that the unity of the nation would be promoted by having a national system of education, divided on the grounds of class but not on the grounds of religious conviction: all children should be brought up in a 'Christianity above divisions of belief'. According to Groen, however, such an upbringing would be neither national nor Christian, and he gradually came to believe that the true faith must be taught at 'special schools', founded by parents. The government should only be allowed to provide education in regions where no private confessional education was available, and this public education should be completely neutral. No reference should be made to the Bible, and it would also be better to avoid covering the history of the nation. Conservatives thought that this was going too far, meaning that Groen found little electoral support among the conservative elite. Nevertheless, his actions had a significant impact, because his critique of the conservatives – whom he painted as dithering and untrustworthy, given their refusal to accept the implications of a truly Christian conviction – undermined faith in conservatism. As a result, two kinds of conservatism emerged: a secular

type that put the homogeneity of the nation first, and a religious type that wanted to spread a full, unabridged version of God's word. In the *Aprilbeweging* of 1853, a common aversion to Thorbecke had temporarily brought them together, but the two forms of conservatism subsequently made life impossible for each other. This explains to a significant degree why a conservative political party did not emerge in the Netherlands, a country that was otherwise characterized in all kinds of respects by a conservative culture.

Then there was the fact that the differences between the secular conservatives and the liberals were no longer very clear. Having achieved the most important points in their programme – a modern constitution and free trade – the liberals were unsure as to where to go next. Large numbers of conservatives subsequently joined the liberal ranks, with the result that the discussion in parliament increasingly seemed to resemble 'a vain struggle between individuals'. The liberal constitutional lawyer, Buys, pointed out in *De Gids* that the difference between the liberals and the conservatives was largely fictional:

It is the fiction – if one can use such an image, without being disrespectful – of many a wine list in large and small hotels: a great variety of brands for the same content. The landlord has a drawer full of labels, but in his cellars there is only one kind of red wine: good, ordinary, unadulterated Bordeaux.¹²

In other countries, too, it was claimed that the distinction between the liberals and the conservatives was becoming blurred. In this respect, one recalls Mill's remark that it would be good if the conservatives were to vote consistently for everything that was conservative, and the liberals for everything that was liberal.¹³

In his attempts to shape a national political-religious movement, Kuyper was therefore unable to build on established foundations in the political order, such as well-organized electoral associations, for example, or a conservative faction in parliament, as Groen had half-heartedly and vainly tried to do. He would take another direction: that of founding a political party. But this was an extremely complex ambition, both in theory and in practice. Namely, it meant that between the individual and the state – where nothing had been permitted since the French Revolution – a new phenomenon had to be introduced into the political culture: the political party, an organization that was rooted in civil society but that needed also to secure a place in the political order.

The association of citizens

Traditionally, the formation of political parties had had a bad press. People formed associations in civil society; they established 'ties of affection', and thereby expressed a 'sense of union'. Much good could come of this, but at the same time, it was usually linked with animosity regarding those who did not belong or were not admitted to such a 'union' – for inclusion implied exclusion.¹⁴ This phenomenon only became risky, however, if it assumed a political form, and then that of 'factions'. Indeed, then it was no longer about wise deliberation on the common good, but a struggle between groups that clung to their own interests and points of view. In this way, the community would be divided by disputes and disharmony, and this would become all the worse because factions, like weeds, were almost impossible to get rid of once they existed.¹⁵ Only Burke, in 1770, offered a more favourable perspective on party formation. According to him, a party entailed the association of people who on the whole agreed about how to serve the common good.¹⁶ Moreover, this could have the advantage that a politician would not stubbornly hang on to his own point of view, but would conform to the opinion of a larger group that, in principle, was of the same mind.

In the detailed discussion about the organization of the polity in the United States, however, attempts were generally made to counter the formation of parties, despite the recognition that, given human nature, the process was probably inevitable. Moreover, opposing the formation of parties would in itself undermine freedom, so it was better to reconcile oneself to the inevitable. Only in the first decades of the nineteenth century would people become more open to the notion of political parties. The comforting thought slowly gained ground that parties kept an eye on each other, channelled the enormous diversity of views and opinions into clear choices, and in general, informed – if not shaped – public opinion. This transition from distrust to appreciation was linked to the tradition of tolerance that the Protestants had managed to establish in the religious sphere.¹⁷ The idea could subsequently develop in the political sphere that society even benefits from a certain difference of opinion, and that 'pluralism' might be an essential characteristic of a 'democracy'.

In the United States, moreover, the conviction prevailed that there was an important correction mechanism to counter the great risk of democracy, namely, the rule of an ignorant and tyrannical majority. This was Tocqueville's major contribution to the debate about democracy: the discovery of the importance of 'association'. During his journey through America, he had been astonished to hear that 100,000 people had publicly pledged to

give up liquor henceforth. Whilst amused by this, he also wondered why people who were so deeply in favour of temperance did not simply drink water at home.¹⁸ After some time, he realized that this fitted into a much wider pattern: Americans saw themselves as individuals who were only able to change something in the state or society if they joined forces.¹⁹ This was the other side of the democratic revolution, which had toppled the natural advocates and representatives of the past – read: the aristocracy – leaving only powerless individuals in their stead. In order to achieve something, they had to unite in every sphere of life, whether it concerned the founding of a church or the construction of a bridge, combating alcohol abuse or promoting education. He thus concluded that the science of association dominated all others; it was the ‘mother-science’ on which progress in all areas depended.²⁰ Association, the shaping of civil society, did of course bring a risk: namely, that this would lead to a strengthening of all kinds of special interests, and thereby undermine the general interest. Countering this, freedom of association provided the most important guarantee of combating political oppression: by organizing themselves, the hegemony of the dominant view – ‘l’empire moral de la majorité’ – could be broken.²¹

The conviction could thus grow that the political party was an acceptable, and perhaps even a useful, phenomenon in a democracy, so long as it functioned within the framework of a free civil society, which was able in every area and on every subject to stimulate or correct politics.²² Citizens might be individual voters, as the liberals assumed, but as soon as they unite, they also form part of a political culture. Then it is no longer a matter of the relatively intangible notion of the ‘national character’ or the ‘national spirit’, but of tangible organizations and institutions that assert themselves politically, or even strive to gain a place in the political order.

With the restoration of independence in the Netherlands in 1813, it was proclaimed, with both relief and censure, that ‘all partisanship’ had been abandoned – and the political elite emphatically wanted to keep it that way.²³ The police and the judicial system were used to keep a careful eye on civil society in the Netherlands. This was based on a number of provisions in the Code Pénal, which had been introduced by the French and remained in force after 1813. It was not permitted, without prior permission, for more than twenty people to assemble with the purpose of engaging in religion, the arts, politics or other subjects. The constitution of 1848 did indeed grant the right of association, but with the elaboration of that basic right in 1855 at the urging of parliament it was legally determined that a form of preventive supervision would remain after all. The government was accordingly given the authority to grant corporate rights to an association,

allowing it to undertake legal and financial obligations. Of course, this also meant that the government could refuse to grant such rights if it objected to the purposes of the association, for whatever reason.²⁴ In that case, the members of an association would be severally liable, a risk that many could not or did not wish to take. The 'public' nature of society – the free exchange of ideas among citizens who accepted each other as equals – was thereby limited and usually controlled by the elite.²⁵

As part of the wave of reading circles, clubs, learned societies and academies that appeared at that time, in 1784 a Baptist minister, Jan Nieuwenhuyzen, and his friends founded the Society for Public Welfare (de Maatschappij tot Nut van 't Algemeen). The Society was a great success, partly due to its close cooperation with the government and, from 1813, royal assent to its noble goal of promoting the 'general welfare', mainly by extending and improving education. It was a Protestant organization, which is to say that Catholics were not obvious members and Jews were refused membership until 1864. The organization's success was partly due to its organizational form: a central administration in Amsterdam and branches spread far and wide across the country. In many places, Society meetings fulfilled an important social function. The association's membership grew from around 10,000 members in 1820 to around 14,000 at the beginning of the 1860s, spread over 137 and just over 300 regional branches, respectively.²⁶

In addition, there was the Dutch variant of the international religious revival movement that emerged around 1815. This movement was known in the French-speaking part of Switzerland as *le Réveil*, in Germany as *die Erweckungen*, and in England and Scotland as the Evangelical Revival, and it was related to the Second Awakening in the United States. It was an expression of resistance to the Enlightenment and to a Protestantism that had accepted too much of the former and that appeared to put social virtue before individual belief. The movement was supported by a relatively small number of people from the most elite social circles, who met in some large towns in 'soirées religieuses', home meetings dedicated to bible study and prayer. Groen van Prinsterer and Da Costa, for example, had taken part in it.²⁷ The Réveil became more of a close-knit movement when the decision was taken in 1845 to introduce separate meetings, held with some frequency, to discuss social issues such as Christian philanthropy and the matter of education. From that time onwards, those involved called themselves the 'Christian Friends' and became very active in the social sphere.²⁸

After 1848, the role played by clubs and societies slowly but surely became more intensive, supported by a broad humanitarian movement – 'the soldiery of dissent'²⁹ – which swept across Europe mainly from the

Anglo-Saxon countries. For example, in addition to all kinds of initiatives relating to culture and entertainment, there were numerous associations that focused on such areas such as countering alcohol use and prostitution and slavery, and promoting school inspections and the quality of education, to name but the most important topics.³⁰ There arose a market in moral issues in which the associations in this area competed (for members, contributions, time), for in a capitalist system, protest also is subject to market mechanisms.³¹

People who were active in the Society for Public Welfare or the Réveil were involved in by far the most initiatives in the Netherlands. These were the two most important and, in any case, the most influential crystallization points in civil society. The Society was based on Christianity above divisions of belief, while the Réveil was grounded in orthodox Protestantism. Given this difference, in 1841, for instance, it proved impossible to found a 'general' (non-religious) association that would devote itself to the abolition of slavery; Groen van Prinsterer used some clever meeting tactics to forestall a common initiative and went on to establish, along with Christian friends, his own association on 'positive-Christian' foundations.³² Differences in belief promoted both the expansion of clubs and societies and an increasing differentiation between them. In the Protestant camp, in particular, there was the usual process of multiplying on the basis of division.

The relationship between these associations and the political order was ambivalent: on the one hand, after all, politics was essential for making something happen in society; while on the other, they did not want to acquire a place in the political order. The use of the term 'politics [*de politiek*]' to refer to an independent domain of human activity arose only in the middle of the nineteenth century, and then mostly in a negative sense. One of the first examples of its use, dating from the beginning of the 1860s, is to be found in a work of popular history by Hofdijk, and it immediately set the tone: 'Whatever you do – I pray you – do not meddle with politics'.³³ The issues with which the associations were engaged lent themselves only with difficulty to an essential aspect of political action: the process of give and take. No 'transaction' can be made between justice and truth on the one hand and falsehood and injustice on the other. This explains why it was not the obvious course for these associations to become immediately involved in politics, and why they preferred to influence the 'national conscience': the nation had to be put to rights by means of a flood of tracts, leaflets and pamphlets.³⁴ This had the great advantage that it was not necessary to cede the moral high ground; the *Gesinnungsethik* could, and indeed should, be upheld with a certain severity. Despite this, the moral reformers naturally

wanted to achieve something, and so they were forced to get involved in 'politics'. The relationship remained a complicated one, however: politics was both a tempting and a forbidding area.

In this context it was Kuyper who, supported by some of the orthodox-Protestant associations, took the lead. He broke through the dominant public-religious system, that of Christianity above religious differences, and joined (part of) civil society and politics together. To this end, he could have chosen to politicize anti-Catholic sentiments, such as those that had become apparent in the *Aprilbeweging* of 1853, but he assumed Groen's place at the helm and opted for a direct attack on the educational politics of the liberals. Tried and tested in an endless series of conflicts in the church and in the various associations, he also introduced the hard-headedness of being in the right into politics.

Sphere sovereignty

In 1860, a National Association for Protestant School Education (*Vereeniging voor Christelijk Nationaal Schoolonderwijs*) was founded in opposition to the general education organized by the government, and subsidized the founding of Protestant schools (*scholen met den bijbel*). In response, in 1866 the Association for the Promotion of National Education (*Vereeniging tot bevordering van het Volksonderwijs*) was set up, which aimed to 'defend public schools in the court of public opinion'.³⁵ At the instigation of the Vatican, this was followed in 1868 by an episcopal charge that the faithful were in principle forbidden to attend public schools. In view of this growing confessional pressure, the Society for Public Welfare decided to abandon its traditional reticence and speak up openly for public education – as a consequence of which, the Society's membership grew in a short time to a little over 17,000 members. And this again had the result that in 1869, Kuyper wrote a lengthy pamphlet about the Society.

The key point made in this pamphlet, entitled *De "Nuts"-beweging (The Society for Public Welfare movement)*, was that this organization had shown that a 'general' association was in fact an unchristian one. At the same time, it was an inspiring association, because the Society had shown how all kinds of interests that did not fall directly under the responsibility of the state or the church could be promoted. There was 'middle ground' between state and nation where useful work could be done. In that respect, the Society was exemplary in Kuyper's view: 'The notion of voluntary association for the promotion of social interests has not yet been applied in our country'.³⁶

This kind of association could be used as an important form of protection against ever-growing state interference in society, which was endangering 'civic freedoms'.³⁷ Two arguments followed from this point.

The first argument was that civic freedom was essential for preserving the true faith in the church and in society. However, it was difficult to refuse to others that which one demanded for one's own circle. This implied that Kuyper accepted that society was not a whole, but divided on the basis of religious and philosophical convictions:

We [...] demand, for every part of our nation, complete freedom and unfettered justice to influence the new configuration of the people [read: the Netherlands in the modern era] according to the numerical strength and the financial means, the moral strength and the gift of intellect [of each part]. We demand that our regenerated nationality should include every historical element of our national life [*volksleven*], however changed or limited it might be. Our Reformed people to the fore, but also our Catholic compatriots, and the men of the old Society of Welfare as well as the youth of Holland, be they be modern or radical; in short, every group and denomination must be able to help build the new house in which the people of Holland shall live.³⁸

This could only have the consequence that Kuyper abandoned the unquestioned ascendancy of Protestantism. But what he gave with the one hand, he took away with the other, in that at the same time he stated that society was not actually 'an aggregate of individuals, but a living creature, held together organically, with its own sense and capacity, its own character and nature'.³⁹ And that character and nature had been determined by the Reformation, as was also the case in England, Switzerland and America. It was then not difficult to argue that this had come about through Calvinism, with its distinctive trinity of 'unlimited political freedom, severity of morals and pious profession of Christianity'.⁴⁰ The origins of political freedom lay in the freedom of conscience that had been brought by Calvinism. Anyone who recalled here that it was in Calvinist Geneva that the Spanish theologian and doctor, Servet, had been burned as a heretic in 1533, was given to understand that while this had been a lamentable event, it was by no means comparable to the number of pyres that had been built by the Catholics.

With the extension of political freedom, Kuyper also desired ecclesiastical freedom: in itself, the Reformation had destroyed the unity of the Christian Church, and Calvinism had thereby made possible the 'pluralism of church forms' and had 'shed light on the limited nature of our understanding, even

in the confession of the faith'.⁴¹ All freedom was ultimately based on the conviction that there was nothing above the individual conscience, 'the sanctuary of all personal liberty' that ultimately could permit no human being, only God, above itself.⁴² With this ingenious historical and theological construction, he allowed himself to act as the spokesman of a 'Reformed people'.⁴³ Unfortunately, these 'people' were not very visible; while they had shown themselves in the *Aprilbeweging*, soon after 1853 it had been established in their own circle that this campaign had had no lasting effect and should even be described as 'ridiculous'.⁴⁴ Kuyper would therefore find it very difficult to organize 'the people', both in the church and in politics and in the intervening space. It required the transfer to the political domain of interests and opinions that, until then, had only been able to play a role in civil society. The political domain became more complex as a result, but also broader.

Conversely, the second argument restricted this domain again, mainly so as to keep the space for the free association of citizens as extensive as possible. To this end, Kuyper coined the phrase 'sphere sovereignty' (*sovereiniteit in eigen kring*), which he expounded in detail in his address to mark the opening of the Free University in 1880 (an institution that he also founded). Life, he argued, was neither uniform nor simple, but 'an infinitely complex organism'. This implied that an individual as such meant little, and only gained meaning as an element or part of a group, whereby every group had its own 'life spirit'. Organicist analyses such as this were common.⁴⁵ Kuyper made his analysis unique, however, by granting every group, 'sphere' or 'circle' its own autonomy, derived directly from the 'ordering of creation'. Spheres such as these also had the most ancient rights, as they existed before the state had even been created. Yet it was the ineradicable tendency of every state to suppress these spheres, which explains why history can be read as a constant struggle between 'sphere sovereignty' and 'state sovereignty'. The state had no other role, however, than to guard the mutual relations between the spheres *and* to ensure that individuals were not repressed within their own spheres. In one respect, therefore, state sovereignty was above all of the spheres, but did not apply within them; 'there [within the sphere] rules a different authority, that descends directly from above, from God, and which is not *granted* by it but *recognized*'.⁴⁶ How the state might protect the rights of the individual within a sphere without undermining the autonomy of the sphere was something upon which Kuyper did not comment.

This view then led to the delineation of the Reformed sphere, a process that had begun with the Réveil:

Because it was precisely through this that an autonomous sphere emerged, in which a Sovereign other than the earthly power was worshipped. A sphere in which men looked to the soul, practised mercy, and inspired the state 'not as politicians, but as confessors of faith' [read: like Groen van Prinsterer]. Thus not through the political machinery, but through moral strength, a hope was born for all nations from within the soul; and therefore not to rule, but to serve, in our fatherland too, the part of the nation [*volksdeel*] that honours the Messiah, the *pars Christiana*, also became, despite itself, a national party.⁴⁷

This was an ingenious mix of Burke and Tocqueville, among others. The former had asserted: 'Religion is the basis of civil society, and the source of all good and of all comfort'.⁴⁸ The latter had shown how this could acquire meaning in modern states; after all, the United States was an unusually religious society. On this point, Tocqueville referred to a judge in New York who had rejected the testimony of a man after, and because, he had declared that he did not believe in God.⁴⁹ But due to the strict separation of church and state, the state was not burdened with the struggle between the different religions, and the church was in a position to focus on its eternal message. Every denomination could subsequently organize itself in its own way, thanks to the 'mother-science' of free association. In 1899, during a journey across America where he was received as 'a most satisfactory foreigner',⁵⁰ Kuyper would state somewhat enviously that the country enjoyed a rich and thriving religious life, which, precisely for this reason, was to able influence public life.⁵¹ A few years later, therefore, he made a symbolically important step by inducing his church to remove '21 words' from Article 36 of the Reformed Confession of Faith, which had determined that the state had to counter 'all idolatry and false religion' (read: Catholicism). In Kuyper's reasoning, this was a logical step, given that church and state were not permitted to exercise any authority over each other. Kuyper would never formulate the other side of this: 'sphere sovereignty' and 'state sovereignty' are not mutually exclusive, but presuppose each other.

The political party

In 1869, with his three pamphlets – *De 'Nuts' beweging, Eenvormigheid* and *Beroep op het Volksgeweten* (*An appeal to the national conscience*) – Kuyper had driven the foundation stones of a modern conservatism and

the formation of parties as such into the soft Dutch soil. An event of major importance occurred in the same year, when the decision was made to abolish the tax on newspapers, thereby allowing a great expansion of the press and consequently the 'public' nature of society. The publisher of a new newspaper in the Province of Friesland, for example, reported in 1871 that it was the intention to report on 'great political events' in the Netherlands and abroad, to address the 'key issues of our society', given that 'in our age, every educated person, at any rate, *must* know and also *wants to* know something'. The minor stories from the region, the prices in the market, the notices of births and deaths, auction announcements and statements by the mayor were tied to the course of world history.⁵²

World history, in turn, seemed to be in flux as never before: developments were occurring more rapidly and were increasingly covering the most remote corners of the world. Records were being established on a daily basis: more and larger, further and higher. People were labouring away everywhere: capitalists 'who thought in terms of continents and oceans'; and teams of workers, 'the shock-troops of industrialisation', who dug canals, built railways and laid endless kilometres of telegraph wires.⁵³ One symbolic high-point of all of this energy was the opening of the Suez Canal in Egypt in November 1869, in the presence of international high society. The attendees included Prince Hendrik, an uncle of King William III who had a great interest in shipping in general and in steamships in particular. It was against this background that Kuyper began to build his 'people' or his 'part of the nation', which in the elections of 1870 had only consisted of a humble 55,000 enfranchised citizens.⁵⁴ In order to gain some influence, it would have to become a political party; but the way out of the 'sphere' in society and into a party in the political order would prove to be a long and winding one.

Political parties sprang up in a number of countries in the course of the nineteenth century. In general, political analysts were unhappy about this. Among other things, they pointed to how the relationship between the electors and the elected was at stake. Choosing a representative was no longer an expression of the voters' appreciation, but the outcome of strategic deliberations by party elites. In fact, an oligarchy within each party determined who would be admitted to politics, and this meant that the electorate was only offered a very limited choice.

Worse still, political parties determined what counted as 'politics'. Rather than organizing around a particular issue, on the contrary, parties determined what the issue was and showed not the least tendency to disband themselves once it had been dealt with. In the United States,

there was also the fact that large numbers of government positions were distributed as rewards for support in elections. Party loyalty and faction discipline were put above individual judgement; minorities were ignored and deviant opinions were suppressed as far as possible. This led to the paradox that an elected majority could make decisions that were not shared by the majority of the population. This was not only the end of politics as an intellectual activity, but even the loss of the 'moral dignity of man', as the Russian political scientist Ostrogorski put it in a detailed study of the rise and role of political parties in England and the United States.⁵⁵ No wonder that many liberal intellectuals had a particularly low opinion of politicians.

In Germany, the phenomenon of the party met with more understanding than in Anglo-Saxon countries, and this radiated through to the Netherlands. A survey of the German parties, *Character und Geist der politischen Parteien*, published in 1869 by the liberal constitutional lawyer Bluntschli, was translated into Dutch almost immediately. Parties were unavoidable, and while there were downsides to this, the advantages were greater. Bluntschli put it succinctly:

The parties are the natural, the essential manifestation and expression of the powerful inner motives that move the political life of the nation.⁵⁶

A Dutch reviewer of the book noted that in his country, too, a discussion had taken place about whether political parties were helpful or harmful. According to him, resistance to this phenomenon was largely based on the limited capacity of the Dutch to deal with differences of opinion: 'The calm and increasingly give-and-take-inclined nature of our people is attached to peace and order, and they prefer not to see these disturbed'.⁵⁷ Thus the problem did not lie so much in the phenomenon itself; a distinction had to be made between good and bad parties. The reviewer was in complete agreement with Bluntschli, for example, that the Catholics were engaged in a kind of party formation that was unfortunate and that must even be described as disquieting. Such parties were founded in order to serve confessional interests. While there was little to be said about the formation of the Catholic party in the Netherlands at present, the outlook was not promising:

Our political development was always and will continue to be poisoned and paralysed by miserable religious party-questions, something for which the Dutch seem to have a special talent.⁵⁸

Time would soon show that this was not just a typically Dutch idiosyncrasy: the process of party formation in Germany was largely advanced during and owing to Bismarck's fight against the Catholics, the *Kulturkampf* (1871-1883). Confession was even, according to the German historian Nipperdey, 'entscheidend'. More generally, and certainly until the end of the nineteenth century, parties in Germany were linked to a 'Gesinnung und Prinzip, an Theorie und Doktrin, an Idee oder an "Weltanschauung" als ein Konglomerat nicht mehr durchreflektierter Ideen'. German parties were 'parties of principle', based on a worldview that included a certain pathos of philosophical profundity.⁵⁹ They usually formed around 'thinkers'; to a large extent, party elites consisted of intellectuals. A plea on behalf of an issue, whatever it might be, was almost always cloaked in great ideas and broad visions. As a result, politics took on the character of a battle between philosophies of life, and between sacred convictions. This proved a major impediment to agreeing on something, after which it was natural to see the state as the embodiment of the whole: 'das wahre Ganze'.⁶⁰

So it can be concluded from this brief tour that good party formation was dependent on finding a balance between hard-headed opportunism (as in England) and uncompromising conviction (as in Germany).

In his search for an organizational form for Reformed politics, Kuiper was unable to take the Anglo-Saxon path. There, parties were organized from the top down through factions in parliament, in order to help ensure that only docile like-minded persons would be delegated to parliament. The Dutch parliament had a few representatives who considered themselves to be sympathizers of Groen, and who were 'anti-revolutionary' in that sense. They saw little in forming a party, however, and moreover, Kuiper was somewhat dissatisfied with them. England offered yet another example, however, namely that of making part of civil society politically relevant. In 1828-1829, for example, Daniel O'Connell had had success on the issue of Catholic emancipation. An even more appealing example was that of the glorious performance of the Anti-Corn League in the period between 1838 and 1846, also concluded with great success. This 'bottom-up' organization had kept the core of its activities local, but under tight national leadership. This enabled it to mobilize substantial support without losing its hold on tactics and strategy. Kuiper had attributed the success of the Society for Public Welfare to its use of such a model, and it was one that he himself would adopt.

Kuiper's first step was to radicalize the National Association for Protestant School Education. By 1869, he had reached the point where it would henceforth start to engage in politics more directly by pushing for the

reform of the Education Act. This stated that pupils should be educated in all Christian and social virtues; but the word 'Christian' should be erased, given that it was not meaningful in public education. In the same year, he held discussions on the founding of a newspaper, capitalizing on the abolition of the newspaper tax. This would facilitate the forming of a 'discourse community'. These were the first steps in the process of politicization. The next step was to formulate a very succinct political programme in 1871, to which 'anti-revolutionary' candidates would have to commit themselves should they wish to be recommended by anti-revolutionary electoral associations. At the same time, he tried to bring local electoral associations together in a national voters' association. In fact, the only successful outcome of all these activities was that the first issue of his anti-revolutionary newspaper, *De Standaard*, could be published on 1 April 1872, with Kuyper as editor.

One important initiative to set up a 'real' political party did not come from Kuyper, who, from an early stage, had to allow for the hostility that his forceful personality could provoke. In 1872, a sympathizer founded the Anti-School-Law League (Antischoolwetverbond). The League would press for the reform of the constitution, in that it should state that private confessional education should be the rule and public education the exception. In the elections of 1873, the League worked closely with local electoral associations; in other words, there was now a connection between civil society and the political order. But when Kuyper, who had since been elected as an MP, wanted to shape the League into a real voters' association in 1874, this hit significant internal problems. First, there was a high level of mutual distrust between the different denominations within Protestantism. Second, there was an ongoing discussion about whether the organization should concentrate on one issue or have a broad political programme. In these kinds of discussions, the Anti-School Law League slowly but surely lost the energy it needed. The attitude of Groen van Prinsterer was not helpful, either. He had indeed named Kuyper his heir as the political leader of the anti-revolutionary 'current', and did support him in the radicalization process, but he believed a political programme to be '*unnecessary and dangerous*'. A political movement's strength lay not in programmes, but in 'principles'. In Groen's view, principles were the 'to be or not to be' of a movement. But in order to 'preserve maximum space and flexibility' for real political action, something such as a specific programme should not be set.⁶¹ Here, the aristocratic need to maintain one's own individual freedom of movement revealed itself; or to put it differently, a high degree of reserve regarding any initiative that might limit political action by being bound to programmes and organizations. After all, this was the beginning

of the subjugation of people's ideas and consciences, a step on the way to an impious form of democracy.

All of this made up a very fragmentary picture. On the one hand, there was the growth of a community of discourse; a core of people who, under Kuyper's leadership, were creating their own world, a 'part of the nation [*volksdeel*]' that was securing its place on the political stage, capitalizing on the new opportunities for communication.⁶² The expansion of the railway network, for example, made it possible to reach constituencies across the whole country more easily than ever before, nominations and election results could be sent by telegram, and a shared identity could be shaped in a movement's own newspapers.⁶³ On the other hand, the whole enterprise was very fragile and very dependent on a few people, as was shown in 1876 with the death of Groen and the absence of Kuyper, who had become overstrained and had gone abroad for a few months to recover. On his return, he wrote a political programme in the course of 1877 that was to serve to unite the electoral organizations in a close-knit party organization, but the programme's reception was so lacking in enthusiasm that the founding of a party had to be postponed. Kuyper thereupon made a start on a detailed explanation of the programme in *De Standaard*; the first article appeared on 19 April 1878, the last on 24 February 1879. So long as the series was being published, the founding of the party had to be postponed; it only eventually happened on 3 April 1879, with the establishment of the Central Committee of the Anti-revolutionary Electoral Association, which accepted *Ons Program (Our Programme)*. The search for a way to put political weight into the balance had thus taken a decade. One might even ask whether it might have taken longer still, had the liberals not given a helping hand.

In March 1878, Kappeyne van de Coppello, the liberal Minister of Internal Affairs, had introduced an education act that would make substantial improvements to the quality of primary education. Education would become more expensive as a result, and subsidies for public education were duly provided. Private schools would have to comply with the same quality requirements, and were thus confronted with rising costs, but they were – and continued to be – excluded from the government subsidy. This resulted in highly indignant confessionals presenting a petition to the king, asking him not to sign the law. The petition was signed by around 305,000 Protestants and 164,000 Catholics (the electorate consisted of around 120,000 men in this period). It was all to no avail: William III signed the act in August. It became clearer than ever that under the existing electoral law, a minority was in a position to ignore the majority. For Kuyper, this education act was a blessing in disguise: he would have managed to found an anti-revolutionary

party eventually, even though the people around him were disheartened and some were thinking of abandoning the struggle altogether. But the liberals had made it easy for him, as he could now capitalize on the shared distress and a common enemy. It was even a decisive contribution to the cooperation between the Catholics and the Protestants that Kuyper had been considering for some time, after mutual relations had been put under yet more pressure in November 1871 by the decision by a majority of MPs to close the embassy at the Vatican, a decision against which 400,000 Catholics had signed a petition. With this challenge from the liberals, the anti-revolutionaries, in memory of Groen, were simply forced to embrace party politics, 'as free men, as Dutchmen, as Christians'.⁶⁴

In his explanation of *Ons Program*, Kuyper provided a more detailed version of the ideas that he had already set out in earlier pieces, but it was clear that he was now mainly trying to convince his supporters. For example, he used numerous domestic examples to get as close as possible to his intended fellow party members, and to convince them of the utility of forming a party and the completeness of the anti-revolutionary worldview. His anti-Semitism was also revealed in passing, in the statement that the Netherlands was pre-eminently a Christian nation: in a constitutional sense, Jews did count as 'individuals,' but 'for the nation as a "moral organism", in the formation of her character, they do not count'. This was much harsher than his opinion regarding the provinces of Brabant and Limburg, that is to say, his Catholic fellow citizens, who, despite all obstacles, were emphatically accepted as 'constituent elements of the nationality of the future'.⁶⁵ He had already written extensively on the Jews in 1878, asserting that it was they who had made liberalism so hostile to Christian politics. It was unfortunate that they controlled the stock exchange, the legal system and the press, which gave them enormous power over public opinion and international relations. They were fellow citizens and they should not be treated as disgracefully as they were in Germany, but they did not belong to the Dutch nation; they were 'guests'.⁶⁶ In this, he shared a wide range of anti-Jewish sentiments.⁶⁷

Somewhat more out of the ordinary were his ideas about the importance of political parties as such: 'In the State, it should be the case that there are *always* parties'. This was true of many countries, and was even normal, 'as far as life was healthier there'.⁶⁸ An anti-revolutionary party thus had a position to choose, in addition and in opposition to the Catholics and the liberals. This naturally raised the question of whether it would be possible to cooperate with other parties in elections. According to Kuyper, this would be possible, 'subject to our full independence'.

But to make such an idea workable, it will also be necessary for not only us, but also all political parties [read: political convictions] in this country, to organize on as permanent a footing as is the case abroad. As things are at present, cooperation is hindered because there is a complete lack of any opportunity for open and official consultation between parties. It is not possible to negotiate with an editor, nor with our chaotic parliamentary clubs. It is still less possible with our untamed electoral associations. And as far as the Catholics are concerned, least of all with a bishop or a nuncio.⁶⁹

Kuyper had thus founded the first political party in the Netherlands. He had also made it clear that the level of political organization that had been standard until then – a newspaper, local electoral associations, parliamentary factions – was no longer adequate. Everything had to be linked up and brought under tight control. This was a relatively late development; in England and Germany, such organizations had arisen around 1860. Moreover, by his example, Kuyper was also forcing the other political movements to make similar changes, which they would do reluctantly. If they did not, it was clear that it would not be possible to do business with Kuyper.

The right to vote

‘One characterizes the politics of our age when one calls it the age of citizenship’, Thorbecke had written in 1844. The essence of that citizenship was the right to vote, he went on, before wondering whether this had to be granted in practice to all Dutch people. He had given an ambivalent answer to this question. On the one hand, the power of ‘the principle of *universal* suffrage in the constitutional history of our age’ was clear.⁷⁰ Expressed in Hegelian terms, this principle was striving for realization. On the other hand, however, the right to vote was limited everywhere to adult males with relatively high incomes. This tension implied that there would be constant discussion about the right to vote, and not only in the Netherlands. In these discussions, the greatest attention was paid to the numerical expansion of the number of enfranchised, which was closely connected to the extent to which potential new voters possessed sufficient insight in order to gain the accolade of full citizenship.

A couple of examples from the countries surrounding the Netherlands clearly reveal how diverse the arrangements were. In Germany, there had been universal male suffrage throughout the Empire since 1871, at least

for the Reichstag. Different systems were used in the different countries within the Empire: Prussia, for example, recognized a *Dreiklassenwahlrecht*, which ensured that the votes of those who paid the most tax carried the most weight. Belgium began with census suffrage in 1830 and introduced universal male suffrage in 1893, but the latter was simultaneously made 'plural'; that is to say, the higher a voter's social status or the more tax they paid, the more votes they could cast. In Great Britain, discussions took place in an almost sociological manner about which social classes of the population could or should obtain the vote. In 1832, the number of MPs from industrial towns in the north of England was increased and citizenship was extended to large numbers of the middle classes. In 1867, the number of voters was practically doubled by extending suffrage to working men. In 1884, agricultural labourers were also given the vote, leading to a tripling of the electorate compared with that of 1832. In Germany and in England, women continued to be excluded from the vote until the end of the First World War (in France until 1946, in Belgium until 1948 and in Switzerland until 1971). Discussions on the electoral system took place in every country; these were sometimes highly theoretical, and were often focused on the smallest details.

The great duration and complexity of this discussion stemmed from the concern that expanding the franchise would bring countries increasingly closer to the introduction of 'democracy'. And the insurmountable problem with democracy was that in effect, a majority would take no account of a minority. Tocqueville had already observed that in the United States it was not so much the 'extreme liberty' that troubled him, as the weakness of the guarantees against a tyranny of the majority.⁷¹ The English philosopher Mill sided emphatically with this concern. His argument for 'personal representation' was thus, to a significant extent, an attempt to maintain a 'virtual' or aristocratic element in the representation, even though the aristocracy would be replaced by the intelligentsia. This would have to keep the ignorant majority in check.

Politicians did share these kinds of concerns, but they were put aside due to the growing need to increase the weight of their own party; and this had the consequence that larger parts of the population were connected to the political system. This also formed the background to important expansions of the electorate, mainly by conservative politicians such as Bismarck and Disraeli. They dropped the right to vote into the lap of parts of the population that had not asked for it. Moreover, the fact that they took such an energetic approach was, paradoxically enough, based on the idea that large swathes of the population were not yet 'politicized', but that

they had a natural and traditional faith in the powers that ruled them. And actually, as Bagehot argued in England, this was also an essential part of enabling a parliamentary system to function as it should. For a great part of the population, 'the ignorant multitude', politics was far too difficult. The vast majority thus had no respect for it, but they did appreciate the theatrical show that was performed by the (political) elite: the ceremonies, the beautiful women, the display of extravagance and amusement.⁷² For this reason alone, the monarchy was such a fortunate institution; its performance was not only beautiful, but even magical: 'Its mystery is its life. We must not let in the daylight upon magic'.⁷³ In other words, democracy was only possible in a 'deferential country'.⁷⁴ Politicians should be aware of this and behave in accordance with it. It implied that the distance between the stage floor and the hall must be retained; distance, rather than proximity, was critically important. Thus politicians should not see 'representation' as compliance with the wishes of their electorate, but as the provision of leadership.

One should not conclude from this opinion that Bagehot was a cynic.⁷⁵ Many intellectuals – diverse men, such as Saint-Simon, Comte, Marx and Spencer – had imagined an ideal society in which there was no longer a place for politics. It was even their intention to eliminate politics; for them, it was but an imperfection that had to be overcome. For Bagehot, by contrast, politics was the vital element in a society. He enjoyed politics as a game of personalities and possibilities. It was this quality, based on his 'polyphonic conception of life', that he tried to protect from a number of problems that he had identified. In this respect, at least, Kuyper must have been his kind of politician.

Between 1850 and 1880, around 12 per cent of the adult male population in the Netherlands had the right to vote. For a wide range of reasons, the feeling arose in the 1860s that voting rights needed to be changed; there was, as Buys described it in 1869, 'a sort of national awareness that our system of representation is in need of actual revision'.⁷⁶ He himself saw no need for a radical expansion, all the more so given that he wasn't aware of hordes of incensed citizens who were demanding the right to vote. The Netherlands should therefore not let its head be turned by what was happening abroad. Buys had in mind a better distribution of the electorate between the towns and the countryside.

Others chiefly desired that the representation of their religious support-base be improved, which in a practical sense could only be achieved by extending the right to vote. Kuyper had written in his party programme:

So that the States-General be rooted in the nation; the people would not be represented in name only; and in their composition, no longer harm the rights of minorities; she [the party] demands the introduction of a different electoral system and, in preparation for this, the lowering of the census [threshold].⁷⁷

The Catholics also wanted better representation, as they found the existing district system very disadvantageous. They had it easy in the almost homogenous Catholic areas south of the great rivers, but to the north, they were a minority that had little chance of gaining their 'own' representatives. This had the consequence, for example, that in 1869, the 564,000 Catholics in the provinces of Zeeland, North and South Holland, Utrecht, Friesland and Overijssel, Groningen and Drente were not represented in the House of Representatives by a fellow-believer.⁷⁸ Or to put it yet another way: around 1880, Catholics made up approximately 36 per cent of the population, and on these grounds should have had a 'right' to around 30 seats, but in reality had only about half of these. A number of conservatives were also in favour of expansion, based on the conviction that a majority of the population was still 'sound'; that is to say, not yet irreligious, let alone socialist.⁷⁹ Finally, the liberals also thought that something had to be done, even if only because the Netherlands, as a small country, could not allow itself the risk of a breakdown in trust between the population and its national representatives. From 1870 the argument was added that the government would interfere more in society and would start to undertake more tasks. The population should have more influence on parliament as a counterbalance to this.⁸⁰

Not one political current argued for universal or '*allemands*' suffrage. There were socialists who did advocate this; they were the driving force behind an 'Association for obtaining universal suffrage', which from 1876 argued for universal suffrage for men aged 25 and older, who could read and write, and who had 'not committed an offence against society'.⁸¹ But here, too, just as with many other associations, ambivalence about politics undermined any success. In September 1885, at a large suffrage demonstration in The Hague, it was solemnly declared that another march would not be held, as 'a repetition of this movement would be an insult to the self-esteem of the Dutch people'.⁸² With this statement, however, the movement condemned itself to impotence and would rapidly fade away.

The very diversity of motives prevented an easy solution from being found; but the dynamic of growing competition between the political currents would increase the pressure, something that was largely Kuyper's doing. He was quickly followed by the Catholics who, with their electoral

associations, had been gaining a greater hold on the Catholic electorate since 1870. No formal Catholic party arose, as had happened in Germany, and there was no political programme. But neither was that strictly necessary, given that Catholicism already provided the principles, and the clergy an intricate and effective infrastructure.⁸³

With this, the contours of a curious party landscape emerged. In 1869, Buys had still assumed that something like a Protestant party was unlikely to emerge in the Netherlands. In England, political Protestantism had found a place in Gladstone's liberal party, and in France with Guizot's conservative-liberals.⁸⁴ Perhaps a Catholic party would arise, as was the case in Germany, Belgium and Switzerland. The actual battle for the favour of the electorate, however, would be between the conservatives and the liberals, as almost everywhere else in the world. On this, Buys would prove to be mistaken.

Catholics and anti-revolutionary Protestants began to cooperate in elections. This was particularly strange because anti-revolutionaries frequently taunted Catholics with their stories of sixteenth-century pyres, just as the Catholics saw the Reformation as the origin of all the plagues that had since scourged the world.⁸⁵ With the faltering of the expansion of the franchise, however, they had benefitted from cooperation in a number of electoral districts: by combining their votes, they could beat a liberal candidate.⁸⁶ The justification for these agreements lay in their common support for private confessional education. But this would have been insufficient, had they not also been two groups that remained strictly divided by a common Christianity: neither was out to convert the other. This is what made it possible for the Catholic leader Schaepman to describe the anti-revolutionaries as 'both friend and foe'. His biographer would later remark on this point: 'In everyday life, he found the liberals more attractive than those rigid, god-fearing people; but elections, after all, were never a matter of everyday life'.⁸⁷ 'Rome' and 'Dort' thus worked together, and in doing so, the Catholic electorate stuck to the agreements better than the anti-revolutionaries, who could hardly bring themselves to vote for a Catholic.⁸⁸

The liberals were confronted with a steadily rising number of confessionals in parliament: the battle thus appeared to be between liberals and confessionals, not liberals and conservatives. The priests and the ministers were on the march, and even a few socialists could be seen on the margins. It took a while, but in 1885, the liberals finally founded a party, so as to be able to hold their ground better in elections. They thought that they would do without detailed statements of principles; a reference to Thorbecke's

achievements should be enough. But Article 1 did sound like a kind of programme:

A Liberal Union is to be established, with the aim of fighting, by all permissible means of information and cooperation, the political influence of the confessional parties, and promoting the application of liberal principles.⁸⁹

Many thought that this sounded a little too aggressive. The term 'fighting' was thus removed, to the regret of many liberals, who nevertheless made the best of the situation by saying it sometimes and thinking it constantly. Thus the liberals also had to search for a 'people' behind the voters, though they were only interested in mobilizing the 'right voters'.⁹⁰ It was anything but a wholehearted effort. The discussion was therefore rarely about the right of citizens to participate in decisions on affairs that concerned them; perhaps this had been an acceptable idea during the Batavian Revolution, but that, according to Buys, was long ago: 'Our right is simply the right to be governed well'.⁹¹ What mattered now was the strengthening of the nation state; spurred on by Kuyper, this had to take the form of forging popular support. The result was that the dividing lines in the nation state became clearer than before.

Inextricably bound up with this was a fundamental change in the nature of representation. A change took place in this period, from voting deferentially for a respected member of the upper classes to electing men with the same 'principles', and the transition from local or regional ties to national loyalties, with the political party as the organizational centre.⁹² As parties became more important, the relationship between the electors and the elected changed. Kuyper explained this in *Ons Program* as follows. In the liberal order, representatives were 'figures of trust'; not only 'without undue influence or consultation', as stated in the constitution, but even, in Thorbecke's view, 'without any bond with the voters'. Contrary to this, the anti-revolutionaries argued that a delegate should have a 'moral bond' with the voter. He was elected as 'a bearer of principles' and ought to act as 'a mouthpiece' in the country's meeting halls.⁹³ Taken to its logical conclusion this meant, at any rate, that discussions in parliament were no longer conversations between gentlemen who were concerned with the general interest, but negotiations between various ambassadors; the development that Burke had so resisted. Moreover, it is difficult to compromise on principles. This meant that the function of parliament gradually changed: it remained the heart of national consultation, but in addition to this – and

sometimes in conflict with it – it increasingly acquired the character of a platform from which the people were addressed.

Confessional politics

An expansion of the franchise had become desirable for a very wide range of reasons. But it remained an uncertain undertaking, and many pitfalls were hidden in the details. The expansion that took shape in the period between 1885 and the introduction of a new electoral law in 1896 would thus be accompanied by the usual confusion.⁹⁴

The least confusion was caused by a request made by Miss Aletta Jacobs, a young doctor from Amsterdam, who in 1883 asked her local council to enter her name on the electoral register. The request was denied with some amusement; it went without saying that this was not the intention. The case was eventually brought to the Supreme Court, which ruled that women did not have the right to vote, as otherwise this would be stated explicitly in the constitution. A man paid tax for his wife and children, so he had the right to vote. What this meant for the voting rights of widows and unmarried women, seeing as they were often of independent means, remained unresolved.⁹⁵

Once this problem had been pushed aside, the search could begin for the dividing line between the 'solid working man' with a 'certain degree of autonomy and independence' and the 'fifth class', also routinely referred to as 'proletarians and vagabonds'. In the first round, it was determined in 1887 that the number of enfranchised would be expanded provisionally from 134,000 to 292,000 voters; and now, for safety's sake, it was stated in the constitution that the right to vote applied exclusively to men. The numbers would increase slightly in the following years, to 302,000 in 1896. In 1894 it was proposed that the right to vote be given to 800,000 people; that is to say, 74 per cent of adult males. This would put the Netherlands between England, with 65 per cent, and France, with 87 per cent; and clearly behind the German Empire with 90 per cent and Switzerland at 92 per cent. The proposal to expand the electorate so radically proved too much for a majority in the House of Representatives, even when the minister brought Bismarck into the fray, by citing his view that the right to vote should be extended as far as possible, given that such an extension would be much more effective 'für das konservative Princip' than all kinds of complex arrangements and limits.⁹⁶ In 1896, after a crisis in the Cabinet and an election that brought very little change to the composition of the House of Representatives, it

was finally decided to adopt an extremely complicated system based on income and social position – in which an exam was described as ‘intellectual property’ – that granted the franchise to 577,000 men. The age requirement was raised from 23 to 25 years. Due to increasing prosperity and levels of education, the electorate would grow more or less by itself to 1,079,000 in 1917; that is to say, 71 per cent of men above 25 years.⁹⁷

This development took place almost synchronously with that in Belgium. There, too, there was a liberal education act (1879), and there was also stark polarization between liberals and confessionals, an initial expansion of the right to vote (1882), and some time later a substantial expansion (1893), as complex in theory as it was chaotic in practice. In *De Gids*, the Netherlands was warned against following too closely in its neighbour’s footsteps, as the Belgian liberals were in such disagreement regarding the pace and extent of the expansion that they had fallen out in a heated fratricidal struggle. Consequently, Pandora’s box had been opened, the clericalists would gain supremacy, and the liberals found themselves on the edge of an abyss.⁹⁸ Would this fate also befall the Netherlands?

It appeared that it would. The first effect of the debate about extending the franchise in the first half of the 1890s was that all of the factions were deeply divided. And with some delay, the currents split into what became known as the *gauche* and the *droite*: a group that favoured expansion and a group that stepped on the brakes. Combined with the need to shift to some form of formal party organization – due precisely to the increased significance of the electoral struggle – this led to the splitting of the liberals (and later, even a further division into three), and the splitting of the anti-revolutionaries.⁹⁹ Only the Catholics were not troubled by this. That was largely a consequence of the vivid memories of the *Aprilbeweging* of 1853, reinforced by the threatened position of the pope and the closing of the Dutch embassy at the Vatican in 1871. From the mid-1860s, Catholics with liberal tendencies were eliminated, leaving a relatively homogenous conservative group of representatives. With the example of the German Centre Party in mind, they did briefly consider founding an interconfessional party with the anti-revolutionaries, but this was impossible in the Dutch context.¹⁰⁰ As a result, a Catholic party was formed in which content was wholly subordinate to unity. It took a massive effort to keep all of the regional differences in check, but unlike in Germany, a certain range of viewpoints was almost entirely absent in the Netherlands. An attempt in 1894 to bring the faction under direct episcopal control did fail, however.¹⁰¹ An appeal from the ranks to throw open the windows and cast off the ghetto mentality, as had been made in Germany in the famous 1906 article by Bachem, ‘Wir müssen aus

dem Turm heraus!', would come only decades later in the Netherlands.¹⁰² Combined with the fragmentation of the competition, this implied that the Catholics would steam ahead to the heart of the political order.

The balance of power in the final quarter of the nineteenth century thereby changed fundamentally. It began with the gradual collapse of the conservatives and the equally gradual growth in the number of confessional MPs in the House of Representatives, in which the number of seats (in keeping with the growing population) was increased in 1879 from 80 to 86:

Composition of the House of Representatives

	1869	1875	1881	1887
Liberals	46	43	49	48
Catholics	10	16	17	19
Anti-revolutionaries	6	12	15	19
Conservatives	18	9	5	

Source: G. van Klinken, *Actieve burgers* (Amsterdam 2003), 106, 125, 133, 138, 188, 228

The classic opposition between liberals and conservatives was transformed into a new opposition between 'free-thinkers' and 'confessionals'. In the Netherlands, this opposition was described as being between the 'left' and the 'right'. As we know, this terminology was used at the end of the eighteenth century to distinguish between supporters and opponents of popular sovereignty, and at the beginning of the twentieth century it would serve to distinguish between supporters and opponents of the reduction of social inequalities by means of a redistribution of national income. For a number of decades, however, these terms were used in the Netherlands to distinguish between politicians who linked their political views to religion, and those who rejected such a link on principle. Religion and religious difference, described by Kuypers as 'antithesis', was now the main axis of the Dutch political order:

Development of the composition of the House of Representatives [*the total number of seats was set at 100 in 1888*]

	1891	1894	1901	1909
Confessionals	46	40	58	60
Free-thinkers	54	60	35	33
Socialists			7	7

Source: G. van Klinken, *Actieve burgers* (Amsterdam 2003), 504

And that made it possible for a prime minister to deny emphatically in 1909 that he led a conservative cabinet: it was a right-wing cabinet based on Christian principles, although he would not wish to say that being left-wing was considered to be unchristian.¹⁰³

Politics had become more religious and more national, and was henceforth organized into parties. The conservative flag had fallen on that battlefield, whilst liberalism was on the wane. As part of this fundamental change, which perhaps would have taken place anyway, there was also the transition from delegates being 'trustworthy men' to being 'principled men'. This struck at the very heart of liberal political culture; the new political culture was grounded in parties that embraced a particular philosophy and worldview, potential candidates were tested heart and soul, and once they had become delegates they were no longer autonomous representatives but 'spokesmen' for their supporters. The expansion of the electorate led to a strengthening of the Catholics: they would form the largest bloc in the House of Representatives, with around a quarter of the parliamentary seats.

Parliament lost some of its waywardness; there was a fall in the number of 'characters', contrary MPs who refused to take advice from anyone. The role of the leaders became more important; they were to each both 'friend and foe'. In an era in which heroes were rare they achieved a certain celebrity status, thanks to all the political cartoons and the first photos in the press. At the same time, this situation meant that *staatsburgers*, the citizens upon whom Thorbecke had once reflected, had become *partijgangers*, party supporters. The change in the political culture could hardly be summarized in a more dramatic fashion.

Den Treek

The central figure in this transformation was Kuyper, and it was the old liberals, who had been key figures in the previous culture, who found this most to their cost. One of the most eloquent representatives of their distress was De Beaufort, who in 1873 took possession of a splendid family country estate, Huize Den Treek in the municipality of Leusden, surrounded by forest and moorland. He was a fairly good historian, was editor of *De Gids* (1876-1893), and had many additional roles, including chairman of the time-honoured Society of Benevolence in Frederiksoord; but in the main, he devoted himself to politics. With a few interludes, he was an MP for 23 years; one of these interludes included being Minister of Foreign Affairs (1897-1901). He was a courteous man who, however, expressed himself in his diary with unusual

acerbity about one man: Kuyper, whom he considered a charlatan and a self-important fool. De Beaufort was amazed at the charismatic authority that Kuyper managed to exercise over his followers, how the man managed to use Christianity shamelessly for his own power-political purposes: 'Après l'entrée de dr. Kuyper dans la vie politique, tout changea'.¹⁰⁴

Aside from his negative opinion of Kuyper's character, he reproached him in particular for having led the Netherlands to democracy, and into a situation that had been predicted by a series of authors, from Tocqueville to Ostrogorski:

Dr. Kuyper is the type of politician of a democratic society, following the American example. Elections are everything to him, and his considerable talents and gifts are used exclusively to manipulate the voters. This demands a high degree of boldness, which he does not lack, either. There is nothing he does not dare to say or write. But he is not so bothered about the truth; he proclaims that which can make an impression, correct or not.

In his aversion to the man, De Beaufort had absolutely no sympathy for the way in which Kuyper had organized a 'part of the nation' and had managed to provide it with a place in the nation state. He could not understand that this was the consequence of a development that had been foreseen by Thorbecke, when he had characterized the nineteenth century as an 'age of citizens'. Largely as a result of Kuyper's activities, three major changes appeared in the political culture: a transformation in the nature of representation, the formation of a political party that rested on an organized basis in the electorate, and the creation of a new bond between religion and politics. De Beaufort had an aversion to every one of them and blamed Kuyper personally for them.

According to De Beaufort, Kuyper had been the first to throw himself into the 'technicalities of elections' and had become the master of this. As an indefatigable orator and writer for the press, he had managed to forge a base of supporters who followed him in everything and forced the political order in the direction of 'democracy' and universal suffrage. In De Beaufort's opinion, the hallmark of such a democracy was that very little attention was paid to constitutional issues and the maintenance of careful procedures. It had led to the emergence of a much more constant pressure to accede to all manner of demands, in order to satisfy supporters: 'democracy is pre-eminently a costly form of government'.¹⁰⁵ One major problem was that now things had come so far, it was impossible to see how they might be improved. Changing the electoral system was out of the question, and the

Belgium system of plural voting rights would be of little help. De Beaufort was therefore pessimistic, and wondered: where had it gone wrong?

The answer, without any doubt, was in 1894. The disintegration of the liberals over the proposal to expand the franchise radically had been the final blow for the liberal movement.¹⁰⁶ To this was added a questionable characteristic in the Dutch national character: a great tendency to fuss about trifling matters, a great indifference to politics and a tendency to be stirred up only by 'religious issues'. And this had, as it were, made the country Kuyper's hostage: the latter might be in a minority with his anti-revolutionaries, but thanks to the coalition with the Catholics, he had the power to impose his will. In short, thanks to Kuyper, the country had been 'poperized'. And this became indisputable when Kuyper succeeded in becoming prime minister in 1901. Almost despairingly, in August 1904 De Beaufort wondered in his diary how it would be possible to rid the country of this plague:

One man governs the Netherlands and shall continue to do so, as long as he gives the Catholics everything they desire, and this last thing he is doing and will continue to do. Only two circumstances can free us from this dictatorship: the defection of the Catholics, which is almost inconceivable, or a general anti-Catholic movement led by the Protestants. What serious statesman, however, will want to bring about the latter?¹⁰⁷

A few years later, he read a fierce complaint from a kindred spirit about the problems of the parliamentary system, as it was now functioning:

The national interest has been reduced to a game, the country to the prey of office-seekers, and the people are indifferent and listless; that is the spectacle playing out before us. [...] Fiercely quarrelling parties, disputing each other's power, blind to the common interest that binds all the citizens of our shared nation.¹⁰⁸

De Beaufort considered this analysis to be 'not incorrect, although somewhat exaggerated'.¹⁰⁹ But he was quick to link it to his favourite foe: 'Yet how can it be possible that one man could have bewitched the whole nation?'¹¹⁰ And a little later, there is a short complaint about general political views in November 1909, when church and state were hopelessly muddled in a detailed debate about what, exactly, 'Christian principles' were.

Now that was also a curious debate. The prime minister, the anti-revolutionary Heemskerk, attempted to explain why he had used the term

'Christian legal principles' rather than 'Christian principles'. Well then, 'Christian principles' might cause confusion; although he admitted that the alternative, 'Christian legal principles', was not entirely satisfactory either:

When one wants to express such a big thing, of this depth and height, of this length and breath, in one single word, it is not possible to find a wholly satisfactory expression. It was once said [...] that it was better [...] 'to build on the Christian foundations of our national life [*volksleven*]'. That is an expression that also contains much that is good, but neither is it wholly satisfactory.¹¹¹

All in all, this did little to clarify things. Groen van Prinsterer had always avoided explaining what 'Christian politics' actually was, and Kuypers had shown great virtuosity in shrouding the issue in a thick fog;¹¹² but for lesser mortals, the inability to explain the link between religion and politics was distressing. De Beaufort became profoundly despondent about this and noted sombrely:

The character of the political parties is changing more and more. There are no shared political ideas any more. The confessional parties in all countries are putting forward the most diverse ideas. Preservation and rapid progress are united in these.¹¹³

This was also linked with a very different issue of concern. With his great interest in and knowledge of foreign affairs, De Beaufort did not see the world as a spectacle of peaceful progress. In this period, in any case, one key element of the preservation of independence threatened to collapse: the House of Orange. After the death of Sophia van Württemberg in 1877, in 1879 King William III married a German princess, Emma van Waldeck-Pyrmont, the elderly king's junior by more than 40 years, in the anticipation that she would provide him with an heir to the throne. This came to pass: in 1880 Princess Wilhelmina was born, an event about which a Portuguese journalist would write, a few years later: 'The valiant House of Orange only remains attached to this mortal life by the fragile existence of this child'. The independence of the Netherlands was thus hanging by a thread, given the energetic politics of Germany: 'Every argument that can be derived from politics and economics, from oreography [the description of differences in height in the landscape], ethnology and history, is in favour of the German ambition to annex this piece of land between the Hanoverian border and the dunes of the North Sea'.¹¹⁴ The problem subsequently resurfaced when the

marriage of Wilhelmina to Hendrik van Mecklenburg-Schwerin, concluded in 1901, remained childless for many years. In the meantime, the question arose as to what would happen if there were no change to this, or worse still, if the queen were to die: 'the most wretched outcome for the future of the Netherlands'. De Beaufort considered two possibilities: the abolition of the monarchy and the establishment of a republic, or the preservation of the monarchy, but with the throne occupied by 'an unknown German monarch'. He even looked into who would be in line for the succession. He found the two solutions equally unattractive, and greeted the birth of Princess Juliana in 1909 with great relief. He was no less content to observe a 'general festive mood' everywhere; this was an indication of the 'great strength' that the House of Orange still enjoyed in the Netherlands: 'Kuyper and the socialists are nothing to that'.¹¹⁵

His appreciation of the 'strength' of the House of Orange was linked to his deepest feelings about 'the Netherlands'; and these feelings told him that it was above all a small country. This had been the predominant view for some decades, certainly after the secession of Belgium. In 1865 the most important historian in the country, the Leiden professor of Dutch history, Fruin, having stated that in the past, the Republic had largely been able to achieve such greatness because other countries were so weak, had declared:

What a different future our country would have had, by contrast, if it had amounted to a few more millions! [...] Then, like other kingdoms, it would have been able to expand its territory, and to keep up with the general progress of other nations.¹¹⁶

The consequences of this situation were of critical importance, and he summarized them as follows:

Our modern-day kingdom, like our republic in the past, only exists thanks to the jealousy of our neighbours, who will not grant each other the advantage of annexing us. This jealousy will remain, but the supremacy of one of the jealous states will be sufficient to remove all guarantee of our nation's existence. This sad experience has already befallen us. And even if our weakness does not put our nation's existence in the balance, it prevents us from participating in the great movements that take place in Europe. We must be an idle witness to the events on the world stage. Our sympathies and antipathies do not result in action: no wonder that they are increasingly degenerating into antipathy. Rather than exercising influence over other nations, we have to guard against the preponderant influence

of our neighbours. We lack a sense of our own strength, the feeling of self-sufficiency. Our national character should be more spirited, more dynamic, so that we might feel resilient and more powerful as a nation.¹¹⁷

This was written in 1865, in the midst of the violent events that brought about the unification of Italy (1859-1870) and Germany (1864-1871). In 1869, Thorbecke would thus accept as completely obvious that historical development entailed a 'drawing-together of small states into few large ones'. And he drew the conclusion from this that small states only had a chance as 'the architects and guardians of the constitutional order'. Only this, perhaps, would give them the strength they needed to keep going.¹¹⁸ The liberal political culture of the Netherlands was thus based on two equilibria: one of an external nature, located in international relations, and one of an internal nature, located in the preservation of unity by upholding the constitution.¹¹⁹ With the maintenance of the external balance, Dutch politicians could not throw much weight in the scales. This was dependent on decisions made in Berlin, London, Paris, Vienna and St Petersburg. The only thing that could be done to reduce the risks, at any rate, was to preserve the constitutional order at home. And this was precisely what Kuyper, in the liberal view, was not doing. Not only did he think that he understood foreign politics, and frequently baffled De Beaufort with actions that were as personal as they were thoughtless, but what chiefly vexed De Beaufort was that Kuyper did not behave in accordance with the constitution. He mixed politics with religion, paid no heed to the division of power set out in the constitution, exchanged political debate for the delivery of sermons, practised politics like a journalist rather than a politician, and forced independent men into the straitjacket of party politics. And he had divided the country. In the same debate of 1909 in which politicians had spoken so hazily about 'Christian principles', a liberal, who originated from a Protestant-conservative aristocratic family, had issued a severe warning about the political misuse that was being made of 'ecclesiastical passions'. Indeed, in this manner, the country was not so much divided as in the process of disintegration:

Wherever one turns, whichever journal one takes up, one sees that the entire Dutch nation is being partitioned into separate compartments. There are Protestant youth associations, there are Catholic youth associations, there are Protestant rest homes, there are Catholic rest homes. Timorously, each believer is being put in his own compartment with his fellow believers. [...] Again, I ask whether the time has not come for people to try somewhat to calm these ecclesiastical passions.¹²⁰

The time had not come, however; it would only get worse. For this reason, there was just one consolation remaining for the liberals: the House of Orange. An unbroken hereditary succession gave some protection in international relations, certainly in view of the numerous family connections between the House of Orange and the German aristocracy, the breeding ground *par excellence* of kings and queens. But in addition, the House of Orange, in the midst of all the discord, was the most important symbol of the unity of the nation state. At the end of the nineteenth century, liberals thus did their best to stimulate the people's love of the House of Orange, just as Princess Emma and her daughter Wilhelmina made great efforts to strengthen the ties of affection between the queen and the people.¹²¹ Had Bagehot not explained that the monarchy was an unrivalled guarantee to maintain a *deferential society*, even under a democratic regime? This situation was not without its paradoxes. Kuyper, who hailed from the tradition of the bond between God, the Netherlands and the House of Orange, did not attend the investiture of Wilhelmina as queen in 1898; he stayed in the United States, as the lectures that he was giving there apparently could not be postponed. He did send a telegram in English, communicating many lofty wishes, to which he received a cool reply thanking him in French. There was no love lost between Kuyper and Wilhelmina, and the relationship would thus, to put it mildly, remain extremely distant.¹²² The liberals, meanwhile, whose political culture had eclipsed the monarchical regime, embraced the royal house at the end of the nineteenth century and entrusted the country's unity and independence to a woman. De Beaufort was entirely aware of the symbolic importance of Wilhelmina's investiture. In his diary, he repeated a number of times how impressive it had all been, how the tears had sprung into the eyes of many of those present when the young queen had sworn an oath on the constitution: 'no actress could have done it better, so charming and at the same time so unaffected were her gestures'. Contented, he noted a comment made by a French journalist: 'Such a spectacle in France would make royalists of all Frenchmen'.¹²³ The transformation of the political culture had divided the nation, and now the royal house had to hold the nation state together.

5. Justice and Love

Fin de siècle: Ideology

On 1 July 1890 in Amsterdam, the centre of the socialist labour movement, an association building was opened in celebratory style by Ferdinand Domela Nieuwenhuis, the leader of the Social Democratic League of the Netherlands (Sociaaldemocratische Bond, SDB).¹ The necessary funds had been scraped together with great difficulty; in the end, the financing had only just been managed thanks to a hefty loan from the feminist Wilhelmina Drucker. At the opening, the building was christened Constantia ('tenacity').² It would become the focus of the SDB, which had been founded in 1881 and sported the proud letterhead: 'Not ratified by Royal Decree of 23 March 1884.'³ The fact that the SDB had been refused corporate rights was a symbol of its uncompromising struggle against capital, the state and the bourgeoisie.

The SDB was engaged in a struggle with the world, but also within itself. Not only were there mounting internal differences regarding the party's direction and course, but the SDB was also becoming isolated at the international level. Nieuwenhuis increasingly distanced himself in particular from the German labour movement, the largest in Europe. The Socialist Workers' Party of Germany had been founded in 1875, and renamed itself the Social Democratic Party of Germany (Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands, SPD) in 1891. Despite all the pressure of Bismarck's Anti-Socialist Laws, the SPD had managed to win almost 20 per cent of the vote in 1891. The party's success made little impression on its Dutch comrades, however, as was shown at a congress of the Second International in Brussels in the summer of the same year. On 15 October, Nieuwenhuis reported on the congress in the Constantia building. He declared that success at the polls was causing the Germans to stray ever further from the revolutionary path. After all, little could be expected from parliament; the air alone there was 'contaminated': 'Whilst the speaker himself is not inclined to exaggerate, there can be no solution other than to tread the path of force (*applause*)'.⁴

Nieuwenhuis then addressed the decisions that had been made in Brussels. He dwelled for some time on a resolution on militarism, and also spoke at length on the question of whether piecework was acceptable or not. He then briefly addressed the 'Jewish question', and reported in satisfied tones that not only had anti-Semitism been condemned, but also pro-Semitism (*jodenvrienden*).⁵ He spent even less time on the final point, the relations between men and women: in his view, there was nothing to be said on this.

But the relationship between men and women, or actually the relationship between socialism and feminism, was more complicated than Nieuwenhuis suggested here.

The SDB had already agreed in 1882 that all laws should be abolished 'that granted fewer rights to the woman than to the man'.⁶ In this era, this was a position that was as clear as it was remarkable. The SDB was thereby the first party to put legal equality on its programme, but this had led to little action. The SDB's focus on women wavered somewhat in practice. In 1889, encouraged by a number of socialists, Drucker had founded the Free Women's Association (*Vrije Vrouwenvereeniging*, *vvv*), an organization in which men had little or no influence and that was formally independent of any party.⁷ Although the *vvv* had more or less originated from the SDB, the relations between the two cooled quite quickly. Playing a role in this was the fact that the good personal relationship between Nieuwenhuis and Drucker degenerated into mutual incomprehension; and this had come to light in painful fashion at the congress of the International in Brussels.

Drucker had put her name forward as a Dutch delegate for the congress, probably on the suggestion of an Amsterdam-based committee member of the SDB. But at the beginning of the first meeting, a Dutch delegate from the SDB declared that Drucker could not actually be admitted, on the grounds that the *vvv* held a 'bourgeois position': 'She does not desire that man and woman fight against capitalism, but that woman and man fight each other'. Karl Marx's daughter, Eleanor Aveling, argued for her removal in three languages. She was backed up in this by Domela Nieuwenhuis, who argued that socialism did not distinguish between men and women, but that the 'ladies' of the *vvv* did. Drucker reacted furiously: 'Vous mentez! Vous mentez!' A news report described what happened next:

Amusement then followed the wryly humorous answer of Ms. Drucker's compatriot [Domela Nieuwenhuis]: 'If you can therefore guarantee ... that it is not so, then we will resist no longer!' and the whole hall burst into a roar of Homeric laughter, and ... Ms. Drucker was admitted to attend the Congress as a delegate!⁸

A wound had been struck here that would not heal. After the congress, Nieuwenhuis defended his behaviour at a meeting: the *vvv* 'is devoted to new privileges and fights for special privileges for women, which the socialists, on the contrary, wish to abolish, because they want completely equal rights for men and women'. It could not be simpler; he had been absolutely right to oppose Drucker's presence at the socialist congress:

'Mrs. Rothschild might just as well have come as a representative of a ladies' millionaires' association! (*Laughter*)'.⁹ Drucker did not intend to let this pass. At the meeting of 15 October in the Constantia building at which Nieuwenhuis gave his formal report to the party on the congress in Brussels, Drucker was present. To warm up, she initially attacked one of Nieuwenhuis' central opinions, criticizing the 'constant preaching of the revolution': 'That leads nowhere; only blood will be spilled'. She then turned to the core of her objections, the manner in which she had been treated in Brussels, and things quickly derailed:

At the end, the debate became more personal. In response to an allegation from Ms Drucker, that he had presented various things incorrectly and that this had been observed more than once, Mr Domela Nieuwenhuis claimed that Miss Drucker's ability to distinguish between fact and fiction was not particularly well developed.

These words were followed by such cheers and laughter that Ms Drucker had to abandon the rest of the debate, despite the chairman's protests against the conduct of the meeting.¹⁰

The SDB had nothing against women in theory, but it did have problems with them in practice. With this incident, however, the competition between the sexes and the classes became more visible than it had initially been. It also formed part of a development whereby the socialists became so focused on the final victory that the immediate prospects for action were reduced to the promotion of class-consciousness. This had the effect of alienating not only women, but also some trade unions (a number of which were collectively affiliated with the SDB). The latter began to weigh up their options: membership of a socialist party did not bring many advantages, while in any case it brought the disadvantage that employers and the authorities took a tougher line. A number of trade unions therefore left the SDB and declared themselves 'politically neutral'. This marked the beginning of a decline, which by the spring of 1899 forced the League to give up the Constantia building. To make everything even worse, the building was acquired by the Jesuits. They established a church there and put a large cross on it, in an emphatic obliteration of the building's diabolical socialist past.¹¹

On a more abstract level, the conflict between Nieuwenhuis and Drucker can be seen as symbolic of an important change in the political culture that occurred in the third quarter of the nineteenth century. Kuiper had made the step from civil society to the political order, and he had done so by founding a political party. As a result, autonomous people's representatives

had been replaced with 'principled men'. Linked to this was the shift from 'constitutional' to 'ideological politics'.¹² As the Catholic MP Aalberse would later put it, politics became a 'struggle in which we set principle against principle, philosophy against philosophy and, accordingly, slogan against slogan'.¹³

The importance of parties and ideology is highlighted in particular by the difficulties that both socialism and feminism would have in this area. The socialists initially failed in their attempt to form a party, and only succeeded at the second attempt. An ideology would then be developed as part of this process, whereby a singular dynamic between 'theory and movement' began that not only brought many advantages, but also threw up considerable problems.¹⁴ Feminists had problems with both shaping an ideology and accepting the phenomenon of the political party. In the struggle for emancipation that they entered, in order to mobilize as many women as possible, they brought together too many arguments, as it were – and in particular, internally contradictory arguments – to strengthen their demands. As a result, it was difficult to arrange these arguments into an ideology and to organize as a party. This meant that women did gain a key place in the new political culture, but they did not gain a place in the political order; for it was an order that revolved around parties and ideology.

Ideology

Ideology is important for linking everyday life to a larger whole, giving meaning to experiences, and bringing opinions on various issues (such as the nature of being human, the 'natural' social structure or the 'spirit of the age') together in a coherent interpretation of the nature of society, if not the meaning of life itself.¹⁵ Ideology was initially an occupation of intellectuals who mainly debated amongst themselves, but as more people had to become more directly involved in politics – because political parties began to search for the 'right voters' to enlarge their power bases and legitimacy – ideology acquired an additional function. It then became essential for both binding like-minded people together and distinguishing them from others. It is mainly this function that makes ideology so important in political parties. The shaping of an ideology and the founding of a political party thus went hand in hand, as it had for the anti-revolutionaries in 1878-1879.

An ideology does not have an essence as such, a fixed and immutable core, but is characterized by the connections that are established between different values and opinions in 'a system of internal relations'.¹⁶ Thus a very

common concept such as 'freedom', for example, only acquires meaning if it can be shown clearly how it relates to 'equality', for example. In some situations, freedom will mean that equality comes under pressure, or that the equality of a society undermines economic welfare. An ideology must therefore be able to solve these kinds of problems in order to be able to function as a means of binding people together and as a guideline for action.

An ideology does not have to be logically consistent. What matters is that the intended adherents experience coherence. In order to enhance the impression of coherence, an ideology is usually presented as the continuation of an old tradition, with prophetic precursors, shared defeats and proud victories – comparable to Renan's view of the way in which nations form.¹⁷ A *Gesinnungsgemeinschaft* thus takes shape, whereby more or less rational convictions are strengthened by emotional ties. Kuyper, for example, constantly referred to Groen van Prinsterer and frequently harked back to the Reformation, whilst the socialists would almost always begin overviews of their movement with the utopians, if not the early Christians. This veiled the fact that ideologies are constantly changing; that is to say, the relationships between the political concepts are always being adapted. This is inevitable, given that an ideology must facilitate the taking of decisions or be able to legitimize decisions that have already been taken. In order to retain this quality, one must move with the times; otherwise an ideology will lose its practical meaning. The permanent task of a party is thus to find a balance between holding fast to an ideology and adapting it.

At its own discretion, a party derives its right to exist from a clear ideology – and just one, although there may, of course, be nuances within a party. This means that opinions can differ on the relationships that should be established between different concepts within an ideology. Sometimes this leads to the forming of 'wings' or 'factions' within a party, and at other times to splits. In addition, it is also possible for an ideology to remain unattached to a specific party. One example of this is conservatism: no single party in the Netherlands dared to call itself 'conservative'. Far from meaning that there was no conservatism in the Netherlands, it was simply split between the different parties.

Just as the founding of one party forced other political groupings to take the same path, as it were, the formulation of one ideology started a process whereby more ideologies were devised. How crucial parties and ideology became in the political culture is revealed most clearly by the socialists' and feminists' struggles in this area. Both currents only emerged when bourgeois society – and with it, capitalism – expanded. This expansion was linked to a key concept, 'progress', in both a spiritual and material sense. But

at the same time, a concern arose among the elite. Would more freedom, for example, not be achieved at the cost of greater inequality? What might be able to curb the forces that had been unleashed, now that religion no longer bound a community to particular values? Would it be possible to formulate compelling higher values that would, at the very least, keep life acceptable for people, who had after all been created in the image of God? It is this quest for an 'autonomous morality' that provides the framework for the rise of socialism and feminism.¹⁸

Morality and the market

These modern concerns can be explained with reference to a critic of bourgeois society, Karl Marx. In one of his early works, *Zur Judenfrage* (1843), he argued that religion was no longer the force that bound the community together, but its opposite.¹⁹ As a result, man had been thrown back on his own resources and could only look forward to the rights of man and the citizen. But of what did these rights actually consist? All things considered, he had lost the right to be a *citoyen*, and in exchange he had gained the right to become *bourgeois*: he had lost his freedom and had been given a clear field for his egoism instead. Man now stood alone, oppressed by the dictatorship of money.²⁰ Marx's analysis was clear: although capitalism might bring greater prosperity, the Faustian price for this progress was growing inequality and the breakdown of the community.

For non-Marxists, this devilish dilemma would be revealed in the discussion about the moral implications of Darwin's work. After all, could one not conclude from this that what was 'functional' in evolution was also inevitable, and perhaps even good? The philosopher Bellaar Spruyt would warn the Netherlands at length against this in 1874: 'Another step, and we will be boasting of the social advantages to be gained from finishing off worn-out old men, invalids and the insane'.²¹ A quarter of a century later, Kuyper summarized the problem again in different words: the question was not 'whether the strong should take pity on the weak, or else whether they must, rather than may, crush the weak'.²² Against this, he could and would only refer to the teaching of the gospel. But for many, God was dead and Christianity had been reduced to a 'Sunday hobby'.²³ With the blurring of the first great commandment, 'Love the Lord your God', the second – 'Love your neighbour as yourself' – seemed to have lost its power.²⁴

This is one side of the story about people's concerns in the nineteenth century, in which money divided the community and the market was

decoupled from morality.²⁵ The other side is that on the contrary, these concerns showed the extent to which people longed to reconcile natural selection with progress, economic growth with more equality. In this, a crucial role was played by the preservation of certain 'virtues', such as a sense of duty and public spirit.²⁶

For a large part, these civic virtues were supported by a fundamental development that became visible from the mid-eighteenth century onwards, whereby greater understanding was shown for one's fellow man, even if one was not particularly fond of him. One example was granting civil rights to the Jews – even though 'they had not asked for them' – in 1796. More important was the rise and success of the movement for the abolition of slavery, despite the fact that this clashed with economic self-interest. Paradoxically enough, this humanitarian movement seems to have been linked to the rise of the market economy, as the historian Haskell has suggested in an elegant argument.²⁷ In an analysis inspired by Elias and Max Weber, he has argued that this new humanitarianism became possible the more people became conscious of their dependence on each other. The expansion of the markets made the chains of interdependence not only longer, but also more intensive.²⁸ Naturally, the conduct of trade was partly based on the pursuit of expediency; but in the longer term, it was usually only possible to make profits by abandoning fraudulent practices and a focus on short-term interests, and by investing in relationships and putting trust in contracts and agreements. Initially, Protestants were particularly good at this; but the more the attitude spread, the less important religion became. People generally got better at putting themselves in another's place.²⁹ In this sense, the market shaped character; it taught people to keep their promises and to pay attention to the consequences of their actions, even if these were distant in time or place. This had a far-reaching psychological impact: it focused the attention on the ability to delay immediate gratification, on the importance of self-control. In this respect, the humanitarian movement was driven less by empathy, as the abolitionists were seldom convinced of the notion of racial equality; more important was the fact that self-control was given the status of a principle, especially by the middle classes. It was the key to the advancement of civilization, and explains why it was in everyone's interest to promote the virtue of self-control in every possible way.³⁰

These developments made it possible for a number of exceptional people to make the shift to organizing campaigns against slavery, which had been seen as a necessary evil since time immemorial. A crucial factor in this was the conviction that one was personally involved in the evil; not so much because one profited from it directly, but because one was involved

indirectly by allowing it to continue to exist. This was the basis for starting up a movement, which by necessity had to enter the traditional domain of politics. The amount of resistance that had to be overcome for this was massive; not only was there the resistance of those who had interests in the slave trade and slavery, but even more difficult was the tough opposition of custom and convention, 'the cake of custom' as Bagehot had called it.³¹ Moreover, there are many mechanisms that allow one to avoid taking action personally, even if one considers change desirable.³²

In civil society, there arose an increasing number of associations that shaped the new humanitarian sensibility,³³ focusing on saving victims and strengthening character. This led to various activities to improve the lot of groups such as children, paupers, prostitutes and prisoners, and it would all largely be achieved by spreading knowledge and self-control: people's hearts and minds had to be reached.³⁴ It was not usually necessary to have the permission or cooperation of the state for this improving work to bear fruit. Thus until deep in the nineteenth century, these activities did not involve direct participation in 'politics', but the gaining of 'influence' on politics. Towards the end of the century, however, the question arose as to whether this 'influence' was sufficient, and whether there should not be a shift towards the founding of a political party. As the Catholic priest and politician Schaepman remarked during this period:

In our age, it is obvious for every movement to manifest itself in the political domain. After all, these days the State is on its way to being everything, and one can hardly imagine any aspect of life that is not touched by the State. This fact explains the direction of the popular movement.³⁵

The founding of the Anti-Revolutionary Party was an example that could lead to imitation. The question, however, was whether the humanitarian movement, or parts of it, would succeed in taking the same path.

Socialism

Socialism has traditionally been presented as a political philosophy that, once transformed into an ideology, succeeded in inspiring the masses. That is the picture that also emerges from reading the first major survey of socialism to be published in the Netherlands, the six-volume work *De Socialisten. Personen en Stelsels* (*The Socialists. People and Systems*, 1875-1897), written

by a progressive liberal, Quack, who was a lawyer, professor of political economy and a bank manager. The whole of the first volume was filled with a detailed pre-history, from 'Plato's Republic and Greek Socialism' to the Enlightenment. However, the French sociologist Émile Durkheim had pointed out at an early stage that socialism should mainly be seen as a '*cri de douleur et, parfois, de colère*', articulated by people who had managed to link these cries of sorrow and anger with the notion that there was something wrong with society as a whole.³⁶ The socialism that was to develop in the course of the nineteenth century thus tended to appeal more to humanitarianism than to ideology, and focused more on people's hearts than on their minds.

Socialism was brought to the Netherlands in 1848 by a handful of German artisans in Amsterdam, but it took an effort to keep the flame burning. This is normally explained, wholly in line with Marxist theory, by the fact that modern industrial capitalism was slow to emerge in the Netherlands. Indeed, industrial capitalism did take a long time to arrive. The economy was based on classical components – agriculture, trade and crafts – and would only 'thaw' in the period between 1860 and 1870. As a consequence of the liberal policy of free trade, all kinds of institutional constraints were abolished and the domestic market became noticeably interwoven with the international one. This led to a steep fall in structural unemployment and a rise in real incomes between 1860 and 1900 (also due to the fact that food had become cheaper). From 1880, income inequality in the Netherlands would also fall quite rapidly (and would continue to do so until 1940).³⁷ To the extent that there was a 'take-off' – an acceleration in a relatively short period of time – this would only occur around 1890.

The emergence of all kinds of workers' associations from the 1860s onwards was therefore less the consequence of economic development in a direct sense, and much more of a social-cultural development. The more that society hit its economic stride in the course of the century, the more the feeling arose that the community was subject to centrifugal forces and that the different social layers were becoming alienated from each other. One obvious example is that of the oratorical societies, which were mostly to be found spread across the west and north of the country. They were initially drawn from a civic culture across the class divide, but in the 1860s they would disintegrate and divide into social classes. In 1869, the following comment was made on this in a Frisian town: 'A country in a normal situation has three classes; our place, however, already has three in the middle class alone'. This revealed a 'caste spirit' that was promoted in

particular by 'men who are only interested in money. They consider money to be the only lever that makes a person who they are'.³⁸

The feeling that money was becoming the dominant value and that this entailed the drawing of new, hard dividing lines in society formed the background to the rise of a 'labour movement', initially mainly among skilled artisans. The motives were very mixed. In part, it was a demand for respect, an ambition to maintain one's own 'honour', certainly as a wage earner. Besides this, of course, people were also defending their interests in a changing labour market; and, not least, the growing need for some mutual companionship also played a role. In many respects, it was a resumption of the culture of the guilds; while these had been abolished around 1800, their memory had been preserved (among other things, in a number of funds for mutual support in cases of death or illness). In Amsterdam in the mid-1860s, for example, there was even 'a true craze for association [*een ware verenigingskooorts*]' to be discerned among the most prominent artisans.³⁹ A number of these associations gradually developed into 'real' trade associations; that is to say that the promotion of material interests came to the fore. Initially, the largest trade union was the General Workers' Union of the Netherlands (Algemeen Nederlandsch Werklieden Verbond, ANWV), which was founded in 1871 and rapidly gained 5,000 members. It lost its position, however, when the Protestants split from the ANWV after the latter had spoken out in favour of public education. They founded the 'Patrimonium' workers' union in 1876. For a long time, this was the largest (more than 13,000 members) and most stable organization. In 1888 the Dutch Catholic People's Union was founded. This came about in typical fashion: when a celebratory meeting was held on the occasion of Pope Leo XIII's ten-year jubilee, the entry charges were so high that working-class members were effectively excluded from the festivities. The organization quickly won followers and significance by cooperating with the volunteers who had helped the pope defend his worldly authority over Rome and its surroundings in the 1860s, and who had organized themselves into the Union of 'Old-Zouaven'; sometimes whole branches went over to the Catholic union.⁴⁰ The great majority of organized working men and labourers were thus organized along confessional lines, aiming to preserve a deferential society, and were above all emphatically 'Dutch': socialism was less a solution than something extrinsic, symbolic of everything that a large part of the population was concerned about: the hard-headed pursuit of material interests.

In 1878, a Social Democratic Association was founded in Amsterdam. It adopted the programme that had been agreed by the German social

democrats in Gotha in 1871. Comparable associations were set up elsewhere in the Netherlands, and in 1882 they joined together as the Social Democratic League (SDB). The SDB ratified the slightly modified programme, unaware of the fact that 'Gotha' represented a tricky and not uncontroversial compromise.⁴¹ The programme stated that the main goal of the socialists would be to strive for the abolition of the system of wage work and the removal of all social and political inequality.⁴²

This programme was actually the only thing that the SDB had in common with the German social democratic party. The SDB was neither a political party nor an electoral association nor a trade union, but a bit of everything. What it most resembled, in fact, was a patriots' club of the kind that had existed at the end of the eighteenth century.⁴³ Certainly, in the first decades of its existence the party leadership did not have the power to compel the branches to act, so in this respect it lacked both party discipline and ideological clarity. More generally, the theoretical level was not difficult to grasp. The tailor Gerhard – who was, according to Domela Nieuwenhuis, 'if not *the* cleverest, then one of the cleverest and the most developed wage slaves that has every lived' – responded to the first volume of *Das Kapital* as follows:

It is incomprehensible that this man considered it necessary to write such a large book of 800 pages to demonstrate that the worker's surplus value is gobbled up by another and does not end up in his own pocket; that's something I've known my whole life through experience.⁴⁴

There was no shortage of opinions within the SDB; the central problem, however, was how to connect them to prospects for action. The main goal was the abolition of capitalism, but this would be the result of a revolution. The theory stated that the revolution would happen more or less by itself, with the consequence that the organization mainly focused on promoting the 'class struggle'. This would not deliver any immediate results, but it would increase class-consciousness and thereby speed up the coming of the revolution. In the 1880s the leader of the SDB, the former clergyman Domela Nieuwenhuis, therefore agonized over the question: what should socialists do when the revolution had succeeded? Would it not be necessary to set up some kind of transitional regime in order to prevent the return of the bourgeoisie? Perhaps even more important was how to prevent the high hopes of the workers being dashed and avoid the accusations of 'treachery' that would rapidly follow. This was no simple task, as after the revolution it would naturally be impossible to deal with all the major

issues at the same time. In 1880, Nieuwenhuis put this problem to the chief editor of *Der Sozialdemokrat*, the official journal of the SPD: 'was braucht man zu thun um Besserung zu bringen, ohne Alles zu gleicherzeit zu regeln und dadurch Fehler zu machen? Ich glaube das diese praktische Frage die wichtigste ist'. Nieuwenhuis asked Marx the same question in January 1881, when he presented him with his Dutch version of *Das Kapital*. But however understandable it might appear to us, it was naïve to ask Marx this question. Marx responded in irritable fashion: when the proletarian revolution broke out, the conditions – 'wenn auch sicherlich nicht idyllischen' – would be right. Until that time, any speculation would only detract from the struggle and might even lead to banalities. The only additional thing to be said about this was that for the time being, the bourgeoisie must be filled with angst; this would also enable the time to be won that was needed to devise further measures.⁴⁵ In making this argument Marx was being theoretically logical, but his back was also against the wall: he wished to say as little about the state as possible, as he did not want to be overtaken on the left by the anarchists, who had dropped the state altogether.⁴⁶

There was thus little that Nieuwenhuis could do other than to continue with his critique of the bourgeoisie, who were corrupt and hypocritical in every respect, and describe the unbearable suffering of the proletariat. A stay in prison for lese-majesty – from 19 January 1887 to 31 August 1887 – gave him the aura of a martyr, and that was of great propaganda value, certainly greater than his subsequent membership of the House of Representatives from 1 May 1888 to 15 September 1891. In fact, he found himself there as the result of an unhappy coincidence, was excluded by the MPs from the spirit of camaraderie that prevailed there, and did not really know what he was doing there at all. He greeted the end of his term with a sigh of relief. Combined with his growing aversion to the dominance of the SPD at international congresses, the party discipline that dominated that party and its rapidly increasing focus on parliamentary work drove him towards anarchism. In any case, he rejected participation in parliament in increasingly pointed terms, and was a fierce critic of the SPD. The printer of the party journal, *Recht voor Allen*, was an exception: he wore slippers with a portrait of Liebknecht on one foot and Bebel on the other. But he was a German in exile, after all. At meetings, just mentioning the names of the two German socialist leaders was enough to provoke 'catcalls and hisses'.⁴⁷

All of this broadly corresponds with the general picture that the English historical-sociologist Michael Mann has sketched of early socialist parties in Europe. For one thing, they were different from other associations and organizations because they were not led by dignitaries. The members were

driven by a strong sense of class-consciousness and developed a proletarian identity. The main problem was that socialists wanted to represent the 'working class' and often 'the people' as whole, but they were not supported by a majority of the population, not even by a majority of workers. The socialists were aware of this, as shown by the many complaints about workers who did not understand that only socialism was concerned for their welfare and interests. As a result, socialism locked itself, as it were, into a subculture of 'militancy'. In this internationally shared sentiment, however, significant differences would rapidly develop, partly along on national lines. Some parties, especially those in Germany, Austria and Spain, had bound themselves to Marxism, but the Labour Party in England, for example, showed little evidence of socialism; parties in other countries fell in between the two. However different they might be, though, as a community they had a major problem with the state.⁴⁸

In the 1860s, the German socialist Lassalle had described the liberal state as a 'night-watchman state' that aimed only to counter looting and burglary. He believed, however, that the state should assume a much broader role. After all, life was a fight with 'nature', and was thereby a struggle with misery, ignorance, poverty and powerlessness. The state ought to take the lead in this struggle.⁴⁹ The state thus became a moral project, something that Lassalle was even prepared to discuss with Bismarck. His views were pushed off the agenda by Marxism, but remained present as an undertone. For the time being, the lack of a theory of the state had to be counterbalanced with utopian thinking in which the 'state' did not even feature. In a kind of transubstantiation, this entailed abolishing the separation between society and its organizing power.⁵⁰ In this respect, people fell back on an expression that is usually attributed to Saint-Simon: that in the future, there should be the administration of things, not rule over people.⁵¹

This was precisely the image of society that was presented in a very successful novel by the American writer Edward Bellamy, *Looking Backward: 2000-1887*. The novel was published in 1888 and was immediately translated across the world. In this book, every form of coercion was absent; political parties, trade unions, banks, prisons and the bourgeoisie were superfluous; every person was driven only by the desire to serve society; and whilst there was crime, it was only committed by people suffering from mental illness, for which they were treated in institutions. In 1890 the novel appeared in a Dutch translation by Frank van der Goes, *In het jaar 2000* (*In the year 2000*). Interestingly, Bellamy's story ingeniously sidestepped the question of how such a socialist society might be achieved in practice. He solved this problem by having his protagonist, Julian West, fall asleep in 1887, only to

wake up in 2000 when Utopia was a reality. In the third edition of the Dutch version, Van der Goes pointed out that this device had not harmed the book's popularity: 'This way of going to bed in the capitalist world and waking up in the socialist one must have charmed many a reader in every country'.⁵²

August Bebel also included a sketch of an ideal society in his book, *Die Frau und der Sozialismus* (1879), which went through 52 editions in his lifetime. In 1891 a first Dutch translation appeared, followed by a second one five years later.⁵³ The state did not have a place in this book, either: 'The first act wherein the state will appear as the true representative of the whole body social – the act of taking possession of the means of production on behalf of society – will at the same time be its last independent act as state'. With this, the curtain would also fall on 'the whole political world' of ministers, parliaments, standing armies, police, courts, prisons and taxes. 'Ten thousand laws, regulations, etc., will become just so much waste-paper...' There would be a 'central administration', but it was immediately added that this would not be a 'government with influential power – only a general leadership'.

The main issue will be to determine the number and the nature of the existing forces, the number and nature of the means of labour: factories, workshops, land and soil, etc. and their current labour capacity. Then it will be necessary to determine the supply and the different foodstuffs required to satisfy the average demand of the population. For all these goals, statistics thus play a key role; this has become the most important auxiliary science in the new society, for it provides the standard for measuring all social activity.⁵⁴

As everyone would work, a working day of around three hours would be 'too long rather than too short'. The struggle between different interests would be outlawed 'completely' and, thanks to statistics, every possible problem would be solved with the greatest of ease even. Given that no one had an interest other than the 'general interest', there would no longer be any reason to commit crime, for example. Even the 'vices of today's young generation, which get worse every day', would disappear, along with self-indulgence, impertinence, indiscipline and crude pleasure-seeking: 'The social atmosphere will render them impossible'.⁵⁵

With hindsight, it is easy to state that these were dreams; but that was not the view of the socialists. After all, socialism was not an 'ideology' – according to the socialists, that was in fact the distorted picture that the bourgeoisie presented of reality – but a science. Bebel's final words in *De*

Vrouwen het Socialisme were thus: 'Socialism is science applied consciously to all realms of human activity'.⁵⁶ This also explains the popularity of Darwinism among socialists, which was thought to be empirical proof of the existence of a systematic development that could only result in the triumph of the proletariat.⁵⁷

At the same time, however, the scientific character of socialism was its weak point: if something were shown to be lacking in Marx's analysis, if society were to develop in a way other than predicted, then the most important legitimization of socialism would be open to attack. Eduard Bernstein, for example, began to address this from 1897 in a number of articles for the party journal *Probleme des Sozialismus*, beginning with the question of whether the state could indeed be replaced with 'self-government' ('Selbstverwaltung'). A year later, he stated that the final goal of socialism was still very far off, and that it would be wise to anticipate only a 'stückweise Verwirklichung des Sozialismus'. This meant that he did not believe that capitalism would collapse more or less automatically (the so-called catastrophe theory). Likewise, he stated that society was not becoming more and more divided into two antagonistic classes; in other words, the middle classes were not disappearing – on the contrary. Moreover, some parts of the bourgeoisie had started to behave in a more 'socially-minded' way, meaning that as far as he was concerned, the nationalization of all means of production was no longer an essential point. This was followed by the oft-cited conclusion: the final goal of socialism (whatever it may be) is nothing to me; the labour movement as such is everything to me.⁵⁸ Bernstein wished to distance himself from the utopian quality of socialism and its scientific character, as he again explained at length in his *Voraussetzungen des Sozialismus und die Aufgaben der Sozialdemokratie* (1899).⁵⁹ In other words, Bernstein had made socialism into an ideology, even if the socialists would never put it that way.⁶⁰

The discussion about Bernstein's 'revisionism' clearly highlights the function that an ideology had for a political party.⁶¹ First, the ideology had to create as much distance as possible from the bourgeoisie. This explains the constant rhetoric about the revolution, which was otherwise awaited rather fatalistically, given that it was essentially expected to happen by itself. Even more importantly, this rhetoric was largely meant to unite the various currents within the party to a degree; it was a means of integrating them. In this respect, for example, clinging on to the revolution was a necessary fiction. Bernstein's transgression was to attack this fiction, whereby he undermined the integrating function of the ideology. His views were thus

rejected by an overwhelming majority at the party congress of the SPD held in 1903 in Dresden, although he was not thrown out of the party.

The gulf that had emerged between theory and practice was not bridged by this; and in practice, the SPD was a parliamentary party that fought for social reform. Due to the fact that it was only tolerated in parliament and did not actually have to think through the responsibilities of government, it could afford to be theoretically radical. The link with the supporters in the labour movement thereby endured, even when the party had been taken over by the parliamentary faction and the ballot box had become the barometer of its significance.

Domela Nieuwenhuis had little or no understanding of the problems of his German party associates, but he was not incorrect in his analysis in 1891. Whilst the SPD decided in 1891, during a congress in Erfurt, that the struggle of the working class was 'nothwendiger Weise' a political struggle and also managed to convince international congresses of this position, an increasingly fierce battle developed in the SDB between opponents and supporters of parliamentary participation. Raised voices were the least of it; the sad thing was that the police – the servants of capital – sometimes had stop by to restore a little order. The great majority of the SDB wanted to follow Nieuwenhuis' example by sticking to a 'revolutionary' course. This had already brought them a great deal, not least mutual comradeship, hardened in the fires of oppression. Together, the supporters of the SDB had broken out of their servility and transgressed the borders of normal bourgeois civility. Anyone who wanted to change society would be best to avoid putting his faith in the existing rules; those were the chains with which the bourgeoisie kept existing injustices shackled.⁶² The charismatic Nieuwenhuis was aware of how things were meant to be done, but disagreed, and he thereby legitimized the revolutionary rhetoric of his supporters.⁶³ As a result of this, they did not wish to systematize their views as an ideology. At precisely the moment this happened at the international level, they distanced themselves from such a development without much argument: systematization meant accommodation, and that was seen as a step towards becoming bourgeois. This argument was decisive; and as a result, the SDB would not become a political party, for the necessary self-control was a quality of the opposition. The party discipline of the SPD proved this; in Nieuwenhuis' view, Bebel, Liebknecht and Bernstein were no better than Bismarck – they were Germans who only knew two positions: submission or imperiousness.⁶⁴ The SDB thereby placed itself with conviction outside the new political culture, which was based on the formation of a party, armed with a more or less coherent ideology.

Liberalism

This process proved less arduous for the liberals than it had been for the socialists, but it was not easy for this circle, either. The liberals had become more conservative over the decades, if only because a number of conservatives had moved over to their ranks (owing to the lack of a secular conservative party). From 1870, however, various young liberals were convinced that a more active stance had to be taken on the 'social question'. In their view, something had to be done about the predicament of the lower classes. A cautious man such as Cort van der Linden even thought this a 'key point': 'According to the law the workers are free, but in reality they are the slaves of capitalism'.⁶⁵ He believed that the fundamental principle of liberal politics was still the promotion of 'full individual freedom', of course, but it was clear that not everyone could participate in the social 'contest' with the same weapons. The state's role should thus be expanded and it had to ensure that everyone could 'take part in life's struggle on a more equal footing'. Moreover, he added in sensitive tones:

The contest is uplifting and hardening, but let it be a contest between comrades, not a fight for life involving class against class and man against man.⁶⁶

Liberals continued to pay lip service to political concepts such as individual freedom and a limited state, but these concepts were organized differently and put in a completely different context: a progressive-liberal ideology was emerging. Classical liberalism was now rejected on the grounds that it presented people as individuals, 'as if they were closed, independent beings that unite together to form a society'. Society was made up of a number of Robinson Crusoes, as it were. Van der Linden believed that this kind of liberalism ought to be replaced with a 'progressive politics' based on new principles:

Opposed to the principle of competition is the principle of cooperation. Opposed to the politics of absolute individualism is the politics of the community. Opposed to individualism is the theory that society is an organic entity that is manifest in numerous communal forms. And opposed to the material theory of self-interest is the conviction that the relations between people, within the limits of material nature, are governed by ethical laws.⁶⁷

A group thus formed on the liberal side that was engaged in separating itself from *laissez faire* liberalism, and thereby linked itself to the tradition

of humanitarian sentiment. Characteristic of this was use of the term 'wage slaves' in an echo of this tradition.⁶⁸

An area of ideological transition thus emerged, as it were, between liberalism and socialism, in which a number of political concepts overlapped with each other. This was a phenomenon that was to occur throughout the Western world.⁶⁹ Notably, there were extensive contacts between progressive liberals and reform-minded socialists, including at the international level: congresses, exchanges of letters, shared journals and personal discussions during meetings and – perhaps even more importantly – frequent visits to cafes.⁷⁰ In this area of transition, a shared conviction prevailed that not everything could be left to the market. Children, for example, must be removed from the labour market, public utilities should be taken out of the hands of commercial enterprises, and racketeer landlords removed from slums. To achieve this, these intellectuals conceded a major role to the state, although they were also apprehensive about rampant bureaucracy. This also explains why they granted so much importance to associations such as trade unions and cooperatives, which were not only meant to prevent the emergence of an all-powerful state, but also to function as training academies in the further democratization of society. None of these intellectuals had the welfare state in mind; that term would only emerge around 1940. They were concerned with a 'social politics' that revolved around 'de-commodification' to achieve more equality of opportunity for the lower classes.⁷¹ It was a shift from 'negative' to 'positive' liberty.

As such, it was not about satisfying all kinds of individual wishes and the material desires of the population. To put it another way, it was not about encouraging 'egoism'. The expectation, not only in the Netherlands but also in many other countries, was that restricting the market and putting all kinds of facilities into the hands of the community would lead to the emergence of a 'higher type of individual'.⁷² This implies that in the final analysis, it was not about political reform, but 'moral reform': the expansion and strengthening of 'virtue', the combination of autonomy and responsibility, that classical public spirit that is produced by a person's own, free conviction. This also explains the tremendous emphasis that was put on education.⁷³

For some, this 'moral reform' was even so important that they abandoned participation in normal political debate. Spreading 'progressivism' as a means of shaping everyday life – in clothing, food, sexual behaviour or one's own religious conviction – was thought to be of a higher political order than participating in elections or founding a party. A 'new politics' should

not occupy itself with such trifling matters: 'There is only one thing which avails – to revolutionise people's minds'.⁷⁴

The majority, however, after more or less hesitation, considered it necessary to join a political party. After all, the wrongs of society were not simply 'out there'; people were personally culpable for them, people were at least jointly responsible for their perpetuation and had to accept their consequences. When forced to make a choice on this point, however, the paths diverged. In the Netherlands, progressive liberals established the Free-thinking Democratic League (*Vrijzinnig Democratische Bond*, *VDB*) in 1901. The party's programme rested on three pillars: achieving universal suffrage, the removal of 'the social causes that create or strengthen inequality between the members of the nation regarding their conditions for development', and the rejection of the class struggle.⁷⁵ With this last pillar, the *VDB* distanced itself from the socialists, who would continue to cling to that doctrine. After all, this would prevent them from losing their grip and their political programme from becoming blurred in an 'ethics of rational benevolence'. But some former 'progressives' surmounted the class barrier and crossed over to a new socialist party, the Social Democratic Workers' Party (*Sociaaldemocratische Arbeiderspartij*, *SDAP*), founded in 1894. A bridge was thereby built between the humanitarian tradition and socialism, between gentlemen and workers.⁷⁶

Social democracy

Although the founders of the *SDAP* included a number of former members of the *SDB*, it was not simply a split. At the very least, it was an act of patricide against *Nieuwenhuis*. The *SDAP* presented itself in the *Constantia* building on 1 October 1894. After twenty minutes, it was no longer possible for the *SDAP*'s political leader, *Troelstra*, to be heard. Once the social democrats had been forced to leave, the remaining socialists expressed their 'heartfelt contempt' for these schismatics, opportunists and class traitors.⁷⁷ The *SDAP* had to recruit a following from scratch, and in the beginning this proved difficult, if only because many saw this party as an extension of the *SPD* – which was partly true, given the substantial support it received from the German party. But the decision by a few prominent members of the bourgeoisie to cross over was promising. A typical example was the conversion of the timber merchant, *Wibaut*. In 1897, during a walk with his wife, he rested for a while:

We sat there, lost in our thoughts. Suddenly, I said: 'I can't do it any more, living at the expense of others. I shall join the S.D.A.P.' My wife said: 'I want to do that too'. We said no more about it at that time. In the evening, we both applied to join by letter. I can still remember my feeling of ease, as if I had freed myself from an obsession.⁷⁸

The party's membership rose slowly: the first thousand was reached in 1896, five years later there were 5,000 members, and in 1910, 10,000; only after that would it really take off, when the party decided to go all-out to achieve universal suffrage. On the eve of the First World War, the party had more than 25,000 members.⁷⁹ In 1897, the first two representatives of the SDAP entered the House of Representatives, including Troelstra; two years later they were joined by a third. For Troelstra, entering parliament was comparable with reaching the Promised Land:

I could now undertake my propaganda for the S.D.A.P. in public and before the whole nation. The narrow-minded fuss about revolution would now quickly lose all its meaning. [...]

The arena of the parliamentary struggle had been closed to us and I yearned for the regulated, public fight with the bourgeoisie, in which we now had an opportunity to engage. [...]

Full of hope and expectation, I entered parliament, where unfamiliar pleasures awaited me; to be admitted to a college where the old jeering tone was no longer to be heard, where I could find new satisfaction in the parliamentary tone of the debates, and where a sympathy with our nation's politics awaited me that was of much greater significance than all my work until that time.⁸⁰

What strikes one in this curious passage from his memoirs is, first, the prevailing sense of relief: he had finally been 'admitted' to the civilized world of national politics, and could leave the little, uncivilized politics of labour behind him.⁸¹ It subsequently becomes clear that he saw parliament above all as a platform; the members of other parties were not there to be convinced by him, but as extras, providing a contrast to his starring role in the play. Finally, it seems that Troelstra saw the House of Representatives as 'the nation' as such (in concentrated form): overwhelmingly bourgeois, perhaps, but despite this, the nation to which he and his socialists emphatically wished to belong.

With the growth of the SDAP the question arose, just as it had in other countries, as to whether – and if so, under what conditions – the social

democrats should form part of a government or administration. This was the issue of 'ministerialism'. A sensational event occurred in 1899, when the French socialist Millerand entered government; a government that, in the midst of the chaos of the Dreyfus Affair, had to keep the Republic afloat and bring an end to the scandalous way in which Dreyfus had been treated. This was particularly painful because the government also included the general who had put down the 1871 Commune in bloody fashion. The international socialist congress that gathered in Paris in 1900 resigned itself to this, following a German proposal, but it would have to remain an exception. The issue rose again four years later in August 1904, at a congress held in Amsterdam under the chairmanship of Troelstra. It was mainly at this congress that the principle of participation in government would be fought out. The French socialist Jaurès lashed out at his sister party, which had great reservations about participating in government. He underlined that the SPD was utterly powerless in a political sense; even if it had a parliamentary majority, it would still be unable to achieve anything, because the German parliament was hardly a real parliament at all. It was this powerlessness that caused it to cling to unwieldy principles and seek refuge in theory.⁸² Bebel replied that the French should not blow their own trumpet quite so loudly; the French republic owed its existence to Bismarck, not the French proletariat. Millerand's entry into government had created confusion in the socialist ranks and had thereby done the bourgeoisie a service. The socialists could be trusted to get on with judging one another. Both received resounding applause, and in the vote a majority supported Bebel. The Dutch representatives abstained from the vote.⁸³

In the Netherlands, the problem of governmental responsibility only emerged in 1913, when a free-thinking democrat charged with forming a new cabinet offered the SDAP three government seats, as well as universal suffrage and the state pension. At an extraordinary party congress, a small majority decided to decline this offer. The next offer would only come in 1939. Social democracy would thus become more important at the local level than at the national level: in March 1914, Wibaut was elected as an alderman of Amsterdam and would put his stamp on social-democratic municipal politics in general.

At this time there was also much to be won at the local level – and that was partly a result of international developments and the Dutch response to them. After Germany's victory over France in 1870-71, France had to pay a huge sum to Germany. The latter used this to finance monetary unification and join the gold standard. Many countries followed suit, including the Netherlands in 1875.⁸⁴ The Netherlands thereby became

subject to the advantages and disadvantages of the international mobility of capital and the increasing integration of the commodity markets. Dutch financial policy was now overseen by international financiers. As a result, the margins of budget policy were narrowed, especially as the introduction of a modern system of income tax had been stubbornly resisted for decades; this would only happen in 1893.⁸⁵ This explains the fact that the share of government expenditure in the gross domestic product even fell between 1870 and 1900, from 9.4 to 8.8 per cent (it grew in absolute terms). At the same time, however, there was increasing pressure on government to improve the quality of society. This task was largely passed on to – or left to – local councils. Municipal expenditure per head of the population thus doubled between 1862 and 1892, and subsequently more than tripled.⁸⁶ The most important improvements in areas such as poor relief, medical facilities, education and working conditions for public functionaries would therefore be achieved first in a number of municipalities, and were nationalized, as it were, only after the First World War. Local councils were the testing grounds of a new political culture. International contacts with other cities were often of more importance than the formal dependence on the national state would suggest. This was particularly the case for Amsterdam, which thus considered itself to be more or less a ‘free state’.⁸⁷

It would be some time before the importance of local administration as a learning experience for socialists was recognized by the SDAP. In 1920, Troelstra had an ugly clash with Wibaut when he casually remarked that he would like to ‘kick [some members] out of their seats as aldermen’. He did not really improve things when he later added, to exonerate himself, that it was regrettable that ‘administrative positions threaten to take our best people away from socialist action’. And in his memoirs he took it up again: by filling ‘gentlemanly posts [*regentenposten*]’ these socialists ‘hide their light under the bushel of civil bureaucracy and everyday politics’.⁸⁸ One might ask oneself in this regard, what is more important for workers – who are dependent on local government in numerous respects, including for work and social services – than decent ‘everyday politics’?

The SDAP thought that it was based on science, but it mainly drew its strength from arguments for moral reform. The party built on the old tradition of early working-men’s organizations, which wanted to make work more respectable by keeping good-for-nothings, drunkards and incapable members at a distance.⁸⁹ This tradition had been weakened in the SDB, where this endeavour came up against the principle of solidarity with all victims of capitalism, but it was taken up again in the SDAP. The party thus

gained a particular hold, as its chairman Oudegeest put it, on 'the cream of the working class'.⁹⁰

In addition, the strength of this desire for reform was notable in the socialist leadership's deep conviction that the population still lacked much knowledge and understanding – although it was always added that this was a consequence of the slow pace of industrialization. As a result, the proletariat had been 'languishing in physical and mental degeneration for generations'.⁹¹ Given the steady development of industrial capitalism in the Netherlands, this was not a strong argument; and in other countries, too, with more rapid industrialization, it had to be said that workers were not usually very interested in the more abstract or theoretical discussions. In this context, for example, the Belgian socialist Hendrik de Man spoke of 'a gulf of ignorance and incomprehension'.⁹² In 1906 Bebel complained about the deep confusion that reigned in the party on even the 'Grundanschauungen'.⁹³ It is extremely questionable whether all the educational meetings and long articles in the party press improved this very much. The passion for schooling stemmed, in part, from the need to bind the supporters more firmly to the leadership and to discipline them if necessary, although this brought the risk of a loss of combativeness – what was referred to as 'becoming bourgeois [*verburgerlijking*]'. This was not intended favourably; but it was the inevitable consequence of becoming respectable.

This development was strengthened by the increasing contact between middle-class and working-class people, especially as a result of local councils' increasing involvement with society, in education and poor relief as well as housing, for example. This role expansion resulted namely in a growing group of professionals who hailed neither from the working class nor the traditional culture of dignitaries. They presented workers with a 'new design of living' and contributed substantially – through regular contact at street level – to the inclusion of workers in the new political culture.⁹⁴ Thus besides the 'nationalization' of politics that resulted from the increasing focus on parliament and the state, local involvement in politics continued to exist and was even strengthened as a result of 'municipal politics'.

Not only were social democrats involved in this, but young, progressive liberals were also committed to tackling 'the social question'. Their ideologies overlapped as a result. In 'municipal politics', in particular, there were very few differences between the two groups; in fact, the social democrats implemented the progressive liberal programme at this level. They cooperated frequently in practice, whilst simultaneously accentuating their ideological differences as sharply as possible. As such, they were each other's most beloved enemies.

Feminism

A penniless lawyer from a good family suddenly hears that he has received an enormous inheritance from a distant member of his family, accompanied by an urgent request to 'take as his wife' a cousin, thereby allowing her to receive her share of the inheritance as well, including an estate and a castle. In this way, the writer Bosboom-Toussaint introduces the main theme at the outset of her novel, *Majoor Frans* (*Major Francis*, 1875): how to maintain one's independence and make one's own decisions when money and one's surroundings are bent on following convention and giving a clear field to selfishness.⁹⁵ And after many misunderstandings, this dialectical tension is elevated to a higher synthesis. The cousin can give in to the lawyer's charms because she is also granted an inheritance, and can therefore make her decision from a position of independence: 'Now my pride no longer need do battle with my heart'.⁹⁶

This was all about a woman's struggle for the right to her own person, and in that respect, it is a story that belongs to the rise of the women's movement. Bosboom-Toussaint did not have much to do with this movement, however; her work until then had been closer to the orthodox Protestant tradition. She was a friend of the Groen van Prinsterers, for example, although she kept some distance at the same time. She avoided becoming a 'party woman': 'I want to be as free as the wild bird that flies in the direction in which his momentary instinct tells him, and not like the trained carrier pigeon who flies hither and thither where he is sent'.⁹⁷

Her successful career as a writer clearly showed that it was possible for a woman to make her own way in society.⁹⁸ A number of men even expected this phenomenon to grow and strengthen. In 1878 it was stated in a journal, resignedly or not: 'the man is becoming weaker, the woman stronger'.⁹⁹ But this was not the general opinion. In response to *Majoor Frans*, the leading literary critic Busken Huet wrote that Bosboom-Toussaint was living proof that women could succeed in having careers in society. Initially, 'in the whole of the Netherlands there was perhaps no weaker, more fragile or more nervous little woman to be found'; but she had nevertheless managed to achieve success 'without the aid of fashionable ideas about emancipation'. But she was an exception:

The overwhelming majority of Dutch women, the mature and the less mature, are not clever enough to win a position in a similar manner; and instead of blaming themselves for this and modulating their language, they throw the blame for their lack of ability on the organization of society.¹⁰⁰

It was hard to deny that 'fashionable ideas' prevailed regarding the position of women. In 1869 Mill had published *The Subjection of Women*, brought out one year later in the Netherlands under the slightly more arresting title, *The slavernij der vrouw* (*The slavery of women*). It is a classic text that has lost little of its power of expression.¹⁰¹ The basic premise was simple, as he wrote in his autobiography: 'I saw no more reason why women should be held in legal subjection to other people, than why men should'.¹⁰² This position no longer causes much astonishment, as it has become generally accepted in the West. But in the middle of the nineteenth century, it faced the opposition of the most difficult foe imaginable: custom. Mill had already published the core of his argument in 1851, in an essay that he had co-written with his wife, Harriet Taylor, for the *Westminster Review*. In this, they asserted that the most important barrier to legal equality for men and women, including the right to vote, was that 'custom's' opposition. Women had never had the same rights as men. But, the counter-argument went, did Europeans not boast that they knew more than their forefathers, and that things were done differently now from how they had been done in the past? It was largely a question of becoming accustomed.¹⁰³ This argument was developed further in *The Subjection of Women*. Men and women were certainly different in some respects, such as in their physical strength, but the differences were mainly learned and reinforced. Whether they were real would only be shown if equality were to be put into practice. For the time being, however, there were numerous historical examples of women who had shown that they could do everything. It was utterly superfluous to forbid women from certain activities for which they were unsuitable; 'the free play of competition' would automatically lead to the best imaginable use of everyone's talents, men's and women's. Women would be able to decide to limit themselves to motherhood, but they should also be free to enter the labour market; although this would naturally bring the risk that women and men would compete directly with each other. The analysis thus did not present morality and the market as opposites, but brought them into line: a more just world would be achieved by abandoning that market-distorting element, custom.

Up to this point, the argument was clear; but it became more complicated when Mill broached the issue of whether women should also get the right to vote. In a brave attempt to win male support for this, it was explained that men would benefit if their women were to become less childish than they were at present. This childishness would not simply disappear as a consequence of more education; a higher moral and intellectual level would only be achieved through confrontation with public affairs, by assuming

one's civic responsibility. For this reason, it was necessary to give women the vote.

This part of Mill's argument was not convincing in every respect. After all, who would want to throw their weight behind the cause of women's suffrage once it had been established that women lacked the required level to decide meaningfully on the general interest?¹⁰⁴ Was this not an argument for an ambitious social experiment? No wonder Mill was told that it would be wiser to show a little more common sense.¹⁰⁵

After all, the dominant ideology was that the market neither brought nor required more civilization, as Mill had suggested; on the contrary, the world had become tougher, even amoral, and the domestic hearth an almost sacred place of refuge. The house was the woman's domain, and every change in the position of women brought the risk that the market would also force its way into that sanctuary.¹⁰⁶ This explains the increasing distinction that was made between the domain of the man and that of the woman. The two lived in 'separate spheres', whereby the woman was the lynchpin of 'domesticity' and, by extension, the gentle but unmistakable hand of civilization itself.¹⁰⁷

In this period, household management was not only highly regarded in a moral and abstract sense, but its more technical aspects were also taken to a higher level. In England, there was the renowned book by Isabella Beeton, *The Book of Household Management* (1861). Also very successful was *The American Woman's Home: or Principles of Domestic Science: Being a Guide to the Formation and Maintenance of Economical, Healthful, Beautiful, and Christian Homes* (1869) by Catherine Beecher, the sister of the author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. In Germany this genre was dominated by Henriette Davidis, whose various books on housekeeping included *Die Hausfrau* (1861). A 'free adaptation' of this last book was published in a Dutch edition as *De Huisvrouw: opgedragen aan Hollandse vrouwen van alle standen* (*The housewife: dedicated to Dutch women of all ranks*, 1866), where generations of women could read that housekeeping was a woman's 'sole destiny': 'to a great extent, the peace and happiness of husband, children and servants hangs on the care with which she devotes herself to her management'.¹⁰⁸ Running a household was thus elevated to being a real vocation, 'a vocation for which one can be trained and that can be done *well* and *less well*', as was observed in 1912 at the founding of the Dutch Association of Housewives.¹⁰⁹

This attempt to professionalize household management would come up against hard reality. In 1792, Mary Wollstonecraft had already complained about 'dull domestic duties'.¹¹⁰ A century later, women could only hope that 'not only the heavy, but also the tedious, time-consuming and monotonous

work' would be lifted from their shoulders by advances in technology.¹¹¹ The burden of housekeeping might be lightened, but not professionalized: it remained as tedious as it had ever been. Even more complicated was the following: if women, on the basis of their maternal and domestic qualities, stood surety for the moral calibre of society, they could only succeed in doing so if they (and their families) remained isolated from society. Otherwise, to put it in biblical terms, the salt would lose its savour. The paradox of the 'maternal' argument was thus that with one hand, a link was drawn between the private and public domains, but with the other, the distinction between them was sharpened.¹¹²

So we can discern two ways of thinking about the position and rights of women in the course of the nineteenth century. First, there was a line that flowed out of the Enlightenment, focused on the recognition of women as individual citizens, with citizens' rights and duties. Second, there was an argument that mainly conceptualized women as a category, in which women jointly and in conjunction preserved civilization by standing surety for sensibility and domesticity. In both cases, the starting point was the distinction between the private and the public sphere, be it that this distinction was permeable in the first case, whilst in the second, the more the century went on, the more accentuated it became. At the same time, however, it became clear that a middle ground was emerging between public and private, state and individual, where associations of various natures were being established. According to liberalism, this was the arena where autonomous citizens could devote themselves to common interests. And this led to the question of whether women could also enter this arena. An affirmative answer might be based on the notion that they had a right to do so as human beings, but also the conviction that the special responsibility of women even made this desirable, given their moral superiority and sense of empathy with their fellow human beings.

Many women were active in the associations that made up the humanitarian movement, although more in supporting networks than as equal members. The famous example is that of the World's Anti-Slavery Convention in London (1840), where women such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton were refused as delegates and banished to the balcony.¹¹³ In the Netherlands, it was mainly the more orthodox Protestant women who increasingly applied themselves to all kinds of activities, mostly charitable ones. In 1876, for example, Betsy Groen van Prinsterer, the wife of the politician, set up the Association of Resurrection and Life (*Vereeniging van Opstanding en Leven*). It was originally intended to bring the gospel to the slums of The Hague, but it was linked to a sewing school and a Sunday school, later

followed by a refuge for homeless women and girls.¹¹⁴ There could be no doubt about Betsy Groen's main task, though: caring for her husband. In 1908 this would be described as follows:

But one does not get the least impression that Mrs Groen ruled over her husband; if one believes that, one doesn't know their relationship well at all. No, she was his 'helpmate'.

She controlled the little things, the more minor ones, although such things have a major influence on a person; she cared for every aspect of domestic life; the lady's maid, the kitchen maid, the housemaid, the manservant, and at [the country estate of] Oud-Wassenaar, the head gardener, the four workmen and the coachman; none of them bothered Groen, but reported to Mrs Groen to await their orders.¹¹⁵

Women's activities were thus supplementary, usually small-scale and based on personal contacts. This would change in 1884, however, when the Dutch Women's Union for the Promotion of Moral Consciousness (*Nederlandsche Vrouwenbond tot Verhoging van het Zedelijk Bewustzijn*) was founded, encouraged by Josephine Butler, the celebrated English campaigner against the regulation of prostitution. This union rapidly grew to 700 members, including Bosboom-Toussaint; after five years it already had 3,000, a figure that would rise to around 5,500 around 1900, with which it was for some time the largest women's organization in the Netherlands. The association aimed to achieve a higher level of civilization by fighting the 'double moral standard'. This presented male sexual urges as inevitable, even 'natural', whilst women were obliged to resist them – a tension that almost automatically led to the 'solution' of prostitution. The issue of prostitution functioned as a prism through which the glaring inequality between men and women was reflected. As 'mothers', the women of the Women's Union now entered the arena of public opinion and social activism; and given that the state – by regulating prostitution – had made a 'pact with iniquity', political action was subsequently almost unavoidable.¹¹⁶

A more presumptuous step was taken by Wilhelmina Lensing, better known as Wilhelmina Drucker or 'Dolle Mina [Mad Mina]', who suffered her whole life as an 'illegitimate child' and subsequently campaigned against the double moral standard and the injustices done to women in general.¹¹⁷ She became renowned as perhaps not the first, but certainly the most determined figure in the shift in feminism from being on the defence to going on the attack. Men's fears would no longer be soothed, female dissatisfaction would be mobilized. The 'pleziervleesch [flesh of pleasures]'

would rebel.¹¹⁸ She initially found support for her fight among the socialists in and around the SDB; in return, she lent the socialists half of the sum that was needed to purchase the Constantia association building, contributed to the financing of workers' journals and spoke at socialist meetings. But relations quickly became more complicated.¹¹⁹

In 1889 Drucker set up an independent Free Women's Association (*Vrije Vrouwen Vereeniging*, vvv), with two emphatic provisions: men could not become members and the association would not be affiliated with any party (the so-called 'neutrality principle'). In a manifesto, reference was made to the celebrated pamphlet of 1789 by the Abbé Siéyes, *Qu'est-ce que le tiers état?*: 'What is she [the woman] in society? – Almost everything. – What has she been hitherto in the eyes of the law? – Nothing. – What does she desire to be? – Something'. The first programme was thus strongly focused on achieving 'legal equality': 'The law must only recognize: "people" without comment'. Given Drucker's background, it was not surprising that it included a demand that 'research into paternity' be made possible and that the phenomenon of 'illegitimacy' and, along with this, disinherited children, be opposed. A period thereby began in which this radical feminism was mocked and fought in equal measure. Sometimes the women were pelted with rotten fruit, so they started to wear cotton dresses, which could be washed easily.¹²⁰ The break between the SDB and the vvv – or rather, between Nieuwenhuis and Drucker – also took place in this period.

The affair in Brussels in 1891, in which Drucker had been sidelined by the Dutch socialist delegation, effectively as a man-hating 'lady', caused the distance from the SDB to widen. When Drucker founded a weekly magazine in 1893, its title, *Evolutie*, was not a reference to Darwin but an expression of the programmatic difference of understanding with the 'revolutionaries' around Nieuwenhuis. This difference found definitive expression in 1894, when a separate Association for Women's Suffrage (*Vereeniging voor Vrouwenkiesrecht*, vvvk) was founded out of the vvv, precisely at the time when the SDB emphatically abandoned the suffrage cause.

The first public activities of the vvv were directed against the overly modest actions of the abovementioned Women's Union, which had not only acted very moderately, but had also limited itself too much to the area of morality. The vvv adopted a more radical tone and left no aspect of discrimination against women untouched. Unlike more timid people, Drucker could express herself quite frankly in public. Typical of this was a performance at a public meeting of the vvv in April 1891, at which she fearlessly explained that women tended to be seen as 'a necessary evil, needed for the continuation of the human race'. As a matter of fact: 'We

do not need all those children; there are enough already'. Little could be expected from men, they would not abandon their privileges willingly: 'Mutual, equal development is an unreachable ideal and it will never exist'. She was therefore unable to understand why everyone was so enthusiastic about that Bellamy, because he did not grant women any rights.¹²¹ One of those present subsequently indicated that she 'found the views a little too strong'. Drucker then piled it on: 'The speaker is not affiliated to any party. She knows only one party, the party of justice, and justice is not to be found in any party'. Take the socialists: they declare themselves to be opposed to privilege, but they actually push women out of the labour market. This provoked protest from the hall: working women were 'the bane of society'. 'The woman belongs to the family and not outside it. (*Applause*)'. Drucker responded by re-stating her views with fervour.¹²² More generally, it can be said that she earned her nickname, Wilhelmina Drukke (Wilhelmina 'Commotion'), and that it was a remarkable occurrence if she kept quiet during a meeting at all.¹²³

Wilhelmina had not wanted to sell her soul to any of the political parties, including the one party that, formally at least, stuck up for equal rights for women. She was even reported to have said: 'Feminism in the Netherlands was born out of a hatred of social democracy'.¹²⁴ According to Troelstra, this left her between a rock and a hard place: due to her rejection of socialism, on the one hand, she was unable to get into contact with working-class women; whilst on the other hand, due to her 'complete lack of tact and discretion', she could not penetrate the 'world of bourgeois women'.¹²⁵ As a result, she was unable, in the words of a journalist in 1896, to unite 'the silk with the woollen frocks'.¹²⁶ Moreover, Drucker's moderate success can be put down in part to her negative opinion of men, whom she generally considered irredeemable. And this led to the pessimistic conclusion that no improvement could be expected in the relations between men and women in the short term.¹²⁷

Partly thanks to the vvV, a number of women were able to operate unabashedly in the public domain and, following in Drucker's wake, were even able to knock on the door of the heart of the public domain: parliament. This saw the voicing of classic desires relating to education, work and marriage legislation, but increasingly, the activities were concentrated and focused on the acquisition of women's suffrage, with the vvV as the central point.

The increasingly direct involvement in politics is not to say, though, that the position of neutrality had been abandoned, although there was naturally a temptation to form strategic alliances with a number of political parties, including the social democrats of the SDAP and the free-thinking democrats

of the VDB, and perhaps even with the more conservative liberals in the Liberal Union. Cautious movements in this direction led to two splits, but with 22,000 members in 1916 (more than any political party), the VVVK nevertheless remained the most important association.

Given both organizations' theoretical foundations in the notion of equality, one would have expected the VVVK and the SDAP to come to terms; but this did not happen. The SDAP did not trust the women of the VVVK; when all was said and done, could they have accepted an electoral law that required the same of men and women, if this also implied that this would lead to the exclusion of the overwhelming majority of workers (as a consequence of census suffrage)? And just as the SDAP was afraid of an 'electoral law for ladies', the women of the VVVK feared that in the end, the social democrats would accept universal male suffrage, whereby women would have to wait and see whether this led to female suffrage in the long term.¹²⁸ The women had a particular distrust of Troelstra on this point – and not without reason. He had already upset the mood in 1898 at the grandiose National Exhibition on Women's Labour that was organized on the occasion of the investiture of Princess Wilhelmina as queen, by commenting that the social democrats welcomed the '*réveil* among middle-class women that is shown in this exhibition':

But feminism must not presume to champion the working woman, regardless of whether she is more or less interested in the things that the feminist movement is fighting for, including in the area of legislative change, because in general the circumstances in which the working woman finds herself are completely different...¹²⁹

Here Troelstra added the well-known socialist argument that socialism desired not a fight against man, but a joint fight by man and women against the propertied classes; but he nevertheless succeeded in brushing 'feminism' aside as a ladies' movement – and a bourgeois one at that.¹³⁰ He then wrote a long pamphlet on the issue, in which he put forward three more insulting opinions. First, he cited the view of Friedrich Engels: 'the overthrowing of matriarchy was the world-historical defeat of the female sex'.¹³¹ Indeed, the loss of matriarchy had led to the dominion of private ownership. The conclusion of this argument was that things must be put right in their natural order: first, private ownership would be abolished, and then the position of women would be addressed, even if this was in the 'distant future'. Second, he believed that the 'oppression of women' was not as bad as that of the workers. This meant that the ladies should not act as if they represented

the general interest: was theirs not veiled self-interest? And to cap it all, he asserted that women had not fully understood that the wishes and desires of the women's movement did not stem from their own considerations and arguments, but from a new 'economic necessity'. Women, in fact, were engaged in continuing the historical task of liberalism; the superstructure was being built on the substructure. This could be applauded, because it meant that in this area as well, the bourgeoisie was engaged in digging its own grave and bringing socialism closer.¹³² Both feminists and socialists thus made use of 'equality' in their ideology, but through its relationship with other concepts and considerations, this concept ultimately acquired a very different meaning. As a result, a competitive battle could arise – between the sexes and the classes – first carried out by Nieuwenhuis and Drucker, and then continued by Troelstra and Jacobs, chair of the vvvk from 1903.

Aside from the theory however, at that time a completely different consideration underlay Troelstra's weak support for female suffrage: he had no faith in women's political views in general. Much later, he would even admit that he was 'terrified' that women would mainly support 'reactionaries and the conservatives'.¹³³ This was the Dutch version of a concern held by many progressives, one that was expressed in France, for example, by the historian Michelet in his complaint about the pernicious alliance between women and priests: 'Our wives, our daughters are brought up and are governed by our enemies. *Enemies of the modern spirit*, of liberty, of the future'.¹³⁴ This also explains why Troelstra, in an unguarded moment, exclaimed that he would rather grant the right to vote to the best layabout than become especially enthusiastic about female suffrage. He took a lot of criticism for this, but he did not distance himself from his words. In his memoirs, he would resignedly state that he had been unpopular among 'our women' and that this was also understandable: 'Thus I am irrevocably blamed for being weak, something that did characterize me on this issue'.¹³⁵

It could be many times worse, however: not weakness, but betrayal. When the Belgian socialists were weighing up whether to enter into an alliance with the liberals in 1902, the SPD believed that their Belgian comrades should not take this path. The best thing, they advised, would be to demand universal female suffrage in the negotiations: as the liberals would never allow this, cooperation would also remain out of the question. The Belgians chose the opposite route, however: they dropped women like a hot brick and threw in their lot with the liberals.¹³⁶ Feminism and socialism were in a position to undermine each other's legitimacy. Socialists could sideline feminism as a particular interest, just as feminists could say the same of

socialists: the battle of the sexes and the class struggle not only competed, but sometimes collided head on.

Women were finally granted the right to vote, but under very special circumstances. During the First World War, a constitutional revision of 1917 brought universal male suffrage and passive suffrage for women. This was rather an odd compromise. Women aged 23 and older could now be elected and thereby acquired the right to make decisions for others, without being allowed to decide for themselves via the ballot box. In September 1918, the VDB submitted a private member's bill for active suffrage to be granted to women. The proposal looked almost bound to fail, but the threat of a socialist revolution in November led a majority in parliament to agree to it. Troelstra, incidentally, was absent from the vote on the bill on 9 May 1919. The legislative change came into force at the end of 1919 and in 1922 women also received ballot papers.

It was not a splendid victory: the result had finally been achieved because the confessionals had abandoned their opposition, in the expectation that women would turn against the revolution and act as a force for social stability. Women were granted the right to vote on the grounds of two very different considerations. In part, they received it as individuals, as 'people, without comment', as Drucker had demanded. But in part, it was granted to them as a group, as collective representatives of morality and order. Had this latter factor not been a powerful consideration, it could have taken much longer.

This dual motivation in fact reflected the ambivalence within the women's movement regarding the question of whether men and women were equal or actually different from one another. It could thereby be argued that in essence, men and women were each other's equals and that it was therefore unjust to deny women the rights that had been granted to men in around 1800. But it could also be argued that men and women were very different and that society would therefore be enriched if women were to bring their specific qualities to benefit the public sphere. Both equality *and* difference could thus be used to demand the right to vote; and in practice, both lines of reasoning were used, often in one and the same argument.¹³⁷ This meant that the ideological structure of feminism was very versatile, but it lacked robustness due to these conflicting arguments. A further result was that feminism was somewhat susceptible to neighbouring or even overlapping ideologies, such as liberalism and socialism.

One inspired attempt to achieve a coherent ideology was the book, *Women and economics* (1898), by the American writer Charlotte Perkins Stetson-Gilman. The book was published in a Dutch translation by Jacobs

in 1900, entitled *De economische toestand der vrouw* (*The economic position of women*). In the book, it was argued that women had managed to keep the flame of solidarity and justice burning over the centuries. The circle of light had become brighter in recent years, as shown by the growth of the labour movement and the women's movement: 'Never before have people cared so much about other people. From its first expression in greater kindness and helpfulness toward individual human beings to its last expression in the vague, blind, hesitant movements toward international justice and law, the emotions are being roused'.¹³⁸ The women's movement was thereby held up as the vanguard of humanitarianism:

The woman's movement rests not alone on her higher personality, with its outrage against injustice, but on the wide, deep sympathy of women for one another. It is a concerted movement, based on the recognition of a common evil and seeking a common good. [...]

The traits incident to our sexual-economic relation have developed till they forbid the continuance of that relation. In the economic world, excessive masculinity, in its fierce competition and primitive individualism; and excessive femininity, in its inordinate consumption and hindering conservatism have reached a stage where they work more evil than good.¹³⁹

Both equality and difference were retained here, but put into perspective by the observation that the differences were magnified 'unnaturally' by the organization of society, particularly by the way in which the economy was organized. More equality would ultimately be achieved, whereby men and women would treat each other companionably as free and equal people.

De economische toestand der vrouw was not a great success in the Netherlands, perhaps because it fell in the shadow of a sensational novel that had just been published, *Hilda van Suylenburg* (1897) by Cécile Goekoop-de Jong van Beek en Donk.¹⁴⁰ Six months after publication, 4,000 copies had already been sold; the eighth edition appeared in 1919, at the time when women were granted active suffrage. In this book, all of the grievances against the ruling social order were passionately described, and all objections to the women's movement were thoroughly refuted. The humanitarian movement was more or less divided between men and women in the book: whilst Hilda focused on women's interests, her husband was occupied with the interests of the working-class. The two were brought together, however, in their little child; even in the cradle, the child was dedicated to the further propagation of 'Justice and Love'. Thus here, too, there was an attempt to

find a balance between equality and difference. The writer formulated it as follows: 'I believe that they [men and women] are *equivalent*, but very *different*, coins of the *same* value, but with different mintage!'¹⁴¹ The final pages included the summary: 'women's emancipation is the awakening of women to *true spiritual motherhood*!'¹⁴² With this 'maternalism', the emphasis was ultimately put on difference after all, showing how difficult it was, at the heart of feminist ideology, to bring together the underlying concepts in an organized way.

Not only was ideology a problem, however; the phenomenon of the political party also presented a dilemma for feminism. As suggested above, the final phase of achieving universal suffrage began with a strange compromise. This had led to an extensive discussion within the vvvk that involved two interwoven issues. The first was of a strategic nature: did this compromise have to be accepted as a first step towards full equality? The second was now that the doors of the political order appeared to have opened, what was 'women's politics' and how could it best be served? Drucker saw nothing in the compromise: women would become dependent on political parties to achieve full equality in the subsequent step, and men could simply not be trusted. But the majority of the vvvk accepted the compromise, in the expectation that the next step would come rapidly. This automatically led to the second question, however: how should women participate in the political order? Jacobs, the chair of the association, argued that women should put themselves forward as candidates for the House of Representatives. If a few of them were elected, then in any case they would be able to promote women's interests 'as free people', without being affiliated with any party. This proposal was rejected by a large majority, however. After this, a number of members of the vvvk had their names put down on the lists of political parties. Jacobs stood as a candidate for the vdb, and would have been elected had a male candidate, who felt that he had been passed over, not used dirty tricks to stop her.¹⁴³ Drucker appeared to have been justified in her opinion of men and her aversion to party politics. In 1919 the vvvk transformed itself into an Association of Female Citizens (*Vereeniging voor Staatsburgeressen*), a general pressure group that promoted women's rights. As such, it remained politically 'neutral' and did not participate in elections.

The underpinning of the demand for the right to vote also played an important role in relation to the appreciation of parties and party politics. For instance, it could be argued that every woman was a unique individual and had the right to decide for herself, to be the arbiter of her own fate. She could then choose one of the existing parties and exercise

influence within it to ensure that more attention was paid to women’s rights in the party programme. However, one could argue in the opposite sense that women had similar lives and formed a collective with common interests. Then the obvious course was to form a women’s party in order to promote them.

After some hesitation, the vvvk had opted for the former. It thereby came to a halt at the threshold of the political order, and held fast to its existence as part of a broad humanitarian movement. But there were some attempts to create a genuine women’s party. In December 1918, a Feminist Party (Feministische Partij, FP) was founded, ‘because women’s interests can best be advocated by women themselves’. At the end of 1921, the FP merged with a larger organization, the General Dutch Women’s Organization (Algemeene Nederlandsche Vrouwen Organisatie, ANVO). The ANVO was convinced that the First World War had demonstrated the failure of male politics, and it was thereby obliged to counter this with a ‘female politics’.¹⁴⁴ The family lay at the heart of this; the ‘living cell from which the body of the great society must be built’. In the 1922 elections, however, the party only won 6,000 votes (0.2 per cent of the electorate). After this, these kinds of initiatives no longer got off the ground.¹⁴⁵

Gaining the right to vote had been a great success, but it ultimately led to little. Exclusion from the franchise in the last quarter of the nineteenth century had become offensive, and it had to be brought to an end. This had worked, but the success was not capitalized upon. It rapidly became clear that participation in the formal political order was not a burning desire on the part of the female electorate. It did not result in the founding of a women’s party, and the number of women who played an important role in existing political parties also remained very limited, as shown by the proportion of women among the 100 MPs:

The number of female MPs

1922	1925	1929	1933	1937	1946	1952	1956
7	6	7	4	3	5	8	9

Source: www.parlement.com

This is also an international phenomenon, though; in comparison with England, France and Belgium, the numbers in the Netherlands were not really so low.¹⁴⁶ Perhaps this is the occurrence of a phenomenon that many intellectuals are often slow to grasp: a great many people were simply not

interested in politics, and women were somewhat less interested than men.¹⁴⁷ The VVVK's well-considered decision not to participate in elections was thus a wise one: the disappointing outcome that would have undoubtedly followed would have only undermined the symbolic importance of the many years of campaigning for the vote, and the result that had been achieved with this.

Political culture and the political party

This is not to say, though, that the women's movement did not succeed in exercising much influence on the political culture in a more general sense. At the interface between politics and society in particular, the influence of women only became greater: the expansion of the government's role, which had been brought about by the progressive liberals and then by the social democrats, was to a great extent dependent on their energetic contribution.¹⁴⁸

These women attached themselves to the tradition of 'productive virtue' and would even strengthen it substantially.¹⁴⁹ Whatever the motives, a social infrastructure was formed here, state and society were interwoven; this was the manner in which, as one writer put it, 'the mutual penetration of state and society' occurred.¹⁵⁰ Many areas of life, including education, childcare, mental health, illness, alcohol consumption, housing and labour, in which the state had hardly played a role until then, were now characterized by an element of coercion, regulation, permission or control by local government or the agencies that worked closely with it. Women made a major contribution to this process, 'the triumph of passion'.¹⁵¹ The women's movement and the labour movement, both jointly and in competition, would manage to bring the humanitarian tradition of justice and love into the political culture. Slowly but surely, the state took responsibility for achieving a more just and more decent society; whereby this tradition would also come to an end, to the extent that it was based on numerous associations. In the process, not only the form but also the content of the political culture was transformed.¹⁵²

For the time being, however, it was mainly the change in form that became clear: the establishment of the monopoly of the political party. Not only did this mean a transition from small, local electoral associations to national mass-based parties, but political parties also definitively assumed a central role. As Prime Minister Van der Linden said, when the subject was addressed:

The parties and their factions are no longer groups of voters who accept the leadership of well-known statesmen; they have become groups of voters who themselves determine the direction of state policy. They are not formed from the top down, but from the bottom up.¹⁵³

In this manner, so the thinking went, parliament would become a more accurate reflection of the population, and no vote would ever be lost again. At the same time, there was an awareness that this also brought a danger; namely, the shift from independent, unbound people's representatives to obedient party delegates.¹⁵⁴ In order to prevent this, a number of safety valves were built in. The first was the introduction of a system of proportional representation. In other words, rather than one (or more) delegate being chosen for each constituency, now the whole country was one constituency. Second, the decision was made to keep the electoral threshold low: it would be possible to win a parliamentary seat with less than one per cent of the vote. This would give the voters the possibility of bringing independent spirits into the House of Representatives and would also allow for the representation of small minorities. In this respect, proportional representation was intended as minority representation.¹⁵⁵ In addition, without much discussion, compulsory voting was introduced. The idea was that if everyone were obliged to go to the voting booth, this could prevent political parties from press-ganging accommodating voters. The irony was that the safety valves mainly had the effect of furthering the parties' grip on the voters and on the political order. The liberal parliamentary system of representation *for* the people thus came to an end. In its place came a party political order with one representation *of* the whole people; a people that, aided by ideology and political parties, had disintegrated into separate communities. The women had not wanted to become part of this pattern, whilst the socialists had adapted themselves with some difficulty.

6. The Nation is Divided into Parties

1930: The Pillarized-Corporate Order

On Saturday 6 September 1930, an estimated 140,000 people gathered in The Hague in the largest demonstration that had ever been held in the Netherlands. This impressive demonstration was in protest at the government's decision to allocate radio transmission time in accordance with the *geestesrichting*, or philosophy of life, of the broadcaster. As a result, one broadcasting association, the General Association of Radio Programming (Algemeene Vereeniging Radio Omroep, AVRO), which wanted to present a programme that 'could offend no one and could unite our People', had to watch as its transmission time was halved in favour of the Catholics, the Protestants and the social democrats. According to the speakers, in an increasingly divided country, just one area remained, the radio,

where hundreds of thousands of people could feel free outside of their political or religious compartment, and could reach out to one other. And *that* was not allowed. That was not what the political hawkers were selling, that struck a false note in the market of political barter – because, after all, our country is a country of trade AND religion, but also, if it comes in handy, of trade IN religion.¹

The demonstration took place in ominous times. In the same month, the *Algemeen Handelsblad* newspaper reported, one year after the Wall Street crash, that 'speculative sentiment is showing some recovery'.² This was meant to be reassuring, but as we know, the economic crisis was far from over. The international political situation was also hardly reassuring. On 6 September the French government had announced that the battlegrounds of the Great War had been cleaned up, the trenches filled in and the visible damage repaired. One week later, the results were announced of elections in Germany, where Hitler's NSDAP had made a breakthrough and become the second largest party in the Reichstag. The results were broadcast on German radio 'amid extremely sinister dance tunes ("la danse sur le volcan!")'.³

Adversity could also be noted closer to home, however. In the autumn of 1930, a prominent man in the agricultural organizations, H.D. Louwes, declared that the world had become an 'economic madhouse'. In any case, Dutch farmers could no longer compete on the world market; without an active government policy they would be ruined for good. He warned of the

consequences: the political parties were on the verge of losing the voters in the countryside. If the misery were to continue, the desperate agrarian population would become a breeding ground for 'all kinds of toxic excesses'. And with a reference to Germany, he put it to the political parties: 'If our farming community were to get a heavyweight political leader, then he would gain a following that would destroy much of the political balance altogether'.⁴

The demonstration against the dominance of the political parties in the Netherlands and the threat that this order might be radically changed one day indicate that the parties had achieved a monopoly in the political culture, but that at the same time, this monopoly was not simply accepted. The parties took decisions that were disliked by a substantial part of the population, and refrained from making decisions that large parts of society thought essential. After the constitutional revision of 1918, parliament was considered to be a faithful representation of 'the people', but the political parties appeared to be preventing this from having acceptable results. Worse still, the parties were symbolic of the discord within the community – and this in a world that had been thrown fundamentally out of balance since 1914. From 1914, a series of separate pamphlets was published under the title 'Synthesis' in an attempt to avert the danger of the community disintegrating into a number of egocentric 'families'.⁵ At a deeper level, moreover, was this not an expression of a development whereby it could no longer be assumed that people would follow tradition and convention? In an astute lecture of 1917, for example, the lawyer Clara Wichmann suggested that all of the 'old certainties' had been shaken: 'And it is certainly true that a time of searching is naturally also a time of erring'.⁶

The paradox of this period, however, is that this 'searching and erring' did not lead to change, but on the contrary, it led only to the strengthening of the key pillars of the new political culture: parties and ideology. The allocation of radio transmission time in 1930 can be seen as symbolic of this: four parties (the RSKP, the ARP, the CHU and the SDAP), which were all very different from one another, silently struck a deal. They recognized one another on the grounds that they had elaborate ideologies; they were, in the usage of the day, 'testimonial parties'. To proportional representation they added a proportional division of recognition, concessions and subsidies. In the 1930s, the term *verzuiling*, or 'pillarization', came into use. Although the form of the term suggested a process, in 1930 it was in fact clear that it had become an established principle; that is to say that a state of 'being pillarized' had been achieved whereby little further change would occur.

In accordance with this principle, 'single-issue parties' were ignored and even excluded. In a political culture dominated by the liberals, they were theoretically marginalized: independent representatives deliberated on the 'general' interest; social organizations promoted specific interests and nothing in between. The rise of the parties brought a change to this, although initially largely as an expression of spiritual interests (principles or 'testimonials'). After the turn of the century, however, more material interests would call for attention, and parties needed to connect these interests to principles in some way or another. This was difficult, given that it was precisely in a testimonial party that very diverse, if not conflicting, interests were represented. Even aside from this, there was the question of whether parliament ought to be occupied with such matters, or whether much of the deliberation of interests could not better be left to those involved. This would prevent the political order from becoming overburdened and would reduce the chance of conflicts within the parties. With this, one century after the abolition of the guilds, a 'neo-corporatist' culture emerged, whereby organized private enterprise arranged as many aspects of socio-economic life as possible, under the eye of the state. The most sensational example of this neo-corporate order would emerge in the 1930s in the area of agrarian politics.

Pillarization and neo-corporatism were the results of two analytically distinct processes, but jointly and in conjunction, politics and the economy were now deeply intermeshed. It was perhaps this that made the period after 1930 so stable, despite the economic crisis that raged on for years. Among other things, this meant that new ideologies such as communism and National Socialism had little success in the Netherlands, and that the testimonial parties could prevail unchallenged until 1940 and returned after the Second World War having made only minor changes. All things considered, this stability was a great good, but it did give rise to a number of questions. Political parties, in particular, wondered how stability could be maintained in view of the on-going modernization of society. Would the ideological bond be strong enough to retain their supporters, certainly given their manifest inability to combat unemployment? Intellectuals from various backgrounds wondered whether this stability should not be seen mainly as a sign of passivity and lack of interest. Was democracy really firmly anchored in the population, was the unity of the nation – and with this, the independence of the nation state – indeed safeguarded, and should the citizen not be urged to take up his role again as a *citoyen*, someone who played an active, autonomous role in politics? These kinds of questions revealed concerns about the outermost sphere of the political culture, that

which Tocqueville had called the 'habits of the heart': the quality of the population.

Testimonial parties

In the nineteenth century, the greater part of the population had little contact with the state, other than men having to report for military service.⁷ In the final quarter of the nineteenth century, however, the social-liberals had increased the level of intervention in the population. *Laissez-faire* was replaced with the ambition to take 'the national character to a higher level of development in every aspect of life'.⁸ Humanitarian sentiment became a structural component of state activity. The foundations of this regenerated state were laid with the introduction of income tax (1893) and compulsory education (1901), whilst the quality of life was improved with the introduction of the Housing Act and the Industrial Accidents Act (both in 1901).⁹ These were elements of a far-reaching change in society, whereby the traditional relations of authority – in the words of Max Weber, based on the 'Alltagsglauben an die Heiligkeit von jeher geltender Traditionen'¹⁰ – of the old social order were replaced by those of a modern, class-based society.

This society was organized on a rational basis, strongly determined by free-market relations, grounded in legal equality and ruled by government bureaucracy. Further development towards a stronger state faltered, however, at the beginning of the twentieth century, when the ambitions of the social-liberals were blocked by a coalition of conservative-liberals and confessionals. This was where the power of the 'old regime' had established itself, based on banking, trade and shipping interests on the one hand, and those of the traditional rural aristocracy on the other.¹¹

Connected to and in parallel with this far-reaching change, the process of unification in the Netherlands was accelerated. For centuries, many people had not looked beyond the horizon of their own hometown or region. But from the 1880s, all cities and many smaller places that lay between them were linked by means of around 2,000 kilometres of railway; and after this, further densification took place, so that in 1930 the network amounted to around 3,700 kilometres of track.¹² Not only were there more physical connections, but the number of socio-cultural connections also increased. Almost every association and organization wanted to create a national network, often by joining forces in federations, which allowed them to remain attached to their provincial roots whilst combining their strengths

at the national level. In addition, readers across the country were linked to each other in 'imagined communities' by the national press.¹³

During this period, political parties became important in almost every part of Europe; to a great extent, politics was party politics, and this was also the case in the Netherlands. This development was once expressed by the chairman of the social democratic party, Vliegen, when he said in the Senate:

Proportional representation is essentially the recognition of the fact that the nation is divided into parties; it means that people vote for parties.¹⁴

These parties also determined the order of the lists of candidates and, hence, the composition of the factions. Moreover, Vliegen considered that ideally, every voter would belong to a political party, as this would mean that 'the nation would consist of people who also knew what they wanted in a political sense'.¹⁵ As a result, no political refuge was to be found any more outside the political party.

Political parties focused on people who 'knew what they wanted in a political sense', but this largely meant that they were thought to share a philosophy of life or *geestesrichting*. A number of parties believed that they represented social groups with shared convictions that touched on every essential aspect of life, captured in customs, expressed in rituals, and asserted time and again in communal rhetoric. It was the party's role to guard and protect these communities, both from each other and from the state. They thereby justified each other's right to exist. In this way, the parties were warring units in the political arena, but at the same time they were also rooted in civil society. They were the linesmen with respect to the state, and simultaneously attempted to be the umpires of their own spheres. This was difficult, given that the parties had to appease conflicting interests within these spheres (of employers and employees, for example, or rural and industrial interests). The most important means they had to bind these different interests was ideology, also known as 'life convictions [*levensovertuiging*]'. As a result, this was given an aura of sanctity. Parties did have a number of fundamental political principles, but much more important was the fact that they represented a philosophy of life among the people.

The confessionals did not find it difficult to fulfil this role, whilst the social democrats adopted the pattern on the misguided basis that their views flowed directly from a scientific conception of human nature and the world. The liberals found this difficult, however; they had a *levensovertuiging*,

but they considered this largely a matter for individuals. As a result, the liberal Freedom League hardly succeeded in saying anything meaningful on the issue, because liberalism, as a party chairman explained in 1924, was ‘a concept that has so many aspects, simultaneously philosophical, political and economic, in its entirety a mentality and a whole life-goal for the individual and the State’, that this could not be captured in a few words.¹⁶ Whilst this was not a particularly strong argument, it did reveal the extent to which the party landscape had come under great pressure from ideology.

This party landscape was characterized by great ambivalence with regard to the small parties.¹⁷ The small testimonial parties – such as the Reformed Political Party (Staatkundig Gereformeerde Partij, SGP) or the Reformed (Orthodox) State party (Hervormde (Gereformeerde) Staatspartij, HGS), represented in the House of Representatives from 1921 and 1925 onwards, respectively – could not be batted away easily; they all too clearly represented a particular *geestesrichting*, even though they stemmed from that well-known ailment of Protestantism, the search for the lowest common multiple.¹⁸ Precisely because *geestesrichting* was such an important quality, they could not be denied entrance to the States General by means of a high electoral threshold, for example. As a spokesman for the anti-Catholic HGS would aptly put it: a small party might be ridiculed and abused, but it was a ‘miracle of steadfast principle’, whereby every member of this small party was worth at least as much as many of those in large parties.¹⁹ As a consequence, however, the door was also left wide open to ‘single-issue parties’. In the period between the two world wars, there were thus many small parties, some of them testimonial parties and some of them single-issue parties:

Elections to the House of Representatives (HoR), 1918–1940 [number of seats: 100]

Year	No. of parties	No. of factions in HoR	No. of one-man factions in HoR
1918	32	17	8
1922	48	12	2
1925	32	12	4
1929	36	12	5
1933	54	14	6
1937	20	10	0

Source: www.parlement.com

When the Electoral law was changed in 1935, the phenomenon of small parties was contained somewhat with the introduction of a deposit and by

raising the electoral threshold, which explains the fall in 1937.²⁰ Despite this, the system remained open and accessible. The show was run, however, by the six or so parties that saw each other as 'the great powers in Parliament'.²¹ The decision on radio transmission time would reveal how heavy-handedly the monopoly on *geestesrichting* could be enforced.

The decision on radio transmission time

After 1918, the radio was brought to life by trade and hobbyists, by the factories producing transmitting and receiving sets and radio amateurs.²² To promote the sales of sets, programmes were broadcast from 1919. From 1923, frequent broadcasts were transmitted by Wireless Broadcasting Hilversum (de Hilversumsche Draadlooze Omroep, HDO), the first 'broadcasting corporation', founded by the Nederlandsche Seintoestellen Fabriek. In response, in 1924 a number of orthodox Protestants set up their own association, the Dutch Christian Radio Association (Nederlandsche Christelijke Radio Vereniging, NCRV). This was followed a few months later by the Union of Roman Catholic Radio Associations, soon renamed Catholic Radio Broadcasting (Katholieke Radio Omroep, KRO), the Workers' Association of Radio Amateurs (Vereniging van Arbeiders Radio Amateurs, VARA), and the small-scale Freethinking Protestant Radio Broadcasting Association (Vrijzinning Protestantse Radio Omroep, VPRO). Whilst these associations initially had one broadcasting station, a second station was made available from 1927. After this a division took place: as the 'right', the NCRV and the KRO used one station (Huizen), while those on the 'left' used the other (Hilversum). They thereby followed the classic antithesis introduced by Kuyper.

In 1927, the HDO remodelled itself as the General Association of Radio Broadcasting (AVRO). It wanted to have full disposal over one of the stations in order to transmit a 'general' programme. As a consequence, the VARA would either disappear altogether or would have to switch over to the station used by the NCRV and the KRO. In response, the NCRV, the KRO, and the VARA united in a Committee of Broadcasting Associations that would protect their 'rights' with dogged persistence.

In 1930 the government allotted the available radio transmission time to the different associations. The conflict between the AVRO on the one hand and the other three associations on the other was solved with a heavy hand: the lion's share of transmission time (80 per cent) was divided equally between the four large broadcasting associations. In addition, they

had to take it in turns to provide a 'general programme'.²³ Aside from the consequences for the amount of transmission time that each association would now receive, the main point was that the AVRO was not recognized as a 'general' organization: the 'general programme' would after all now be provided by the four associations that had been authorized to broadcast programmes. What was more, the AVRO was in fact declared to be 'liberal'.

The liberals – from the conservative Freedom League to the progressive Freethinking Democratic League – were outraged. They thought that the AVRO was being refused a monopoly on the general programme because the programmes that it broadcast were more popular than those of the NCRV, the KRO and the VARA. Normal people, after all, did not want politics to encroach on their family lives, and had a horror of 'politics on the airwaves'.²⁴ In response, the social democrat Vliegen asserted that such arguments 'speculated on anti-political sentiments', whereby

the anti-political feeling that has always existed is being whipped up, and could become a dangerous element if, for example, fascism were to obtain more of a hold on politics, something that is spread by newspapers such as *De Telegraaf* year in, year out, with a certain skill; the situation is already presented as a great mess, and people must be made aware of this.²⁵

The core of the parliamentary debate was subsequently about whether *geestesrichting* was a deciding criterion. In that case, a number of MPs had questions. For example, whether the VARA did indeed represent a 'world-view', given the fact that social democrats had views on economics and politics, but otherwise claimed to be open to all convictions. Or, indeed, was it even possible to consider the AVRO as 'liberal', when this was denied outright by the association itself: 'When does the Minister have the right to say to a particular association: You think that you have such an outlook, but I declare that you have another one'.²⁶ One member of the Roman Catholic State Party (RKSP), tried and tested in the battle over education, had no difficulty with this question:

Let's not deceive ourselves with qualifications such as 'general' and 'neutral'. People have been playing hide-and-seek behind 'neutral' and 'general' for years. Is there not a Society for Public Welfare [Maatschappij tot Nut van 't Algemeen]? Do we have to accept that society as 'general' [*algemeen*]? Mr Speaker! That general broadcasting is of no use to either the Catholic or the Protestant or the socialist conviction; perhaps to the amazement of some people, but we will get over that.²⁷

It was a free-thinking democrat, Oud, who finally put his finger on the problem:

The Minister has based his artificial division on the four worldviews. I think that this is precisely the wrong way round. There are not four broadcasting associations because there are four worldviews, but four worldviews were devised because there were four broadcasting associations...²⁸

All the criticism, all the unanswered questions: it was to no avail. Even the Christian Historical Union (Christelijk Historische Unie, CHU), which had stated in its electoral programme that the party would resist 'the increasing tendency to group in accordance with religious, ecclesiastical and social differences',²⁹ voted for the government decision (58 votes to 15). And with this, pillarization became a fact – and not only on the air.

In the Senate – the *chambre de reflexion* – a freethinking-democrat had already snapped at the minister in the run-up to the decision: 'You are chopping the Dutch nation into four pieces. [...] I have [...] always had the feeling that a finely structured organism was being hacked up with a big butcher's cleaver'. But surely it could not be the case that the Dutch people did not have anything in common?

If that were true, then expressions such as 'our antirevolutionary people, our Catholic people' should not be seen as approximate metaphors, but as literal, hard truths; then four 'peoples' would be living as 'nations' on the territory of our fortunate State. But thankfully, that is not so.³⁰

A social democrat responded obdurately: 'But that's the way we are'. The Netherlands was a nation of theologians. The divisions had been there for centuries, they were in the Dutch blood: 'we are a nation that, indeed, in terms of our spiritual and cultural life, does not constitute a nation'.³¹

The division into four that took place in 1930 would have consequences that would stretch far beyond the allocation of transmission time. For a start, it is interesting to see how this sheds light on the relationship between the political level and social organizations. From an international perspective, the obvious course of action was to create one broadcasting organization; this was the practice in almost every European country.³² The broadcasting associations had rejected this, however. Politicians subsequently suggested a 'general programme', but this was also boycotted successfully (the NCRV was even opposed on principled grounds to communal 'lunch music').³³

This suggests a certain degree of impotence on the part of politics. On the other hand, however, the politicians proved themselves ready and able to stand up to the association with the oldest claim and the largest following, the AVRO, and to cut its transmission time significantly.³⁴

In fact, through this manoeuvre, it was even decided that there was no 'neutral' ground; such ground was 'liberal'. This way of thinking had been introduced by Kuyper, it had been reinforced by the Catholics, and now it was also accepted by the social democrats. This meant that it was now established that there were four *geestesstromingen* (philosophies of life); no more and no less. Any group that now presented itself would have to join one of the big four in order to have a chance of gaining the state's attention (and subsidies).

This division into four was applied in various areas in the 1930s, such as that of youth unemployment.³⁵ The Ministry of Social Affairs began to subsidize a number of youth organizations in this area, on condition that they grouped themselves in accordance with a *geestesrichting* in a central board.³⁶ Officials at the ministry forced any organization that did not fit with a Catholic, Protestant or social democratic board to cooperate in a neutral federation.³⁷ From the mid-1930s, these four boards would be referred to as the 'the so-called four pillars',³⁸ a metaphor that would subsequently become increasingly common. In 1939, for example, the social-democratic Minister of Social Affairs, Van den Tempel, spoke in the House of Representatives about

the pillars, those are the four national youth welfare organizations that represent different outlooks, which together provide youth services. These organizations are popularly known as pillars.³⁹

The metaphor came across as relatively neutral (something that would only change after the Second World War). Those who objected to the division into four in the 1930s did not refer to 'pillarization' but to 'compartmentalization' (*hokjes- en schotjesgeest*, the mentality of 'pigeon-holes and dividers').⁴⁰ And Queen Wilhelmina, the preeminent symbol of unity and harmony, put it yet another way in a radio address of 1939:

The discord and increasing division and fragmentation that confront us in daily life, and the mutual estrangement that comes with them, are bad remedies for the ailments of our age. Precisely at a time when many feel an increasing longing to work together and close ranks, and the need is felt to reach out to others, we must all strive, above all else, to understand one another and to be understood.⁴¹

Criticism of parties that refused to understand one another ran over into criticism of parliament as a whole. It is difficult to say how extensive or far-reaching this phenomenon was. Due to the introduction of compulsory voting, it cannot be gauged from the election turnout figures. In general, however, people referred to a 'crisis' of parliamentary democracy.⁴² This was an international phenomenon: 'Most parliamentary democracies in Europe began to look like democracies without democrats'.⁴³ It was partly a consequence of mass unemployment in the 1930s, which had a crippling effect. In the Netherlands, parliament might have been a true reflection of the population, but this did not give it any powerful executive authority. As a result, the continuation of the crisis – and in the Netherlands, the low point did not come until 1936 – even appeared to be a direct result of the large number of parties.

In a more immediate sense, the limited space in which to act, both for parliament and the government, was largely a consequence of the complicated position of the party that lay at the heart of the political order, if only due to its size: the RKSP. For many years, it was not really possible to speak of a 'Catholic party'; that which presented itself as such was internally divided by 'regional jealousy, political differences of opinion, personal rivalries and fundamental issues of competence'.⁴⁴ Even the initial attempts to centralize the various Catholic electoral associations hit formidable obstacles. Aalberse, the man who as no other would strive to unite all Catholic associations and organizations, still had little hope of success in 1904: 'It is actually folly to speak of a Catholic *political* party. Shall we ever agree on one key point?'⁴⁵ Achieving unanimity only became somewhat realistic in the 1920s, when employees' representatives, modern employers, teachers and civil servants managed to limit the power of the party's aristocratic leadership, and the party as a whole went in a more 'democratic' direction. This change was put into effect with the formal founding of the Roman Catholic State Party (Roomsche-Katholieke Staatspartij, RKSP, 1926), after which various aristocrats, many of whom had belonged to the Catholic faction for decades, left the stage. As a result, the views of the RKSP became more 'socially-minded'. This meant that on the one hand, the distance increased between the party and the anti-revolutionaries (who, by contrast, were being driven by their political leader, Colijn, in a more liberal-conservative direction); while on the other hand, the distance from the social democrats became smaller (due to the fact that the latter had distanced themselves from their radical past after the failure of the revolution in 1918). A 'democratic paradox' thus emerged: the smaller the differences between the Catholics and social democrats became, the greater

the risk that Catholic workers would cross over to the SDAP. Whilst a coalition between the RKSP and the SDAP would have been obvious in terms of their programmes, at the same time, this step was strategically impossible (such a coalition would only be agreed in 1939, but its significance remained limited in the shadow of the approaching war).⁴⁶ As a result, the central party in the political order (which held 30 of 100 seats) was indecisive on a matter as critical as economic policy in a long-lasting crisis. The policy that was implemented thus offered no prospects.

This paralyzing situation provoked two responses. The first was the rise of a National Socialist movement (Nationaalsocialistische Beweging, NSB), which was started in the autumn of 1931. The NSB justified its right to exist as follows:

What does the National Socialist movement want to be? A party, or a small party, the 59th, or the 95th, or the 210th? By no means. In the first place, it wants a regeneration of the spirit, both politically and economically, of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Within this Kingdom, on which the sun indeed never sets, there reigns such a growing spirit of lethargy, powerlessness, unwillingness, indifference, unbelief, discord, sectarianism and squabbling that it is past bearing, that it sometimes seems as though the nation were gathering the disintegrating powers to commit suicide.⁴⁷

In the NSB's view, the 'nation' was a community that had been divided by differences in belief and the party politics based on these, but would regain its unity under powerful leadership. At the provincial elections of 1935, the party won 7.9 per cent of the vote (which would have translated into around eight seats in the House of Representatives), thereby becoming the fifth party in the Netherlands in one fell swoop. This is particularly striking because comparable parties in Scandinavia, England, Ireland and France failed to gain more than around 2 per cent of the vote in this period.⁴⁸ Dutch politics was therefore not remarkably stable, as is sometimes assumed.

The NSB did not manage to capitalize on its success in 1935; on the contrary, in the parliamentary elections of 1937, the party lost almost half its support (4.2 per cent of votes cast). At the provincial elections of 1939 the support fell a little further (3.9 per cent),⁴⁹ with which the success of this response died out as quickly as it had arisen.

A second response to pillarization aimed not so much at pushing the party order aside as at countering what the queen had called 'estrangement'. Various organizations and a wide range of intellectuals came to the conclusion that the political order, if not society in general, had fallen apart, and

that people no longer talked to each other, let alone listened to each other. People from the different pillars came into contact with each other in 1932 to discuss youth unemployment, for example, and for Vorrink of the SDAP, it was a revelation 'that in our country, it has proved possible to discuss the issue of youth unemployment in such a companionable sphere with people of such diverse views'.⁵⁰

A number of students' organizations took the initiative to organize so-called 'national unity' conferences during this period. The first of these was held in 1934, at which the celebrated historian of the Netherlands, Huizinga, gave a lecture that he subsequently developed into a book, *Nederland's Geestesmerk* (*The Dutch Spirit*; more on this below). At these meetings, the participants made cautious attempts to wrest themselves from the 'grip of discord', although it remained unclear whether this was a non-binding discussion, the coordination of attempts to reform existing parties from the inside, or the first steps on the way to forming a new party. For the time being, however, it only involved a marginal group, although contacts were made and views shared that would prove to be of some significance during and after the Second World War.⁵¹

The parties that had been the strongest supporters of the partition of the country into four (the RKSP, the CHU, the ARP and the SDAP) held out in the inter-war years. Together, they had approximately 70 per cent of the electorate in their hands, and this remained the case, crisis or no crisis. Thus despite all the discussion about the crisis of parliamentary democracy, it can be said that on the whole, the 'pillarized parties' commanded a large amount of support. This support even increased somewhat: in 1918 they won 72 of the 100 seats in the parliamentary elections, and in 1937 that figure rose to 79. This also suggests that the ideological bond between the majority of parties and their supporters was very strong. But ideology was not enough; parties also had to be seen to do justice to interests.

Agriculture

The Netherlands traditionally had a very open economy, and was thus very susceptible to the process of globalization that started around 1870. The country became increasingly dependent on a new world, in which time and space had been fixed globally since 1884 (in Greenwich, as decided by the Prime Meridian Conference in Washington) and in which weights and measures could be calibrated internationally (since 1889, at the Bureau International des Poids et Mesures in Paris). On the basis of the gold

standard, which became the norm in the developed world between 1871 and 1900, markets were integrated and there was a transatlantic reorganization of land, capital and labour forces. A high level of interconnectedness was thereby achieved, much of which would be lost in the period between 1914 and 1945, and which would only be achieved again far into the twentieth century.⁵²

The changes that resulted from all of this led, understandably, to calls for protection from these forces, and pressure on governments to intervene in the economy: 'The nation-state, as we know it, is a response to the challenges of the first wave of globalization'.⁵³ And intervention in the form of protecting the national market initially proved sensible, if only because it gave upcoming industries the chance to develop. All developed countries – with England as the sole exception – followed protectionist policies: those countries that did not experienced slower economic growth than those that switched to protectionism.⁵⁴

The Netherlands imposed an import tariff, although it was one of the lowest in the Atlantic world. This fitted with a tradition of trade and shipping that profited from having as few constraints as possible. Thanks to the liberals, free trade practically had the status of an article of faith. When a proposal was made in 1912 to impose a real tariff, an Anti-Tariff-Law Committee was hastily convened. The driving force behind this, Ernst Heldring, published his views in *De Gids*. These were partly based on the notion that the Netherlands was a small country. A large country could in fact be self-sufficient, but the Netherlands could not afford to be; it had very few natural mineral resources, and the Dutch economy could not rely on domestic consumption alone. On the other hand, the Netherlands was connected to a number of large countries by means of the sea and waterways. Due to its location, the country was destined to be the 'warehouse-area of Europe'.

Another argument was that protection led to the decay of the state and of politics. Heldring cited the President of the United States, Wilson, who had said shortly beforehand that tariff legislation provoked a flood of all kinds of appeals to the state to give preferential treatment to particular businesses or enterprises. It made the government 'a desirable prey and the political parties the means to capture that prey'. According to Heldring, this was not yet the case in the Netherlands:

In this country, we are still far removed from the American situation [...], but we have one thing here that makes protection more dangerous for us than for large realms: it is easy to reach the ear of Government in this small country.⁵⁵

Due to the fact that The Hague was so close by and the threshold of government offices easily crossed, nepotism – if not corruption – should be feared in the Netherlands more than elsewhere. Protection therefore not only furthered laziness, but it also threatened the purity of politics. In a small country in particular, a wise government should renounce protection and limit itself to promoting the economy. The draft tariff legislation of 1912 did not even get as far as a debate in parliament, but this did not mean that the Netherlands would not escape the consequences of globalization; and these were most visible in agriculture.

A deciding factor in globalization was the fall in transportation costs, both within the United States (railways) and across the ocean (steamships). As a result, American farmers were able to bring their grain cheaply to the European market from 1870, putting agricultural prices under significant pressure. Agrarian income fell into the red at the beginning of the 1880s, and this sector was generally loss-making until around 1910. This gave a boost to specialization and the intensification of agrarian farming. Production was increased through the use of artificial fertilizer and imported feed, supported by the government through scientific research, agricultural education and quality standards, whilst farmers extricated themselves from intermediaries by forming cooperatives (both for the purchase of artificial fertilizer and the sale of dairy products, for example). The entire sector thereby became focused on upgrading: in came artificial fertilizer and feed, out went vegetables, dairy products and meat. Imports and exports rose as a result, but the sector's dependence on economic trends also grew with this. A further characteristic of the new system was that the more or less traditional family business remained at its heart. In addition to horticultural businesses, this mainly involved numerous small businesses in areas of sandy soil, which kept pigs and chickens on relatively small areas.⁵⁶

The government had focused – to use Heldring's terminology – on the promotion, not the protection, of agriculture, and to this end, it strengthened its contacts with this sector. In 1893 the Dutch Agricultural Committee (Nederlandsch Landbouw Comité, NLC) – a federal amalgamation of existing provincial agricultural societies – was solemnly inaugurated by the Minister of Agriculture as the official representative of Dutch agriculture; in 1918, the NLC was even granted the designation 'Royal'. A separate Agriculture Department was set up at the Ministry of Internal Affairs in 1898. Agriculture was the first sector in the economy in which a formal, structural system of consultation was created between the government and 'organized business'.

The NLC was not representative of the agricultural sector in every respect. It was run not so much by 'farmers' as by 'gentlemen' with an interest in agriculture, such as notaries and burgomasters. The organization was also more focused on improving agricultural technology than on directly promoting the material interests of farmers. And to the extent that this did happen, more attention was paid to large agrarian businesses in the north than to smallholders in the east and south of the country. In the 1890s this led to the rise of unions that emphatically called themselves 'farmers' unions'. For a large part, the inspiration for these came from Germany and Belgium.⁵⁷ The German unions were characterized by their inter-confessional basis, which did not result in any problems because few Protestants were members. This was also the solution that was found in the Netherlands when various regional unions were brought together in a national Dutch Christian Farmers' Union (Nederlandsche Christelijke Boerenbond, NBC, 1896): inter-confessional in name, but largely Catholic in practice. The NBC focused strongly on organizing smaller farming businesses into all kinds of cooperatives, thereby getting rid of intermediaries, who in their opinion were people who sucked the farmers dry through 'profiteering, monopoly and other dirty tricks'.⁵⁸ In fact, in the view of the NBC, the farming community was suffering under the yoke of an outspoken industrial sector, the depraved city and amoral socialism, while the liberal government had failed to come to its aid. Promotion was not enough; there had to be 'protection' as well.

Inter-confessionalism was brought to an end after a few years. The bishops had already let it be known in 1903 that they were not in favour: 'if Catholic associations are possible, then no Christian associations should be established'. This was explained by the theologian and sociologist (and later bishop), Aengenent: 'After all, we must attempt to implement our Catholic convictions in every area...' He subsequently pointed out that Kuyper had also believed that inter-confessionalism had resulted in an 'inevitable weakening of principles'.⁵⁹ So the founding of a Protestant farmers' organization in 1912 was greeted with relief, after which the NCB became a purely Catholic association. At the start of the First World War there were three agricultural organizations: one 'neutral' (but liberal to a strong degree), one Catholic and one Protestant. In parallel with this, three agricultural workers' unions had also been created.⁶⁰

After the outbreak of the First World War, the agricultural sector's problems appeared to be over: farmers could ask high prices, given that demand from Germany was insatiable. But not everything could be exported, as

sufficient food stocks also had to be retained for the Dutch population. Moreover, imports of feed faltered. All of this required substantial government intervention in this period (limits on exports, requisitioning of the harvest, and the distribution of imports of artificial fertilizer and feed, which had become more scarce), at the level of individual businesses. Whilst farmers grew increasingly critical of bureaucratic interference in their businesses, the population complained increasingly loudly about food shortages, which were blamed on greedy farmers. The conflict of interests assumed the contours of a deeply engrained socio-cultural battle, whereby relatively small issues quickly gained great symbolic importance.

Such an issue was the introduction of summertime. In the spring of 1916, it was announced that Germany would introduce summertime from 1 May in order save energy. France and England immediately followed Germany's example. In April the House of Representatives decided, without a ballot, to introduce summertime by way of an experiment. It soon proved that the farmers objected to this innovation: they were unable to mow an hour earlier due to the morning dew on the ground, and when the cows had to be milked in the morning it was impossible to find them in the meadow in the dark. Summertime was therefore ignored in a number of regions, or two separate time systems were kept. The temporary regulation was nevertheless extended in 1917, and in March 1918 the House of Representatives decided by 38 votes to 23 to introduce summertime definitively. The savings to be made on lighting (coal, gas, electricity and petroleum) proved the deciding argument.⁶¹

This debate assumed a new dimension with the arrival of Braat in the House of Representatives (September 1919) as the representative of the Countrymen's League (Plattelandersbond), a political party that had been founded in 1917 by a number of radical farmers from Holland. They lacked a consistent programme, but they were simmering with resentment at the government's agrarian policy and had little regard for politics as such.⁶² Their aversion to what was seen as urban refinement also determined the political actions of 'Farmer Braat'. During his election campaign he had called the House of Representatives a pigsty, and when he was inaugurated, various MPs had made grunting noises. No one greeted him – a fate with which only Nieuwenhuis had been blessed to date – until Troelstra broke the isolation and welcomed him. After this, Braat told his voters 'that he had not introduced himself to all the MPs, as is customary. He was not able to do that, because his heart was full. As a farmer, he was very opposed to that House'.⁶³ It soon proved that his heart was also full of the issue of summertime. In November 1919, he declared in parliament:

The introduction of so-called summertime is a great impediment to the farmer and horticulturalist, to the countryman. When there is talk of resetting the clock during the summer, every farmer and horticulturalist has a hard time. This is an impediment to the business. What do we gain from putting the clock an hour ahead during the summer? What is the point of that? I have heard it claimed that it gives one more hour of sunlight, an additional hour of daylight.

I don't believe it. I don't believe that the sun will shine for one more hour, that the day will be an hour longer. Everything will remain the same; the resetting of the clock during the summer is simply a torment for the population of the countryside.⁶⁴

And with this, summertime became symbolic of the opposition between town and countryside. Braat returned to the issue time and again, and even submitted a private member's bill for the abolition of summertime. After substantial preparation, it was debated in the House of Representatives in March 1923. The first speaker, Lovink (CHU), opened the debate with the following sentence:

Mister Speaker! I do not believe there has been a subject that in recent years, not only here but also in our neighbouring countries, has drawn so much attention and has so roused the emotions as the issue of summertime.⁶⁵

It was an opening that revealed little sense of proportion; not one year previously, for example, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Rathenau, had been murdered in Germany.⁶⁶ Lovink then made it even worse by giving a confused lecture on the history of chronology since the ancient Babylonians. Everything became jumbled in the debate that followed, and solar time, time zones and summertime were hopelessly muddled. In fact, the debate was not about chronology, but about the relationship between the town and the countryside. Town-dwellers were accused of being haughty and lazy, farmers of tiresome conservatism. Finally, however, the House of Representatives decided to abolish summertime. This did not solve the problem, however: one month later, the Senate reinstated summertime; two years later, the House of Representatives abolished it again, after which it was again reinstated by the Senate.⁶⁷

Braat was not successful as an MP, mainly because he was not taken seriously due to his unpolished style. After a failed attempt in 1925, in 1932 a more respectable National Farmers', Gardeners' and Tradesmen's Party

(Nationale Boeren-, Tuinders- en Middenstandspartij, NBTM) was founded, but it collapsed after a few years.⁶⁸ In the meantime, the farmers' problems had become greater than ever before.

In the course of the 1920s, incomes in both the livestock industry and arable farming had fallen so sharply that hardly any business was profitable any more. From 1929 onwards, the situation in various regions of the country even became critical; the losses that were suffered mounted every year, and whole regions threatened to fall into decline.⁶⁹ The sector's dependence on international economic trends weighed hard. In the countryside growing attention was paid to the views of a former official from the Department of Agriculture, Jan Smid, who asserted that the agricultural sector had been treated unfairly. His argument ran as follows. As a result of the organization of industrial workers, wage increases had been achieved and numerous social measures had been taken. With the cooperation of the government, entrepreneurs and workers had succeeded in shifting the costs of this onto agriculture: after all, owing to the politics of free trade, farmers were not in a position to raise their prices. This transfer was short-sighted, because it failed to take account of the fact that the whole industrial structure rested on agricultural foundations. Given the population pressure in Western Europe, in the foreseeable future every country would be forced to grow food for its own population on its own land and reduce its dependence on foreign imports. The Netherlands would also have to follow this path; it would have to focus on self-sufficiency and protect itself from other countries. Seen in this light, free trade was an unwise policy.

Free trade was also unjust: whilst it might lead to low food prices for town-dwellers, it resulted in poverty for the farmers. They, too, had a right to an income that was in reasonable proportion to remuneration for other kinds of work. Moreover, in Smid's view, cultural values were at stake: it was not the proletarian mentality of consumption, but the agrarian mentality of production that ultimately kept society going. After all, this involved character traits such as frugality and a readiness to work hard, values such as accepting personal responsibility for one's own living and that of one's children. In this sense, the quality of society as a whole would be improved if the emphasis were no longer on raising salaries, but on a more equal division of property. In any case, as a first step towards this, an end had to be brought to the process whereby farmers were being ground between the policy of free trade and social politics.⁷⁰

This argument went down well with farmers. It was a justification of the growing feeling of neglect and the increasing criticism of existing pressure groups, which were achieving far too little. In the course of 1931, 'political

farmers' unions' emerged here and there. They initially considered setting up a National Farmers' Party, but Smid's thinking set them on another course. According to him, it was wiser to act as a kind of pressure group and to force politics across a broad front towards a policy that took greater account of the agricultural sector's wishes. For this purpose, the regional unions gathered in 1934 to form the National Union of Agriculture and Society (Nationale Bond Landbouw en Maatschappij, L&M). Three years later, the society had more than 20,000 members.⁷¹

L&M abandoned direct political representation so as to remain free to 'persuade all political parties of the value of agriculture and its practitioners for the whole Dutch nation in an economic and cultural respect'. In the years in which elections were held, L&M maintained contact with various political parties and subsequently advised its members on how to vote. Farmers' organizations in Germany, France and Belgium had managed to gain an influential position in a similar way.

This strategy was not very successful in the Netherlands, however. This was partly due to the lack of a strategic coalition with industrial employers (such as in Germany). More important was L&M's attitude with regard to political parties. They were seen as kinds of "PLCs" for the exploitation of the electorate, prepared to concede to all demands that promised them more votes'. Farmers had long thought that they could do without politics. L&M also lacked the people, training and money that would have allowed it to build up relations in politics, while it had bad relations with other agricultural organizations.⁷²

A spectacular rescue operation for agriculture was launched nevertheless, without any cooperation from L&M. It came about through intensive cooperation between the recognized agricultural committees, agricultural specialists from almost all factions and government officials, who together 'formed one front, the green front'.⁷³ At first, supportive measures were introduced for specific products such as sugar beet, potatoes and wheat. As early as 1933, however, a comprehensive legislative framework was introduced, the Agricultural Crisis Act, covering the whole agrarian sector. As a result, between 1933 and 1936, the agricultural sector received annual support amounting to more than 200 million guilders (for a total agrarian income of 400-500 million guilders and a state budget of between 800 million and a billion guilders). The cost of a range of foodstuffs rose by 8-10 per cent as a result.⁷⁴ Whilst the desperate and sometimes irrational farmers of L&M had achieved little or nothing, through their very existence they had helped respectable pressure groups to achieve this success. The consequences of globalization in the

countryside were mitigated as a result, although this hardly reduced the level of dissatisfaction.

With the Agricultural Crisis Act, free trade was largely abandoned and accordingly, the traditional coalition of large farmers and employers from the trade and shipping industries also disintegrated. Industrial companies also received assistance, but this was a question of 'promotion', not 'protection'. The sums that were involved were not in the same league as those allotted to agriculture. Whilst no coalition could be agreed in parliament to defend industrial interests, a 'green front' had emerged that would continue to function for decades as a powerful advocate of rural interests. This also brought a change to power relationships in the countryside. In large swathes of the rural world a more or less feudal sphere had prevailed, but this was now replaced with the rationality of the national bureaucracy and contact with faction specialists from the various political parties. When necessary, the ideology was adjusted to give space to interests. More generally, however, the question was whether this would be sufficient to retain the bond with the supporters; whether, in a modernizing society, the propagation of ideology and meeting interests would indeed be enough.

Mass-man

It was generally thought in those days that modernization would have the almost unavoidable effect of making the individual start to behave like a 'mass-man [*massamens*]'. Even if people showed some 'character', in certain situations they would become lost in the crowd. The individual was no longer a separate person, but part of an 'âme collective'; a collective soul that had taken a regressive step in civilization. This was the core of the analysis by the French sociologist Le Bon, *Psychologie des foules* (1895), which was read everywhere, in many editions and translations. A year later, he announced that the mass character of society would only intensify, due to the march of socialism on the one hand and the loss of self-confidence on the part of the elite on the other.⁷⁵ Until then, thinking about politics had been based on an assumption of rationality, but now irrationality had to be taken into account.

An interesting variant on this theme was developed by Kuyper, the first man in the Netherlands to set up a mass-based party. In 1910 he published a booklet entitled *Ons instinctieve leven* (*Our instinctive life*), in which he followed Le Bon for the most part, but also showed that people together

did not always take a step backwards, but were also in a position to take a step forwards:

Man was not created to be alone. [...] As people, we were created in an organic relationship with other people. We belong together. [...] Like the nightingale, man has his hour when he sings his song alone; but singing it in a choir with others who are moved by similar urges not only brings a different benefit, but also a higher one. Ten people together are a greater force than ten individuals alone. Through working together, everyone gains an exponent. Together, we are more courageous, more daring. Being together reveals hidden powers. Being together is inspiring; it lifts the spirit, it arouses the passions.⁷⁶

Kuyper added that it had been the great mistake of the liberals to base themselves on 'individual man [*de persoon alleen*]', thereby failing to utilize the power of 'man in a crowd'. This mistake was linked to an over-intellectualized approach to 'the people': they 'live differently, feel differently, and in general are not led by reflection, but by the impulse of the instinctive life'. And it was the quality of the anti-revolutionary movement that it had managed to utilize this insight. It was precisely through this that it was possible 'to kindle sobriety into passion, cool calculation into pious enthusiasm...'.⁷⁷ In other words: the power of 'unity' lay in the instinctive life.

Among European intellectuals there was increasing interest in the irrational side of human beings and life during this period.⁷⁸ In the Netherlands, for example, this was shown by the gradual blurring of the use of the term 'character', in which the classical liberal notion of the rational, autonomous individual had resounded so emphatically. Opposed to this was the rise of the term 'personality', which offered much more space to all-round development, including its irrational aspects.⁷⁹

At the same time, there was broad awareness that these irrational aspects could lead to problems, given the nature of the Dutch character. After all, the people were 'undisciplined', as had become unmistakably clear just before the First World War. In the spring of 1914, a trio of French tourists, including the writer Jules Romains, had been harassed in Harderwijk by the local population. The French Minister of Foreign Affairs complained about the incident to his Dutch counterpart. This resulted in a column in a number of newspapers, published for four weeks, with the heading 'Barbaarsch Nederland [The Barbarous Netherlands]'. The government put the incident to the Disciplinary Union (Tuchtunie), a federation of a large number of organizations that had been established in 1908 with the aim of

clamping down on the gradual growth of 'unbridled freedom'.⁸⁰ According to the Disciplinary Union, this lack of discipline had been able to spread largely due to the lack of mutual contact between the classes in the Netherlands. 'There are few nations in which there has for so long been such a great distance between the gentleman and what are known as the people, as there has in ours'. On the one hand, this had led to a kind of hostility with regard to the elite, but on the other hand, the upper classes had looked away. When things went wrong, a 'gentleman' did nothing: 'He is cowardly, because he is scared for his decency, for his top hat, for his jacket, for his precious self'.⁸¹

After the First World War, these concerns were viewed in an even broader perspective: was indiscipline not linked to the Netherlands' lack of significance as a nation state? The country was small and densely populated, but it had not been forged into one entity through shared suffering. The Netherlands had not really gone through anything for centuries. This had led to a great indifference to 'all questions of national significance'. Not once in a hundred years had the government attempted to take a stand in international politics, no one cared about defence, and this vacuum was filled with trifles on the one hand and arguments about the vaguest of abstractions on the other. As a result, politics led only to the 'most undisciplined meetings'. The Netherlands lay at an international intersection, to be sure, but it was missing the link between 'small-group awareness and broad international feeling'. It had condemned itself to be barren, wrote the journalist Ritter: 'We are a national of seven million solitary individuals...'⁸²

It would only really be possible to solve this problem with the aid of some kind of religious bond or another. This was by no means a new idea: designers of new societies, such as Saint-Simon and Robert Owen, had also developed a 'new religion' as part of their plans. But increasing numbers of people no longer wished to be bound; secularism rose sharply from 1900, and in 1930 1.1 million Dutch people (more than 14 per cent of the population) did not wish to be counted as part of a particular church or denomination.⁸³ In 1933 one of the first academic studies of this phenomenon was published.⁸⁴

The phenomenon of the 'mass-man' was viewed with a certain sense of powerlessness, and the rise of communism magnified these concerns considerably. Le Bon's sombre predictions seemed to be coming true. One cultural historical analysis of this phenomenon was the study entitled *La rebelión de las masas* (*The revolt of the hordes*) by the Spanish philosopher Ortega y Gasset, published in 1930. A Dutch translation appeared in 1933, entitled *De opstand der horden*; and in 1937 the book gained international renown thanks to a French translation. Ortega y Gasset had prepared the French edition in the Netherlands, a country that he had visited a number

of times, probably at the invitation of the historian Huizinga. They had met in 1932 at an international philosophical congress in The Hague, held to commemorate the 300th anniversary of the birth of Spinoza. In the years that followed, Ortega y Gasset made regular visits to the Netherlands, where he gave well-attended lectures.⁸⁵

De opstand der horden argued that European civilization was in danger of succumbing to the rise of the 'mass-man'. This was someone who no longer had an inner life, 'no "I" that refused to let itself be pushed away'. This was dangerous, given that the rise of this type of person went hand in hand with the 'absorption of all things and the whole person by politics'. This 'integral politicism' was particularly bad because it took the place of all forms of 'wisdom', such as religion and science. It was even worse than this, as could be seen from syndicalism or fascism; then the mass-man was no longer concerned with the question of whether he was right, but it was simply enough to have an opinion: 'This is the new situation: the right to be wrong, the right to be unreasonable'.⁸⁶

Huizinga supported this in *Nederland's Geestesmerk* of 1934 and *In de schaduwen van morgen* (*In the shadows of tomorrow*) of 1935. Civilization was threatened by 'the intoxication of the manipulated herds' and 'the primacy of life over understanding'. This created space for 'the violent': 'In the fanaticism of a people's movement, they will become death's executioners'.⁸⁷ Was the Netherlands in a position to resist such dangers? The answer was negative and the reason, according to Huizinga, lay in the party order:

We live under the heavy cover of a completely antiquated party system, which has become fossilized owing to the blunder of proportional representation.

The confessional parties in particular, now that they had had their victory in the battle over education, had no right to exist any more; their continuation was a tiresome form of hypocrisy. But the other parties also mouthed slogans in which they hardly believed any more. The social democrats, for example, still spoke of revolution, but they were only 'merely progressive'. Proportional representation had made everything worse by implying that in a democracy, 'every stupidity and every interest had an equal right to recognition and promotion'. This should therefore also be abolished, 'immediately and utterly'. In Huizinga's opinion, the party system would be so much fairer if it were based on a tripartite division that reflected the existing 'temperaments' or 'general philosophies of life': conservative, progressive

and radical.⁸⁸ In other words, the 'testimonial parties' should be replaced by parties that were based on a kind of political psychology.

This suggestion had not the ghost of a chance, but this does not detract from the fact that almost all of the parties were in fact convinced of the need to pay more attention to the ways in which they could connect emotionally with their followers, and if needs be bind them on irrational grounds. Even in a party of dignitaries such as the CHU it was said that: 'Anyone who understands the psychology of the masses understands that a single word, a single concept, can sometimes have great influence on the masses'.⁸⁹ The social democrats in particular would be prepared to go a long way down this road.

As early as 1892, the Austrian party leader, Adler, had stated that it was important to appeal to the emotions.⁹⁰ In 1908 the English socialist and political scientist Wallas had written that thinking was far too intellectual regarding human action in general and political choices in particular. In 1920 he added a foreword to the third edition of his *Human Nature in Politics* in which he wrote that this point had indeed become clear after the Great War.⁹¹ The Belgian-German theorist and politician, De Man, made a similar observation in *De psychologie van het socialisme*, which appeared in a Dutch edition in 1927. According to him, one should not exaggerate the success of scientific insights and arguments:

The masses [...] always relate to the science of their scholars like the African negro to his witch doctor. The more strangely, secretly and ceremoniously he performs, the higher an opinion they have of him.

It was this that made the 'oppressive unreadability' of *Das Kapital* so good: the fact that it was incomprehensible allowed people to believe in it and to base a political religion on it.⁹²

In the Netherlands, too, social democrats realized that it might be important to appeal to instincts and sentiments. In this way the supporters could be cut loose from the indifferent masses, as it were, and be formed into a community.⁹³ In 1932 the SDAP set up a 'Committee on the central insignia' to look into whether an insignia should be introduced for the movement's members. After all, in Germany the NSDAP had had great success with such forms of advertising. No such insignia was introduced, but the committee was convinced that the propaganda to be implemented was not so much dependent on

the absolute correctness or incorrectness of the principles, [but rather on] the manner in which these principles are proposed, proclaimed

and suggested to [the masses] and even imposed on them. [...] In the propaganda of ideas (just as much as for the advertising of merchandise), it is not only about influencing people's 'common sense', but just as much, if not more, their feelings and imagination.⁹⁴

Thus according to a consultant advertising executive, an extremely ambitious proposal to cut unemployment, the Labour Plan (1935), should be sold as if it were about razor blades or cars. Young people, for example, should not be approached with a slogan such as, 'Young people will find work thanks to the Plan', but there should be references to the 'sexual side of the case': NEW FAMILIES THANKS TO THE PLAN, OR: THE PLAN MEANS OPPORTUNITY TO MARRY.⁹⁵ This advertising executive clearly knew his Freud.⁹⁶

The conviction held by many intellectuals that the population was led largely by sentiments and instincts heightened the concerns about the attractions of fascism. As a result, during the war, the elites from the different political factions held intense discussions about 'regeneration'. The occupation of the Netherlands by Germany was part of a punishment for the antiquated party order, the inability to deal with the crisis and the division within the nation.⁹⁷ The 'spirit of compartmentalization' had to be overcome, the era of antithesis and class conflict was over, the new community should be based on 'positive norms such as mercy, justice, truth and charity'.⁹⁸ It was necessary to link mass-man, as it were, to the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7 and Luke 6:20-49). All of the dividing lines had to be abandoned in order to form a real nation. Max Weber described this way of thinking as the expression of a strong need for 'the fraternity of direct relationships'.⁹⁹ According to this, politics was equated with dissension and should in fact be abolished. Only a very few were opposed to this. The historian Geyl asserted that the Dutch population had hardly fallen prey to fascism; the contrary was true, as shown by the relatively small size and isolated position of the NSB. He subsequently rejected the basic notion underlying these kinds of analyses: 'Our misery does not stem from "disintegration" or "atomization" or "dechristianization", but from a conquest that has nothing to do with any of these'.¹⁰⁰ His was a lonely voice, however.

The end of ideology

Little came of the idea of 'regeneration' after the liberation.¹⁰¹ The old party order returned, although it experienced some difficulties and some

adjustments were made.¹⁰² The Catholics renamed themselves the Catholic People's Party (Katholieke Volkspartij, KVP), the SDAP merged with a number of reformers, largely from the Freethinking Democratic League, and became the Labour Party (Partij van de Arbeid, PVDA), and that was it. More fundamental change was practically ruled out: the electorate showed little eagerness to fly the familiar nest. The testimonial parties thus remained dominant:

Number of seats in a selection of parliamentary elections, 1918-1956

	1918	1937	1948	1956
RKSP/KVP	30	31	32	33
ARP + CHU	20	25	22	18
SDAP + VDB/PVDA	27	29	27	34
Total (of 100 seats)	77	85	81	85

Source: www.parlement.com

This does not detract from the fact that there was an important change in the way in which the parties now worked together to solve the numerous old and new problems that emerged after 1945. In particular, the KVP and the PVDA formed a successful 'Roman-Red' coalition that would hold until 1958. The new consensus was based on the conviction that in the years of crisis, National Socialism had been strongly boosted by socio-economic insecurity. For this reason, it was not only important to get the economy going again, but also, in the longer term, to guarantee employment and provide a higher level of social security. This was coupled with a significant change in the concept of democracy. The socialist De Kadt thus wrote in 1941:

One is not a democrat if one does not have an eye for this material, although in effect extremely cultural, aspect of democracy. A democracy with rags at one end of the scale and palaces at the other is not possible, and anything that claims to be a democracy in such conditions is hypocrisy.¹⁰³

Democracy was no longer limited to political equality but was extended, and now included more social equality as an integral component.¹⁰⁴ This would mean a substantial improvement in living standards. For the time being, however, the concerns that had determined the pre-war intellectual debate to a major extent became deeper. After all, greater socio-economic

security could only be achieved through industrialization, and sociologists did not neglect to explain that this could only lead to secularization, individualization and alienation.

In the first years after the end of the Second World War, many an intellectual was profoundly convinced that the country, if not the world in general, was in the midst of a deep moral and cultural crisis. In 1946 for example, the historian Romein wrote an essay in which he described this crisis as not being limited to economic and social relations, but affecting almost every area: 'we see that its singularity lies precisely in this totalitarian character'. And the reader was offered little hope:

I am aware and everyone may know that the crisis that is gripping humanity has more in its Pandora's box than the hope that I perhaps too eagerly plucked from the bottom. [...] Because the masses – it makes no sense to close one's eyes to the truth – have taken a different path [...] They have taken the path [...] that always brings relief, but one that is always temporary and that never leads to the source of recovery; the way of lethargy, lethargy in sport, film, radio and war. They are resigned to their lack of tradition and their lack of culture and have known no better for many years, because their tradition and culture were taken away from them long ago, and they were left only with barbarism.¹⁰⁵

The 'indiscipline' of young people, in particular, was universally considered an expression of this crisis. In 1948, the Minister of Education commissioned seven sociological and pedagogical institutes to undertake an investigation into the 'development and influence of the mentality of the so-called mass-youth'. A 900-page study was published on the matter in 1953, which had to indicate that it was serious. The conclusion was that:

Wild [*verwilderde*] young people live in a world that can be described as largely structureless. The structureless nature of their world is expressed in an inability to be structured themselves...¹⁰⁶

The 'structureless' nature of the world: this was the phenomenological terminology used to express the lack of culture and tradition. To limit the worst of the damage, social services were extended (a separate Ministry of Social Work was created in 1952), subsidies for public mental health were increased substantially and, moreover, major subsidies were made available for the building of churches (especially in new neighbourhoods).¹⁰⁷ An attempt

was thereby made to steer the population into the new age with respect to mentality, but at the same time to limit the negative consequences of this: it was a process of 'controlled modernization'.¹⁰⁸

The acute feeling of crisis ebbed away, but this did not bring an end to the debate. It continued in the 1950s in the complaints about the lack of political ideals and social visions, about the fact that politics had become 'cold' and was no longer able to warm people's hearts.¹⁰⁹ Typical of this transition from a feeling of crisis to a sense of disillusionment was the heartfelt cry made by Van Randwijk, a man who had crossed from reformed circles to social democracy due to the misery of the crisis years, who had played a key role in the resistance during the Second World War, and who had then become editor-in-chief of the magazine *Vrij Nederland*.¹¹⁰ In 1955, he published a piece entitled 'Bevrijdingsfeest! [Liberation celebration!]'. He admitted that in numerous respects, things were now much better in the Netherlands than previously and than elsewhere in the world; but was this all there is?

I don't like this post-war world. I like it less than the pre-war one, and – I am shocked by my own words – I like it less than the war years. Because dream and protest, those two companions of the living spirit, are wandering among us like outcasts and can no longer find a place to stay. [...]
There was once a time when political forces still worked in the world, and there were political parties in the Netherlands and elsewhere that were stubborn enough to speak for another world in times when every last speck of such a world had vanished. Their hope alone was a form of protest, and their protest gave hope to millions. Today, they have become the most dangerous of conformists and in the place of a new world, the waiting people have their health insurance, their organized consultations and their campaign against the lift-ban.
The fighter jets thunder overhead!¹¹¹

Dream and protest had been stifled by consensus: it was a theme that was being addressed across the world.¹¹² In the West a path had been found between *laissez faire* and totalitarian planning, the state intervened to a certain degree, the welfare state began to take shape, and thereby a richer form of democracy was achieved. There was no longer any need for 'ideology', as the American sociologist Bell argued at the end of the 1950s in his well-known book, *The End of Ideology*.¹¹³ By this he did not mean ideologies such as communism and fascism, of course, which had been denounced and were over. But the great ideologies of the nineteenth century were also 'exhausted', now that the seedbeds from which they had sprung – the problems

that accompanied the industrial revolution – were gone. As a consequence, a grey uniformity now prevailed everywhere; even the capacity for outrage had dissipated, and correspondingly, a major element of politics.¹¹⁴ The new consensus was focused on the promotion of economic growth and with this, so the thinking went, there was more of a need for steering than for politics. And thus it seemed, amazingly enough, that after more than a century the ideas of Saint-Simon had become a reality: no longer rule over people, but the administration of institutions and things.¹¹⁵

In the Netherlands, too, the theme of the ‘end of ideology’ would surface in the mid-1950s in the form of complaints about a lack of passion, but especially in a critique of the ‘primacy of the economy’.¹¹⁶ Remarkably, little attention was paid in the Netherlands to *The Lonely Crowd* (1950) by Riesman.¹¹⁷ This had warned of the rise of a new indifference among a growing number of people: ‘they tend to view politics [...] as if they were spectators’.¹¹⁸ This was closely tied to a change in character: people were increasingly letting their behaviour and views be determined less by what they themselves thought and more by what others thought; the change from an inner-directed to an other-directed character structure. This resulted not in consensus, but in conformism. The despondency to which Van Randwijk had given vent perhaps stemmed from the fact that he found so few supporters for his complaints about the ceasing of ‘dream and protest’, but perhaps even worse was the fact that no one understood why this was a loss.

It is also striking that the testimonial parties in the Netherlands continued to commit time and energy to developing their ideological profiles during this period, although these were largely obligatory exercises. The PVDA presented an ambitious new programme, *The path to freedom*, with great ostentation in 1951; it was the most detailed and complete report that had ever been published by a Dutch social democratic party. The chairman of the parliamentary faction, Burger, could only say of it, after some contemplation: ‘I thought it a rather voluminous book’.¹¹⁹ Also revealing was the fact that the official journal of the social democratic movement, *Socialisme en Democratie*, discontinued its column on ‘Socialist Theory’ in 1955 due to a lack of interest.¹²⁰

A comparable loss occurred in the Catholic sphere. For a number of decades, a corporate ideology had been developed in this sphere with much eagerness, legitimized by the encyclicals *Rerum Novarum* (1891) and *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931). As late as 1951, both encyclicals were referred to on a large scale; in forming the Cabinet in 1952, the KVP even insisted on a separate minister for ‘statutory industrial organization’, the symbol of Catholic social teaching *par excellence*. By 1956, however, this area was

already being left to the Secretary of State, and in 1959 the portfolio was abandoned. In the Catholic sphere, too, an enormous programme was developed to preserve the ideology by adapting it. Between 1960 and 1965, *Welvaart, Welzijn en Geluk. Een katholiek uitzicht op de Nederlandse samenleving* (*Prosperity, Welfare and Happiness. A Catholic perspective on Dutch society*) was published in five volumes, but it largely expressed doubts about old views without offering something new.¹²¹ In this process, the role and function of neither the PVDA nor the KVP had become clearer, a quandary that the parties solved for the time being by pitting themselves against each other (from 1958 it would be 'Roman vs. Red'). Although the electorate would only start to stir in the 1960s, doubts about the significance of ideology were thus already strongly established among the leaders of the most important testimonial parties in the 1950s. Interests proved to be a more powerful means of binding people. Although the changes in the country were revolutionary in nature, there was no indiscipline or lack of interest there. The green front rose again in 1945 and would only gain in significance.

Agricultural interests

The agricultural sector was of vital importance in 1945: it was the only sector that was able to generate the income that was needed for the recovery of the economy, whilst it also had to deliver food for a growing population in the short and longer term.

Real national income had fallen by 40 per cent as a result of the war, according to figures published by the Dutch Central Statistical Office in 1947. Moreover, the Netherlands had a major shortage of foreign currency, whilst due to the struggle for independence in Indonesia, income from the Dutch East Indies had evaporated. Finally, an alarming publication of 1945 calculated that 1.25 million people lacked an 'appropriate livelihood', and that given the rising population, this figure would even grow to 4 million in the foreseeable future. This would be almost impossible to solve without annexing a large part of Germany and an intense drive to promote emigration.¹²² A number of these problems would prove less serious than initially thought,¹²³ but the growing population weighed heavily on policy. The population of the Netherlands was growing four times faster than that of Belgium, for example. The Minister of Economic Affairs, who more than any other was responsible for the approach to the problem, would later write that the economic policy that was implemented could not be grasped

without a 'clear picture of the demographic aspect'.¹²⁴ A policy to limit births could not be considered, however, due to the 'pro-natalist' views of the confessionals and the reticence of the social democrats.¹²⁵ The only practical option was to promote industrialization and an enormous expansion of exports: 'The industrialization programme for the period between 1948 and 1952 is an export scenario'.¹²⁶ In order to achieve this, industry was made as competitive as possible, by opting for a powerful stimulation of investment combined with a very restrained policy on consumption; that is to say that salaries were kept as low as possible. This policy found broad support not only among politicians, but also among employers and employees, who cooperated to this end in the Social and Economic Council.¹²⁷

This cooperation has always drawn a great deal of attention, but at least as remarkable was the founding of the Agricultural Foundation (Stichting voor de Landbouw, SLB) by the three agricultural coordination centres and the three agricultural workers' unions. On 27 June, three days after he had officially taken office, this body was recognized by the Minister of Agriculture and Food Supply, Mansholt, as the 'representative' of the agricultural and horticultural sector.¹²⁸ Regular monthly consultations were held between the minister and the executive board. The organization's costs were largely covered by a levy on a number of products (milk, sugar beet and potatoes), with the full cooperation of the minister.

The agricultural policy that Mansholt brought in after the war was supported by the five large parties (the three confessional parties were even 'by nature rural parties'¹²⁹). At the meetings of the Parliamentary Committee on Agriculture, the doors were locked and business was done.¹³⁰ The policy assumed an even more permanent form when the SLB was transformed into an Agricultural Board in 1954.¹³¹ The board even became a kind of 'national agrarian parliament' that had such good political contacts that it was 'unthinkable' for a Minister of Agriculture to be appointed without the approval of the chairmen of the farmers' organizations.¹³² Together, a policy was implemented in which the minister reconstructed the agricultural sector, but the farmers' organizations protested loudly if this were done too quickly. Behind closed doors, the agricultural organizations and the minister arranged the political pressure that was needed to extract the very considerable sums necessary for moderating the tempo of the restructuring somewhat and to boost the income of efficient businesses.

This policy had to overcome the fact that agriculture was unable to compete on the world market. Specialization, mechanization and thus scaling-up (including land consolidation) were needed in order to deliver agrarian incomes that could keep up, to some extent, with the rapid rise

in real incomes in industry. This also implied on-going restructuring, especially of small businesses (in 1950, two-thirds of businesses owned less than ten hectares of land). In the Netherlands between 1950 and 1970 the number of businesses in the agricultural and horticultural sector fell from 410,000 to 185,000.¹³³ In any case, this was a major problem affecting many European countries:

Labour force working in agriculture as a percentage of the total labour force

	1900	1950	2000
Great Britain	9	5	1.5
Germany	37	23	2.6
France	41	27	4.1
Belgium	27	12	1.9
Denmark	47	25	3.7
The Netherlands	31	19	3

Source: Jan Bieleman, *Geschiedenis van de landbouw* (Meppel/Amsterdam 1992), 211; Eurostat for data from 2000

In the middle of the twentieth century, agriculture and the way of life to which it was linked seemed to be disappearing. It was a tragedy that affected the whole of Europe, including the Netherlands, which for many years had seen itself as a country with a rural culture: cheese and clogs. In a 'silent revolution', from the 1960s onwards farmers and agricultural workers disappeared from public bodies everywhere in the countryside, bringing the local identity of numerous village communities into question.¹³⁴ A whole world was being lost.¹³⁵ The changes were presented as an unstoppable process, against which resistance would not stand a chance.

The first protests in the Netherlands came from the Association for Commercial Freedom in Agriculture (Vereniging voor Bedrijfs-Vrijdheid in de Landbouw, BVL), chaired from 1952 by Koekoek, the son of a poultry farmer from Drenthe. The BVL was convinced that the farming community had been ruined for the benefit of industrial workers, whereby the analysis from the interwar years was taken up again. Koekoek made several attempts to enter politics, but he did not succeed.¹³⁶ He was inspired, however, by the success that Poujade had managed to achieve among the French middle class and farmers from 1953. Poujade, who came from the tradition of the radical right-wing Action Française, even managed to win almost 12 per cent of the vote in the 1956 elections (bringing Le Pen, among others, to the French parliament).¹³⁷ Radical rural movements such as these had people

thinking back to the 1930s with a shudder. In order to prevent a repeat of the misery, a substantial package of protectionist measures was introduced in the Federal Republic of Germany in 1955 (the ‘Grüner Plan’). These aimed at achieving more or less equal incomes in agriculture and industry.¹³⁸ After long hesitation – and a classic farmers’ revolt in the spring of 1961 – the De Gaulle regime would also take this path.

In December 1956, Koekoek and a few faithful followers decided to set up a Farmers’ Party (Boerenpartij), although it was two years before this formally happened. The party presented itself as ‘a party for the whole of the Dutch People, who want to join the fight against dirigisme on principled grounds’.¹³⁹

Electoral support for the Farmers’ Party as percentage of votes cast and seats in the House of Representatives

1959	0.7	0	1972	1.9	3
1963	2.1	3	1977	0.8	1
1967	4.8	7	1981	0.2	0
1971	1.1	1			

Source: www.parlement.com

The pattern is clear: after a difficult start, the party was reasonably successful in the 1960s, after which things rapidly went downhill again. The Farmers’ Party could initially count on great understanding from *De Telegraaf*, the newspaper with the largest circulation in the Netherlands, which in inimitable fashion managed to mix respect for ‘authority’ with support for the common man in the face of such authority. Koekoek’s electoral breakthrough, however, was mainly due to an unusually clumsy performance by the Agricultural Board. When the Agricultural Board was formally recognized as a statutory industrial organization in 1954, it gained the right to levy a charge on all farmers. It is estimated that 100,000 farmers, however – almost 40 per cent of the total – were not affiliated with any organization. A considerable proportion of this group did not intend to pay the levy, and Koekoek became their spokesman. After hesitating for some time, the Agricultural Board adopted coercive measures to collect the money, in the form of the forced sale of land and farms belonging to stubborn refuseniks. In January 1963, for example, three families were evicted from their farms into the snow in Hollandscheveld. This was accompanied by heavy fighting between the national police and the assembled farmers, vividly portrayed by television. This resulted in universal outrage – and three seats in parliament.

In many respects, Koekoek was reminiscent of Farmer Braat. His speeches and interruptions in the House of Representatives were followed with some amazement and outrage; he was once received with a smile, but he was mostly ignored. Just as Poujade's speeches were described as 'déconsu' (incoherent), the same epithet was applied to Koekoek's contributions to the parliamentary debate.¹⁴⁰ He firmly maintained, for example, in opposition to the Minister of Finance, that inflation could best be fought with a sharp reduction in taxes.¹⁴¹ When talking about the world market, the Minister of Agriculture was told: 'If he's talking about the world market, the Minister has to say where the world market is to be found. Then at least we can go and have a look'.¹⁴² This made for difficult debates. His frequent refrain was that every problem was magnified when the state intervened. Ministers were incompetent – 'they know nothing' – and only kept appointing more and more officials. Every problem would vanish like snow in the sun if there were more 'liberty'.

At the time, the question of the nature and meaning of the Farmers' Party resulted in laborious considerations. The crucial question asked by one nice study was: 'Does the Farmers' Party pose a fascist threat?' On the one hand, the answer was affirmative: the supporters scored highly on Adorno's classic F-scale, which measured the 'authoritarian personality' – and thereby the potential fascist.¹⁴³ On the other hand, it had become clear to the author from personal meetings that it was 'impossible' to call Koekoek's supporters fascists. They were

people, normally very hospitable people, with whom we sometimes had very long conversations; people who have lost their way, who don't understand why they, of all people, have to be the victims of the changes that are taking place in our society.

And this led to the conclusion: 'Let us solve the dilemma by condemning the party, but not the people'.¹⁴⁴ With hindsight, it is interesting to see that an opportunity was missed here to analyse the Farmers' Party as a form of populism, whilst the evidence would suggest this:

More fiercely than any party – with the exception of the CPN [the Communist Party] – the Farmers' Party opposes the existing party-political situation and the government policy inspired by the five large parties. This is never expressed more clearly than in the public meetings that the Farmers' Party regularly convenes: lying, slander, deceit, oppression and exploitation, these are the terms that are used many times at such meetings.¹⁴⁵

The Farmers' Party constantly asserted that it did not want to be a single-issue party, but to represent 'the people'; it was averse to erudition, but also to the dominant political culture. This made it popular outside farming circles also, even after Koekoek got into trouble because his party was linked with fascism: various members of his party (including important ones) proved to have been 'on the wrong side' during the war. Koekoek reacted to this with wild accusations about the pasts of politicians from other parties. This led to a remarkable incident in parliament in 1966: a vote of censure by the whole House of Representatives against a fellow MP, Koekoek.¹⁴⁶ The following year, his party enjoyed their largest electoral gains yet. The downfall of the Farmers' Party was mainly the result of a phenomenon that often arises in such parties. The founder saw the party as his personal fiefdom and kept various roles for himself (chairman of the executive and the faction); in addition, the selection of representatives was careless, the financing opaque and the administration weak. Combined with the demand for blind obedience, this inevitably led to arguments and splits.¹⁴⁷

Corporatism

The green front was the most striking example of neo-corporate organization in Dutch politics.¹⁴⁸ It formed part of a more general phenomenon. The more responsibility the state assumed, the more socio-economic life became too important to be left to the free play of societal forces. And vice versa, conflicts in the business world could sometimes only be solved – or bought off – with governmental help. In this respect, the American historian Maier has compared corporate arrangements with the buttress of a cathedral, whereby parliament and the political parties form the chancel and the nave.¹⁴⁹ To an important extent, these arrangements contributed to the occurrence of two major changes in a more or less supervised way: the enormous drop in the agrarian population (including the switch to an extremely intensive agrarian industry, the transformation of the countryside into a productive landscape and the disappearance of the agrarian sector's political administration of small towns, villages and regions); and the integration of the working class into the national state (including giving them a voice in socio-economic policy and thereby maintaining control over the class struggle).¹⁵⁰ All of this happened in the Netherlands in relatively flexible fashion, if only because – aside from a few tensions in the 1930s – there were no conflicts between 'farmers' and 'workers'. That was no small achievement.

There was a price to be paid for this. The social democrats had hoped to achieve this through the systematic organization of the entire economy, under the tight control of econometrists and with politicians being ultimately responsible.¹⁵¹ This failed soon after 1945, although surprisingly, the agrarian sector appeared to become 'a testing ground for the "planned economy" propagated by the PVDA'.¹⁵² Mansholt had to curb his ambitions quickly, however, and switch to an opportunistic and pragmatic policy. An essential component of social democratic ideology was lost in the process – a lacuna that would not be filled. It was noted above that Catholic planning policy died a gentle death in the 1950s: 'With the failure of Catholic social teaching, a framework was lost within which everyday actions could be defended, explained and accepted. And nothing came in its place'.¹⁵³ The most important testimonial parties could offer only the nostalgic scent of the past. With this, a problem emerged at the heart of the political culture: the testimonial parties did not have testimonials – principles – any more. Politicians were rapidly becoming more professional in this period, but they could only offer – although it was anything but unimportant – the 'politics of productivity': the promotion of economic growth. This was not a specifically Dutch phenomenon, as is shown by the discussion about the 'end of ideology', among other things, but an international phenomenon, well-nigh compelled by the overwhelming longing for stability after all the misery of crisis and war.¹⁵⁴

Pillars and pillarization

This stability was the result of hard work and great effort. Moreover, the period after 1950, after the war damage had been repaired and the loss of the East Indies had been processed, can be described as 'years of discipline and asceticism'.¹⁵⁵ Through this alone, it appeared to be the reward for the country's virtue. This reward had to be set against the self-restraint that was demanded in both social intercourse and people's personal lives: passivity in the political arena, obedience to the ecclesiastical and ideological authorities, and great self-restraint in the area of sexuality. As a result, there was a growing difference between the enormous vitality of socio-economic life (the restructuring of the agrarian sector and extremely rapid industrialization) and the 'pre-war' values and norms that applied in the socio-cultural sphere and people's personal lives. How could the two be reconciled? Modernization, according to the theory, should have an impact on all aspects of life, but this did not seem to be the case. This

was the problem that sociologists tried to explain; it was a variant of the time-honoured search for the national character.¹⁵⁶ The solution was sought in the socio-psychological characteristics that resulted from a particular spiritual-social societal structure. Pillarization, which had not yet been in place for twenty years, lay at the heart of this. It explained the stability of the political culture, the firm anchoring of a democratic mentality, the successful consultations in neo-corporate relationships. After a cautious start it even became the explanation for almost every feature of Dutch society. Moreover, it had the consequence that 'our country' could thereby be presented to the world as a very special society. And although the owl of Minerva spread its wings with the falling of the dusk – the first cracks in the pillars could already be seen in the 1950s – after this, the number of discussions of 'pillarization' as the central characteristic of political culture, if not society as a whole, only grew. The interpretation had run away with itself.¹⁵⁷

The term 'pillar' came into use in the 1930s, 'pillarization' mainly in the course of the 1950s. The 'trigger' was probably a clumsy Charge of 1954, in which the Dutch bishops turned against every possible infringement of 'the foundations and walls that support the Catholic order in public life'.¹⁵⁸ This prompted research into the segmentation of society into ideological blocks. The first scientific contributions on the phenomenon of pillarization were published in 1956.¹⁵⁹ From the very beginning, the debate exhibited serious problems, which mostly came to light in a key publication of 1961 by the sociologists Kruijt and Goddijn, in which they summarized the discussion to date and presented empirical foundations for the phenomenon.¹⁶⁰

To start with, a firm finality was introduced in the assumption – without too great a flourish – that the origins of pillarization lay in the sixteenth century and were closely related to the religious divisions at the time of the Revolt. Pillarization thereby became a *force profonde* in modern Dutch history. It had not only existed for centuries, but it was also a typically Dutch phenomenon. While Kruijt and Goddijn admitted that there were also pillarized organizations in other countries, it was mainly the magnitude of the phenomenon in the Netherlands that was so remarkable. They subsequently used a definition of a 'pillar' – as 'blocks of organizations that have a philosophical-ideological basis' – that had the effect of excluding every organization that was not explicitly based on philosophical-ideological foundations. From this perspective, therefore, social democratic organizations belonged to a 'general sector'. Finally, they omitted to state how many pillars there actually were. Anyone who checked their evidence would have good grounds for concluding that actually only the Catholics formed a pillar.

For the Protestants, the definition brought the specific problem that there were significant mutual differences within Protestantism, meaning that it was difficult to speak of one pillar here, while at the same time there was no criterion that would allow one to decide how many Protestant pillars there actually were. If one were to make the division along political lines, which overlapped somewhat with denominational differences, one could conclude that there were two pillars: the CHU and the members of the Hervormde Kerk (Reformed Church) on the one hand, and the ARP and the members of the Gereformeerde Kerk (Orthodox Reformed Church) on the other.

It gets even more complicated when one asks whether there was an additional pillar. In fact, the theory required the presence of such a pillar, given that there had to be an heir to the 'Christian humanism' of the sixteenth century. But an Erasmian pillar of this kind would have to contain radically dissimilar components (partly liberal, partly social-democratic, partly anti-pillarization organizations). And then there would still be a large number of small groups left over, with the question as to whether they also formed their own pillar (the free-thinking Protestants or the Communists, for example), or whether they should be included in a main pillar. One can only conclude that a disastrous sense of finality was brought to the debate, that the definition did not provide a satisfactory answer to the question of what a pillar was, and that it was very unclear how many pillars pillarization had resulted in. Once this contribution had been made, which was as influential as it was flawed, it was difficult for anything but a confused discussion to follow.

The problem became even greater with the appearance of a study by the political scientist Lijphart in 1968, entitled *Verzuiling, pacificatie en kentering in de Nederlandse politiek*, and published in English as *The Politics of Accommodation. Pluralism and Democracy in the Netherlands*.

Following Kruijt and Goddijn, he assumed that there were initially three pillars: a Catholic, a Protestant and a 'general' pillar. These three could be 'considered to be about as old as the Dutch state'.¹⁶¹ He then addressed the question of how many pillars there were. Unlike Kruijt and Goddijn, Lijphart accepted the existence of a socialist pillar. Namely, he asserted that each of the five large parties represented a pillar: the KVP for the Catholics, the PVDA for the socialists, and the VVD for the liberals. Then, he admitted, it got a little 'more complicated', because there were two Protestant parties, the ARP and the CHU; but they could be joined together in one pillar. With this, in fact, the four 'testimonial parties' became three pillars. All kinds of small parties were subsequently included in the pillar that was closest to them. Rather carelessly, however, Lijphart continued to refer to a 'general

pillar', but the latter was so heterogeneous that it was not so much a pillar as a leftover category for which the theory had no solution.¹⁶²

According to Lijphart, these four pillars/parties acquired a formal structure in the nineteenth century and, to an increasing extent, disagreed on pretty much everything. This could have produced great instability, but a solution was found to the problem in 1917: the Pacification, whereby under the leadership of Van der Linden as an 'honest broker', a number of far-reaching differences of opinion – about the electoral law and education – were settled.¹⁶³ The rank and file remained separate, but the elite, the leaders of the pillars, decided not to make an issue of their ideological differences and agreed a compromise. The year 1917 was thus a 'turning point' in Dutch politics; it was then that the foundations were laid for the 'pacification politics' of consociational democracy.¹⁶⁴ Not only was the stability of the country preserved, for example, but a number of 'rules of the game' were introduced that would continue to apply far into the 1960s: business-like politics, pragmatic tolerance, leader summits, proportionality, depoliticization, confidentiality and governance by the government (that is to say that the centre of gravity lay with the executive authority). This may have made the Netherlands a rather boring country, but thanks to the cartel of political elites, it also presented political science with a remarkable ready-made phenomenon.¹⁶⁵

The objections that can be made to Kruijt and Goddijn's article were multiplied many times in Lijphart's work. Historical research, for example, reveals hardly any examples of the leader summits he referred to.¹⁶⁶ No compromise was agreed on an issue of such ideological importance for all the parties as the 'organization' of society (the relations between associations, the various boards and the state). Neither was agreement reached in an area as crucial for all involved as social security (an old-age pension was only introduced in 1947, with pain and difficulty, and then only on an emphatically temporary basis; it would be ten years before the definitive legal arrangements followed).¹⁶⁷ Therefore the rules of the game did not flow more or less automatically from the compromise of 1917, they worked only very partially in the following decades and, moreover, were not specific to the Netherlands. Nevertheless, the theory of 'pillarization as pacification' became the dominant paradigm in the social sciences.

In 1939 Romein put forward the paradox that 'the greater our knowledge becomes, the less clear and less fixed the general picture becomes, until finally the "picture" itself melts into a mist of "opinions": it evaporates'.¹⁶⁸ This was also the result of historical research that was carried out from the 1980s. Its conclusion was short and succinct: 'Pillarization was a metaphor

that had an impact due to the power of expression with which a complicated reality was succinctly described'. For the rest, however, it largely caused 'much (perhaps unnecessary) confusion and academic dispute'.¹⁶⁹ This explains why the case was made for the abolition of this concept, even though this was naturally in vain, given the extent to which the image had taken hold.¹⁷⁰ Moreover, 'bold metaphors' such as these are laden with 'sentiment and resentment':¹⁷¹ they offer some an opportunity to look back on a process of emancipation, while giving others the chance to see the past as oppressive and dysfunctional.

Let us try to sketch out some of the developments that are captured in the metaphor of 'pillarization', but in the framework of developments in the political culture such as those that have been outlined in this book so far. To start with, it is not very meaningful to locate the origins of the phenomenon in the sixteenth century. To the extent that the term 'pillar' means anything, it does not refer to segmentation as such, but to the rational organizational embedding of an ideology, belief or worldview. Neither is it meaningful to assume that Dutch history followed a *Sonderweg* in this respect. In a very wide range of countries, 'Lager', 'milieus' or 'familles spirituelles' emerged, usually as resistance to a liberal state that compelled a 'neutral' form of civilization. It was resistance to 'uniformity, the curse of modern life'. Kuyper began this, and he was copied by a number of Catholics: 'Around 1905, curates devoured the books of Abraham Kuyper, they spoke his language and they made "reformed" Catholic speeches'.¹⁷² In order to make this resistance effective, political organization was unavoidable. The process of entanglement between ideology and organization was legitimized by the view that this concerned the 'emancipation of parts of the nation', whereby the term 'emancipation' was an exaggeration and the 'parts of the nation' were not being delivered from oppression, but being created.¹⁷³

This development was followed and subsumed by a second process, namely, the growth in interest mediation, the organization of advocacy. This was boosted by the wave of globalization that occurred at the end of the nineteenth century (and which parts of society experienced as a crisis), and further strengthened by the two world wars and the crisis of the 1930s. Interest groups in civil society relied on affiliation with political parties, which led to an intensely ideological debate about the organization of society. The interaction between these two movements – protection from the neutral, intervening state on the one hand, and an increasing appeal to the state by advocates on the other – had an ambivalent result. The state was emphatically kept at a distance, but at the same time, it was also used to advance specific interests (including a redistribution of power and income).

Moreover, both movements, both separate and communal, resulted in the breakdown of local and regional individuality and seclusion; it was almost impossible to have an effect without forging national links, which meant that the national level became more important. Paradoxically enough, the division of the nation was the form in which the nation state emerged.

In these complex developments, 'pillars' emerged; clusters of associations, that is to say, links between organizations on the basis of more or less shared religious-political opinions, a communal vision of the past held together by rites and symbols. Not all connections within each pillar were equally powerful, and neither was the level of social control within each pillar comparable. For the Catholics social control was maximal, given the efforts of the clergy who saw to people's spiritual welfare; for the social democrats it was weak, if only due to an almost complete lack of sanctions for disaffection. The different pillars were thus dissimilar in their origins and meaning, just as they were also very different in size. Numerous 'pillars' emerged in the period between 1880 and 1914, although in a heavy-handed process three pillars became dominant: an orthodox-Protestant pillar (which could claim to be the first), a Catholic pillar (the largest, in which Catholic organizational life had spread itself out like a peacock's fan¹⁷⁴) and a social democratic pillar (that not only considered itself the guardian of the future, but also had considerable blocking power to delay legislation due to its links with the trade unions¹⁷⁵). The smaller pillars had to content themselves with a marginal position; the basis for a 'general' pillar was lacking.¹⁷⁶

The dominance of the testimonial parties led to the generally circulated notion that the entire Dutch population had been divided into four: in this respect, the decision of 1930 on the allotting of radio broadcasting time was symbolic of pillarization. Kuyper had provided the model, after which the show was run until 1958 by the pillars with the greatest numerical strength, the Catholics and the social democrats.¹⁷⁷ This dominance in the national administration should not allow us to forget, however, that a large part of the population was not linked to this system, or linked only very weakly. As late as 1939, for example, 57 per cent of circulation of the daily press came from newspapers with no ties to a particular pillar.¹⁷⁸ Pillarization was dominant in the political order, but in society it was anything but total. In addition, there has always been an undercurrent of criticism of this dominance in the form of complaints about 'the spirit of compartmentalization'. All in all, however, this criticism did not concern pillarization so much as the fact that there were political parties that appealed to religious convictions, and thus did not fit with what was considered to be a more modern division based on

socio-economic grounds (or to a conservative, a progressive and a radical 'temperament'). A direct attack on the existence of the religiously-inspired parties would have stood no chance, however, which might explain why the criticism became linked to cultural pessimism in the course of the 1930s. Pessimism may gratify the mind, but it is seldom in a position to change the status quo. An energetic attempt to do just this, which took place between 1944 and 1946 under the aegis of the social democrats and was known as the 'Breakthrough', therefore failed. Pillarization returned, almost unscathed, and became even stronger. The modernization of the Netherlands, particularly the thorough restructuring of the economy, resulted in an enormous expansion of social services and the promotion of the nation's mental health. The government financed this with a heavy stream of subsidies to pillarized organizations, whilst demanding little say in how these were spent.¹⁷⁹ This has been described by the sociologist Van Doorn as a 'formula almost of genius: in charge of one's own affairs, at the public's expense'.¹⁸⁰ With this, however, the seeds of the system's destruction were sown. The greater the organizations' interests became, the weaker the unifying power of the ideology, and the centrifugal forces could no longer be controlled.¹⁸¹ This process was already becoming visible in the 1950s. In this light, the disintegration of the Roman-Red coalition in 1958 can be seen as an attempt to check this process; mutual polarization had to strengthen internal cohesion. But this would only offer temporary solace, and in the 1960s, the testimonial parties would lose their hold on the political culture.

7. Fundamental Changes in Mentality

1966: The Cultural Revolution

'Hello chaps, I'm Marga'. With these words, Marga Klompé arrived at the first social event for ministers in the new cabinet, held at the Hotel des Indes in The Hague in October 1956. She was the first female minister in the Netherlands and caused a 'revolution' with this entrance according to her colleague, Veldkamp.¹ Until that time politics had been a male world in which men addressed each other by their surnames. Politicians would henceforth switch to first-name terms. A Catholic politician, Klompé had participated in the Dutch delegation to the United Nations shortly after the war (1947-1952), and was then a member of the Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe and the Common Assembly of the European Coal and Steel Community, the ECSC (1952-1956). She entered the cabinet in 1956, although not at Foreign Affairs but at the Ministry of Social Work, which had been set up four years earlier. When she attended her first cabinet meeting, Prime Minister Drees had an orchid put on the table for her; a remarkably elegant gesture, given his reserved character and frugal nature.² It was generally observed that the appointment of the first female minister was a major event. In her column in the *Leeuwarder Courant*, 'Saskia' wrote that the emancipation of women was finally taking place: 'All things considered – you might not believe it, but the facts speak for themselves – we've been trying desperately since the time of the Batavian Republic to show that we really are able to take responsibility as adults'.³ In interviews, Klompé herself said that on the one hand, women in politics usually took 'a different approach to an issue'; but on the other hand, she declared that differences between men and women in politics were irrelevant: the only difference was a powder compact in one's desk drawer.⁴ She would indeed miss her work abroad a little, she declared somewhat awkwardly to the camera, but she could see a link with social work:

When everyone is prepared to live with the people around them, and to live well, and to care about each other, then it will be much easier for nations to work together. So I do actually see a very clear line between the work that I first did and the new task that I am taking on today.⁵

It was quite a vague text, but with a little goodwill it could be inferred that work had to be done at different levels and in diverse areas to achieve a

community. This idealistic conviction by no means prevented her from operating heavy-handedly, and she would engage in a tough fight, for instance, to increase the importance of her ministry.⁶ During the debate on her first budget in parliament, the Minister of Social Affairs, who was sitting next to her, had to snap at her: 'Keep your hands off my ministry!'⁷

Her most significant feat was to bring about the General Social Security Act (which was carried almost unanimously in the House of Representatives on 10 April 1963 and came into force on 1 January 1965). Klompé spoke the following much-cited words in its defence:

I wanted to create a law, Mister Speaker, to which every citizen could appeal with his head held high, and whereby he would not find himself in an atmosphere that would be in conflict with his freedom and his dignity as a human being.⁸

In fact an ambition was thereby achieved that the Batavians had articulated as early as 1800: the nation state accepted responsibility for supporting all its citizens.⁹ This act, which at the time was seen as a 'bulwark' of socio-economic security, even marked a shift that occurred in this period: government policy was no longer limited to care, but stood surety for welfare. According to one MP, this implied that benefit payments would create room for 'all those unquantifiable things in someone's life, that cigar and some flowers for the table, a little recreation and a one-guilder present for the niece's birthday'.¹⁰ The minister did not refute this.

Just as Klompé saw a 'very clear line' running from the international to the national level, so, too, did Mansholt (PVDa), although running in the opposite direction. He was Minister of Agriculture from 1945, and returned to the cabinet in 1956 after a tough fight over more money for the farmers. To an extent, the desired budget increase was a consequence of his subsidy policy, which had led the farmers to produce more. Combined with falling prices at the international level, this had resulted in structural surpluses of grain, dairy products, proteins and fats. Moreover, exporting was becoming more and more difficult, as was particularly clear from West Germany's very reserved position on the conclusion of new trade agreements. The agricultural lobby could see only one solution: yet more subsidies. The leader of the green front, Louwes, even repeated his warnings of 1930: politics was too urban, too dominated by Holland, too focused on the workers: 'If, in the Netherlands, a leader of a great stature were to appear, with the necessary level-headedness and endowed with imagination, then he could recruit a large following. A somewhat greater figure than Poujade

would stand a great chance in the Netherlands. Mr Louwes, however, would not advocate a development of this nature'.¹¹ An appeal was thus made to the ghosts of the depression era, mainly in order to strengthen Mansholt's bargaining position. Mansholt eventually obtained a structural increase of 200 million guilders, but it was becoming increasingly clear that agriculture's problems would only be solved if they were to be addressed at the international level.

In 1957 the European Economic Community (EEC) was founded; at the end of the same year, it was announced that Mansholt would be a member of the first European Commission. The defence of his final budget was concluded with a motion proposed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, thanking him in the warmest terms and paying tribute to him. This motion, unique in parliamentary history, was passed without a poll.¹² Prime Minister Drees, who had been confronted by Mansholt's calls for substantial budget increases for years, was particularly relieved: 'We're finally shot of him'.¹³ But he was too quick to celebrate; it would soon be shown that the welfare of Dutch farmers was more tightly interwoven than ever with that of farmers elsewhere, namely in Germany and France. This meant that it was dependent upon the policy that Mansholt was developing in Brussels. Just as the nation state had stood surety for people who were unable to provide for themselves, 'Europe' would design a similar arrangement for the farmers: 'farmers on welfare'.¹⁴

These are the themes that would have a profound impact on the political culture. First, there was the increasing importance of European integration, which on the one hand implied a loss of sovereignty, while on the other guaranteed political stability on the continent. This stability would contribute to continuous economic growth, thereby contributing to the achievement of an unprecedented level of prosperity for the population. This prosperity – and this is the second theme – would not only lead to satisfaction: many intellectuals, on both the left and the right, believed that the population had succumbed too easily to the temptations of mass culture (which was still largely defined in terms of smoking and visits to the cinema). On this basis they carried on with the discourse on 'mass man'. The modernization of society was still accompanied by an undercurrent of distaste and gloom, whether this concerned a psychological discussion of the national character or a sociological discussion of community life.

In the revolutionary 1960s such concerns were taken seriously in an entirely unexpected way. Where the wind was sown, the whirlwind was reaped. However distinct the different forms of rebellion may have been, the common denominator was above all a desire for independence and

authenticity; in short, the opposite of the clichéd picture of mass man that had been evoked. This intense change in society would have important consequences for the political culture.

The welfare state

From the 1950s the Dutch economy saw two decades of growth at an average of 5 per cent. This was a unique phenomenon, one that by and large occurred across the whole Western world. It seemed a direct consequence of the well-functioning international monetary system (agreed at Bretton Woods in 1944); stable exchange rates, the dollar as the most important international currency and the application of Keynesian thinking, at the heart of which was the idea that major peaks and troughs in the economy could be levelled with targeted government policy. Even more important than direct intervention – which was actually only possible in theory – was the fact that on the basis of the Bretton Woods Agreement an international community of bank directors, economists and politicians put their faith in this order. Those involved wanted to avoid a repeat of the 1930s, and considered themselves bound to an orderly budgetary and monetary policy. At the heart of the policy of De Nederlandsche Bank (DNB), which to an increasing extent followed the German Bundesbank, lay therefore the aim of promoting international trust, namely by arguing for ‘discipline’ in every respect; that is to say, preventing inflation and keeping exchange rates as stable as possible.¹⁵ In this framework, wages, prices and taxes were also kept as low as possible. In 1956 the Social and Economic Council added to the central objectives of the economic policy to be pursued that there would be an attempt to maintain a ‘stable price level’. This, in fact, came down to keeping wages as low as possible, which with registered surplus labour at less than 1 per cent (1960) was a difficult task.

On the basis of this growth, the Netherlands had expanded social security at a rapid rate and based it on an extremely benevolent principle: recognition of ‘every person’s right to self-development’.¹⁶ Expenditure on social security, which had made up around 10 per cent of national income between 1948 and 1958, rose rapidly, and in 1975 reached a little over 28 per cent.¹⁷ Combined with similar policies in the areas of public housing, the labour market, healthcare and education, this led to an exceptionally strong increase in expenditure on what, taken together, can be described as ‘social politics’:

Social expenditure in selected Western European countries 1949-1975, as percentage of GDP:

	1950	1955	1960	1965	1970	1975	average growth per year 50/75
United Kingdom	14.8	14.1	15.1	18.2	20	25.6	0.43
FRG	19.2	19.1	21.9	23.2	24.7	32.7	0.54
Belgium		15	18.7	21.3	23.4	31.5	0.83
Sweden	11.3	13.6	15.2	19.9	25.9	33.5	0.85
The Netherlands	12.2	14.2	17.6	22.1	27.1	35.4	0.93

Source: Joop M. Roebroek and Mirjam Hertogh, *'De beschavende invloed des tijds'. Twee eeuwen sociale politiek, verzorgingsstaat en sociale zekerheid in Nederland* ('s-Gravenhage 1998), 357¹⁸

The costs did not initially seem to give rise to any objections, but the constant wage restraint did provoke rapidly growing unease. To their amazement and irritation, trade union leaders acknowledged that wages in Germany, for instance, had come to be somewhat higher. In 1963-1964 it was not possible to pursue the policy of wage restraint any longer; shortly afterwards, moreover, rising prices were almost automatically compensated in wages (and, not much later, in social benefits also). This resulted in a 'wage-price spiral', with average wage increases of 10 per cent per year and a doubling of inflation (to almost 5 per cent).¹⁹

In the 1960s, first the profitability of industrial companies declined, and then from 1965 employment opportunities in this sector fell as well. Companies initially tried to solve their problems through mechanization and mergers. Because profits had fallen, however, foreign capital was needed to finance this, which made the financing structure for industry more unstable. This was not a problem so long as the interest rate remained low, but it did make business more susceptible to international economic trends and monetary relations. The Dutch economy was highly dependent on the world economy (in the 1960s both imports and exports amounted to around 40 per cent of the national income) and was therefore 'very vulnerable', as was shown to be the case in the 1970s.²⁰

To start with, trust in the dollar eroded. In 1971 Nixon did not want to cap domestic spending one year before the elections, while the war in Vietnam demanded considerable sums. When he decided that the dollar would no longer be freely exchangeable with gold, this had a strongly destabilizing effect on international monetary relations. To this were added, largely as a consequence of the wave of inflation that had begun in 1968, the oil

crisis of 1973 and then that of 1979. The Dutch economy initially managed to hold firm, but then things slipped rapidly. The ‘i/a ratio’ – that is to say, the number of benefits claimants per hundred employed – was still 43.0 in 1969, but by 1984 it had risen to 83.3 (and would remain at this level for a decade). Inflation rose further, and the government budget was thrown off balance (from a deficit of 1.1 per cent in 1973 to one of 9.2 per cent in 1995).²¹ From 1972, the DNB warned of a menacing ‘unmanageability and dislocation in state and society’.²²

It would still be some years before it generally became clear how great the problems were. Thanks to the increasing flow of natural gas revenues (natural gas had been discovered in 1959), benefits could be distributed with a generous hand.²³ From the mid-1970s though, the calculations and arguments stacked up that made it clear that something would have to be done: in the end, it would be necessary to bid farewell to the social paradise.²⁴

Lying behind these problems was the fact that the country had to adjust to a new phase in the world economy in this period and, correspondingly, also had to develop a new self-image. For centuries, the Netherlands had seen itself as a country of trade and agriculture, and after the Second World War it had thrown itself into industry and thus into the modern world. But this industry, particularly traditional labour-intensive industry, was vanishing, and the employment system had to adjust to a knowledge-intensive service economy.

Workforce in selected sectors, in percentages, 1947-1981

	Agriculture	industry	trade, transport and communication	banking and insurance	services
1947	19.8	30.1	19.3	1.8	14.1
1960	12.5	33.2	19.9	2.2	14.4
1981	6.5	24.6	23.9	3.1	27.0

Source: CBS

This fundamental restructuring, which had major consequences for the daily lives of numerous people, was closely linked to the fact that the Netherlands had a small consumer market and hardly any raw materials. This made the country dependent upon variables that it could not control (international relations, capital, large commercial groups, economic trends). In a democracy, certainly, the effects of this are absorbed and muted as much as possible. To this end, a government is forced to exercise as much control as possible in an area that it can actually influence: the domestic

economy. This means that a large part of domestic spending has to be 'nationalized' and made available again as 'social politics'. The development of a welfare state is usually connected to the degree of economic openness and a country's international connections.²⁵

The Netherlands traditionally had an open economy, and in the days of the Republic it had already developed a high level of security and insurance. Initially this was largely private and local in nature, but from the beginning of the twentieth century it was nationalized and then expanded.²⁶ This process was rarely analysed in such pragmatic terms, but presented as originating from religious or political-philosophical views.²⁷ In fact, however, the creation and expansion of social security was less the consequence of an increase in something that was called 'solidarity' (and which thereby had a voluntary character), but occurred in parallel with integration in the international economy: in 1948 exports constituted 20 per cent of GDP, in 1969 the figure was 43 per cent, and it subsequently rose sharply (imports rose in a similar fashion).²⁸ The social security system then functioned as intended: it made the change less painful and limited socio-economic insecurity.

In this way a situation developed that Tocqueville had predicted as early as 1840: the democratic state would become a power that was as extensive as it was patronizing, one that only intended that which was good for its citizens, but at the same time was jealous and did not tolerate any competition. The state and the state alone would provide for all needs and lighten life's burdens. He foresaw that society would be suffused with a mass of detailed and uniform rules, stifling independence. Slowly but surely, the nation would start to resemble a servile flock, with the state as a watchful and careful shepherd.²⁹ More recently, this idea has resurfaced in discussions of the 'equanimity of the welfare state'.³⁰ This equanimity could sometimes go too far, particularly if the state did not implement an activation policy, but limited itself to providing benefits with a generous hand. This was the case in the Netherlands.

The agrarian sector in Europe was largely unable to produce at world market prices.³¹ In that sense, agriculture in general did not have an economic future, whilst at the same time, this sector was of great socio-cultural significance. This tension led to much lip service being paid to the family farm, 'het familiebedrijf', 'bäuerlicher Famililibetrieb', and 'exploitation familiale'.³² Thanks to all kinds of support and subsidies, France and the Netherlands in particular had to contend with a growing production surplus, which they would have liked to offload on the European market (read: the German market). Between 1958 and 1968, under the leadership of

the Dutch European commissioner, Mansholt, the Common Agricultural Policy was developed. Just as local poor relief had been transferred to the national level during the nineteenth century, farmers were now included in European welfare arrangements.³³ All of this could be paid for, given that the economy as a whole had seen continuous strong growth in the 1960s. But it quickly led to butter mountains and wine lakes that had to be dumped on the world market at rock-bottom prices.³⁴

Agricultural policy had now gained a European dimension, although this did not mean that the national level no longer mattered. Once a market and price policy had been developed in 1968, Mansholt declared that this was only the beginning. A sustainable agrarian sector would only be possible if a 'structural policy' were to be pursued – a polite term for a fundamental reorganization. According to the *Memorandum on the Reform of Agriculture in the European Economic Community*, known as the 'Mansholt Plan', the agrarian population in Europe had to be reduced from ten to five million. Small farmers would just have to face up to this, as the agricultural labourers had done. Although social measures would be taken (compensation arrangements, re-training, job creation), the protests that subsequently flared up everywhere showed that few farmers were looking forward to it. *Bauernkiller* was just one of the more friendly insults that was directed at Mansholt. The implementation of such a plan would also have enormous consequences in the Netherlands:

Sector	Desired size according to <i>Memorandum</i>	Percentages of businesses satisfying this in 1970
Arable farming	80-120 hectares	0.5
Milk production	40-200 dairy cows	2.0
Beef production	150-200 cattle	10.0
Pork production	450-600 pigs	1.0
Egg production	10,000 laying hens	3.0

Source: E.J. Krajenbrink, *Het Landbouwschap* (n.p. 2005), 214 [Table 5.1]

Mansholt's proposals therefore fell flat: the structural and social policy was deemed much too expensive. This area had to remain subject to national policy.

The organized consultations in the Netherlands were not opposed to the direction that Mansholt had suggested, all the more so as they believed that such a policy was already being pursued in the Netherlands. From 1962 the number of farmers fell rapidly and the average business size increased, as

did the amount of concentrate and artificial fertilizer used; tractors became bigger and refrigerated tanks and sow stalls were built everywhere.³⁵ The problem was anything but solved with this, however. Whilst on the one hand the policy largely led to an increase in production, on the other, little came of the ambition to bring farmers' income up to a level comparable with that of the rest of the population – and that was the promise that farmers in various countries had managed to extract in the 1950s. The more inflation rose during the 1960s, the more notable this became, leading to substantial farmers' demonstrations (in many European regions in 1971, in the Netherlands in 1974).

The 'green front' had been in a position to determine the course of events in the Netherlands to a great extent, and its position became even stronger after agricultural policy was transferred to the European level. Namely, it was then possible to claim that anyone who wanted to limit the price of grain or milk was threatening European integration. This argument came under pressure, however, due to the problems resulting from the Common Agricultural Policy (surpluses, enormous costs and international objections to strong European protection); and then the decline began. In the 1980s, 'Brussels' cautiously began to force back the agricultural subsidies' enormous demand on the European budget (from two-thirds in 1971 to one-half in 2000). At the same time, at the national level the tangled relations between civil servants and farmers' organizations were severed. The deeper background to the disintegration of the green front can be seen as a successful outcome of the agricultural policy that was pursued. In the end, a substantial group of 'farmers' was transformed into a limited group of 'agrarian entrepreneurs'; a more or less classical agricultural system had become a modern agro-food complex (in 2000, 10 per cent of GDP was earned in this sector).³⁶ Once this transformation was largely complete, the unique political role played by agriculture at the national level evaporated.

Whilst the farmers became directly dependent on European arrangements, other occupational groups became so in a more indirect way. The nation state continued to be directly responsible for them, although this responsibility was largely re-insured, as it were, at the European level, as the English economic historian Milward has argued. According to him, European integration was even the 'rescue of the nation state'.³⁷ After all, it guaranteed the prosperity that was necessary to be able to put the renewed notion of democracy into practice.

Integration was also the solution to another problem: what to do with the Federal Republic of Germany. In Dutch policy circles there was a conviction as early as 1945 – although it was not unanimous and was accompanied by

very mixed feelings – that the country would face ‘a poor future’ if the German economy were not to recover.³⁸ This conviction only became stronger when the country’s colonial possessions in Asia were lost. The recovery of the German economy, however, demanded that the political relations had to be defined between the countries that had fought an extremely bitter war.

Some among the elite were convinced that a solution could only be found in the formation a kind of United States of Europe, whereby the countries on the continent would surrender their sovereignty.³⁹ This was the view of the European Movement, which initially enjoyed broad support in the Netherlands. In March 1948 a motion was adopted almost unanimously in the House of Representatives whereby the government was urged to further the goal of the ‘enduring unification’ of European states in supranational ties. According to the first sponsor of the motion, public opinion on this point was finally ‘strong, sober, yet idealistic, concrete’; it was time to discard ideological beliefs about national sovereignty.⁴⁰

Not everyone shared this idealism, however; the then Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs, Stikker, later summarized his position as follows. He had not wanted to undermine other countries’ ‘sincere attempt’ to ‘bring an end to this age-old quarrelling and rivalry’, but he did not really see how this desire could lead to anything that would fit ‘in the pattern of world politics’. In his view this idealism was ill-considered; it offered no answers to crucial questions. Which countries actually belonged to ‘Europe’? Should Great Britain be included, and would it want to be? Would it be possible to form a common market without first creating *one* government over the United States of Europe? What sort of relationship would such a Europe have with the United States, certainly in view of the fact that in the area of security, Europe was dependent upon NATO and, consequently, as expressed in an almost attractive image, sheltered under the American nuclear umbrella? Stikker concluded: ‘This is the uncertainty and vagueness that has been bewitching European and Atlantic politics for so many years. Even now, in my opinion, no one is able to answer these questions’.⁴¹

The creation of the ECSC (1951) did make inroads, in a formal sense, into the sovereignty of the participating countries, but the actual consequences of this were limited. The hope that it might provide a basis for further political integration evaporated quickly (in 1954 the plan for a European Defence Community was abandoned), after which the negotiations were limited to furthering economic cooperation. The six participating countries would abolish all mutual barriers to trade and would apply a common customs tariff to the rest of the world. This was enshrined in the Treaty of Rome (25 March 1957), with which the EEC was founded.

On the whole, the Dutch government was not brimming over with enthusiasm. The country did not want to be trapped in a continental bloc controlled by France and Germany. When it became clear that integration would remain limited to the economy, however, which would make the entry of the United Kingdom possible, the hesitations fell away and the path was taken 'from which there can be no return', as Stickers' successor, Luns (KVP), declared in October 1957.⁴²

The 'Europe of the market' was promoted as an essential component in the encouragement of economic growth, whereby a small country such as the Netherlands would gain unhindered access to an immense consumer market, and would profit from an expansive economy that was equal to the world's large blocs.⁴³ From this perspective, further European integration occurred as a technocratic process, far above the heads of the electorate.

A lost people

So long as prosperity rose steadily and socio-economic security increased, politics was not unduly bothered by the electorate: half of the voters had no interest in it at all, whilst only 10 per cent was 'very interested'. In 1961 the Labour Party commissioned a study that showed that 'the masses have little knowledge of politics, and certainly two-thirds of them consider it to be of little or no importance for their own future to occupy themselves with politics'.⁴⁴ In any case, this was an international phenomenon.⁴⁵ Elections were thus more reminiscent of a census by which the extent of support for the various parties was measured than a well-considered choice.

Contact between politics and society mainly took place through numerous specialists and the representatives of a wide range of interest groups. Just as in 1798 and in 1848, the constitution was still based on the notion that there was no intermediary between the individual voter and the government, but this had become a fiction. Since the end of the nineteenth century, corporate lobbying had gained a substantial place in the political order, something that was mainly valued by the confessionals on ideological grounds. In 1948 the heart of this system of consultation was encapsulated in the Economic Council, which became the Social and Economic Council two years later. All kinds of negotiation systems and consultation rights in various social and cultural areas were added to this pattern. In addition, the idea prevailed that social problems – which were becoming increasingly complicated – were better left to the experts; that is to say, dealt with by the technocracy. Social democrats were particularly susceptible to this

type of approach. At the heart of the technocracy was the Central Planning Bureau, founded in 1945 and run for the first ten years by the internationally renowned econometrist, Tinbergen.⁴⁶ This approach brought the risk that problems that should have been subject to social debate became depoliticized; and this did not increase the political involvement of citizens. Particularly in the period in which the social democrats and Catholics cooperated closely in the 'Roman-Red coalition' (1945-1958), it was hard to deny that the main points of policy were presented to the electorate as *faits accomplis*. The voters resigned themselves to this, and this explains much of the great 'evenness' of Dutch politics.

Naturally, some intellectuals were concerned about this evenness. It seemed to confirm the phenomenon of 'mass man' as a product of modernization, both in the area of work and in that of urban life, and even in family life, where the first signs of a consumer culture were becoming visible. These concerns acquired a philosophical dimension in the mid-1930s on the basis of existential philosophy, but after 1945 they would become relatively general.⁴⁷ In 1948 Van Peursen, a popular philosopher, took his doctorate with a study entitled *Riskante filosofie. Een karakteristiek van het hedendaagse existentiële denken* (*Risky philosophy: A characteristic of contemporary existential thought*, published in a second edition in 1955). To the extent that the writer's meaning can be understood – the language gets somewhat lost in empty constructions – existential philosophers such as Jaspers, Heidegger and Sartre argue for a transition 'from the sphere of not being oneself, a non-authentic existence, bad faith, suicide, to the sphere of being oneself, martyrdom; in short, authenticity'.⁴⁸ Authenticity, however, had almost disappeared from mass culture altogether, and man was suffering from a 'hopeless sense of being lost'.⁴⁹ A new generation of educationalists seized upon this as a social duty. In 1945 Langeveld's *Beknopte Theoretische Paedagogiek* (*A Concise Theory of Education*) was published. For decades, this booklet was studied by nearly every educationalist and teacher in the Netherlands.⁵⁰ He formulated the goal of upbringing as 'helping the child to become capable of ethical self-determination in a moral order, for which we are responsible'.⁵¹ With this 'self-responsible self-determination', a traditional goal such as the education of good 'citizens' was rejected out of hand as being too limited, just as there was a move away from the 'amorphous' ideal of making children as happy as possible.⁵²

This way of thinking also formed the background to the establishment of a Ministry of Social Work in 1952. In the debate on the first budget, Klonpé (KVP), then still an MP, noted that this was an extremely important area.

Indeed, now we are discussing social work, and thus our interest is in the human being who, at a time of technological advance and massification, faces a society that is changing very rapidly, meaning that he often finds it hard to adjust.⁵³

The ambivalence of this way of thinking is made clear here: on the one hand, terms such as development, independence and authenticity were used, while on the other, modernization was presented as an inevitable process to which people had to adjust, to go with the changes of the age. This became the basis for a modern conservatism, which gained ground over a broad political spectrum. This conservatism would not strive to preserve tradition, but on the contrary, it would provide active leadership in the further modernization of society. The socio-cultural consequences of this would have to be absorbed, however, by promoting a 'new *geborgenheid* [security]': everyone would be enticed, or forced, to protect themselves from a desolate Heideggerian *Dasein* by having a good family life and a well-considered philosophy of life.⁵⁴ This was the focus of the system of rewards and sanctions that is considered (mainly with hindsight) to be so characteristic of the 1950s.

This development, whereby a new balance was sought between ties and independence, became most visible in the area of religion. Church leaders from various denominations were deeply convinced that modernization would inevitably lead to secularization. The best way to fight this, they thought, would be to deepen the religious life of the individual believer. In 1954 the Catholic clergy were still putting their faith in authoritarian power, as shown by the Episcopal Charge *De katholieke in het openbare leven van deze tijd* (*The Catholic in today's public life*). Within a few years, this had changed completely: a clerical renewal movement started based on the notion that the church did not belong to the clergy, but to 'God's people on the way', the believers themselves.⁵⁵ Everyday churchgoers could only watch in astonishment as practically every tradition was suddenly thrown overboard; from now on, they would have to figure everything out for themselves.⁵⁶ This not only led to a loosening of the bond between ecclesiastical organizations and religious life, but also to a strong growth in movements that promoted a form of personal religious experience. The American evangelist Billy Graham, for example, made several successful trips to the Netherlands (to the Olympic Stadium in Amsterdam in 1954, one year later to the De Kuip Stadium in Rotterdam). From 1965 the Evangelical Broadcasting Corporation organized itself as a very successful association (it was on the air from 1970), one that also managed to attract a remarkable

number of young people.⁵⁷ Modern conservatism thus put tradition and authority on the line, based on the classical idea that many things had to change in order for things to remain the same.

The turning point: 1966

For the time being this modern conservatism, which had come to characterize all of the testimonial parties to a greater or lesser extent, was very self-confident. This was shown most clearly by the Cals Cabinet, which took office after a cabinet crisis in 1965. It brought together various Catholic, anti-revolutionary and social democratic heavyweights.⁵⁸ As regular elections had to be held in 1967, the cabinet's term was limited beforehand to two years. Despite this, Prime Minister Cals (KVP) set out a very detailed government policy statement, propounding a modern conservatism that was as clear as it was ambitious.

However much we are aware of the short term of this cabinet, we nevertheless consider it our duty to pursue our policy with a view to far-reaching reforms that, we believe, will increasingly demand our attention in the coming years.⁵⁹

With broad strokes a programme was set out that would 'put citizens in a real position to play their part freely and take responsibility throughout our political and social life. In freedom, but not without ties, of course'. The programme was based on the assumption that modernization had entered an accelerated phase and that it should also be intensified further, because the population was expected to rise to around 20 million at the end of the twentieth century. 'The existence of our growing population can only be secured by rapid, continuing industrialization and further development of the economic structure and services'. This would be extremely difficult, given that the Netherlands would lose its traditional face as a result (urbanization and infrastructure), but at the same time it had to satisfy new demands in the area of the environment (sound pollution, air pollution and contamination of surface water). In order to do this, a systematic approach had to be taken to the problems.

It was an ominous sign that the text of the government statement was not only quite lengthy (the prime minister had 55 pages to read out), but a written version had also mistakenly been distributed to MPs in advance, meaning that they listened to the visions with a somewhat bored air. Things

also rapidly went wrong. The programme required a lot of money and there was disagreement among the coalition partners as to how it should be financed. On the night of 13-14 October 1966 the cabinet fell, as a consequence of a motion by the KVP demanding sounder financial backing.⁶⁰

It is difficult to overestimate the significance of the fall of the cabinet. It was the first cabinet crisis that occurred almost entirely in the public eye, due to live broadcasting on television. The public understood very few of the technical budget details, but were served up a tragedy by journalists: a Catholic prime minister who had been forced to resign by the parliamentary chairman of his own party. It was obvious that this should be presented as the final meeting between Caesar and Brutus. The widely shared interpretation of the events was not only that the night had seen treachery, but that it also signified 'the end of an era'.⁶¹ From this time onwards all the classical political parties faced problems, both internally and with each other.

The confusion can be illustrated by means of a discussion that took place in February 1967 between Queen Juliana and Biesheuvel, the parliamentary leader of the ARP. This politician, who can be considered as exemplary of modern conservatism, asserted at the palace:

For my part, I indicated that I would be better off without Christian politics if a Christian party were not to lead the way in trying to achieve a better society, in the fight against injustice, in taking a progressive position on questions such as development aid, war and peace, Vietnam etc.⁶²

Here Biesheuvel not only treated the principle upon which Kuyper had based his party somewhat carelessly, but he also sacrificed sound financial-economic policy on the altar of 'progressive' foreign policy. The ARP was thus almost torn apart in this period in a tough battle for the leadership and direction of the party.

The social democrats were struck by similar turmoil after they discovered that many voters were not in fact interested in politics, and that even their own electorate did not actually perceive a link between their personal problems and what the party considered the 'key points of the political battle'. Those key points – the programme – were only of interest to a few; it was relatively clear that the PVDA was a single-issue party for the workers.⁶³ Precisely in this period, however, the classical 'working class' (just like the agrarian labour force) was disappearing, due to the fundamental restructuring of society in general and the labour market in particular.⁶⁴ This was emphatically denied, though: like a ground swell, there was increasing

interest in socialism's past, mostly in its untamed form; more Nieuwenhuis than Troelstra.⁶⁵ At the end of the 1950s Bell had claimed that the great ideologies of the nineteenth century were 'exhausted'; but that is not how things looked in the 1960s. And with this, we come to the second theme: the sixties and their influence on the political culture.

The cultural revolution

In the opinion of the British-American historian Judt in Germany, the revolution in the 1960s was about sex. Promiscuity was the best way of resisting American imperialism, or disassociating oneself from the national socialist past of one's parents' generation: 'How fortunate that anti-Nazism required – indeed, was defined by – serial orgasm'.⁶⁶ In a less ironic mood, he pointed to the almost complete failure of the aims of the rebels of 1968: authority had been demolished, but little had come in its place.⁶⁷ It was not only young people who thought that an entirely new age had begun; diverse circles entertained the idea that society had entered a revolutionary age. Before we address the nature of this revolution, though, it is first important to look more closely at the question of what a revolution actually is.⁶⁸

To start with, a revolution requires the idea that society is in crisis and forceful measures are needed. If a political regime starts down this road, the result is almost inevitably that the contacts between state and citizens increase in number and significance; that is to say, that the state will politicize the citizens: 'Modernizing states create new publics that suddenly care about national politics'.⁶⁹ Such a mobilization is based on the message that something has gone wrong, that there is a great urgency for change – and with this, the regime's obviousness, its own legitimacy, is inevitably undermined. Space is then created for adjustments and changes to be put forward other than those proposed by the incumbent regime. A revolution is not simply a rebellion of new against old, but much more a tough, competitive battle between rival forms of modernization about the course to be followed.

This general insight can be used in the analysis of the revolutionary changes of the 1960s. With the withdrawal of the older generation that led the reconstruction and the recovery after the Second World War – think of Churchill, Adenauer, De Gaulle, Drees and Romme – politicians stepped forward who believed that the old problems had been solved, and who anticipated new problems and wished to tackle them energetically. This ambition was described above as modern conservatism. However, this

also had the effect of destabilizing the traditional hierarchy; from now on, authority had to be legitimized with the aid of authenticity – a weapon that had been forged back in the 1930s, and that was now eagerly taken up by young people, women and believers. This authenticity had to be won, so the thinking went, from the dominant conformism that had permeated the whole of society: the family, school, work and culture. Indeed, according to the popular German-American philosopher Marcuse, everything was aimed at reproducing the existing order, something he described as the ‘absorption of ideology into reality’.⁷⁰ People had become totally alienated and, according to his famous cult book of 1964, ‘one-dimensional’: the alienated subject had been swallowed up by his alienated existence. According to Marcuse, who spread his message worldwide, authenticity was no longer to be found in the working class, but only among marginal groups and individuals. Rebelliousness thereby became a quality in itself. It was thus a watered-down form of existentialism, provoked by modern conservatism.⁷¹ It led to an ‘existential politics’ that initially focused less on politics, on the community, than on morality and personal identity.⁷² In this sense, it was a cultural, not a political, revolution. And however important the changes in society might have been in these years, the impact on politics was ultimately rather minor. This is closely related to the ideological efforts that were made in the 1960s, which were quite intensive but not especially original. Perhaps this is the most striking thing: it mostly concerned the re-use of ideas that had already been in use around 1900. Whilst political theory almost always involves recycling, in the 1960s, this was largely a recapitulation: repetition in a condensed form.

Anarchism

The return to the past began with a resurgence of the oldest form of socialism in the Netherlands, anarchism. Between May 1965 and May 1967, the Provo movement brought anarchism back, be it in a new form. It was argued that the key problem was that ‘the workers have not freed themselves’ and that they were also no longer in a position to do so. The Provo movement now handed the historical task that Marx had granted to the proletariat over to a new class:

The provotariat is the new insurgent class in wealthy countries. It consists of provos, beatniks, pleiners [people who had taken part in events around Amsterdam’s Leidseplein], yobbos, mods, rockers, blouson noirs,

stilyagi, mangupi, raggare, gammler, artists, students, anarchists, ban-the-bombers; of all young people who don't want to get ahead in life [...] The provotariat is therefore defined in economic and psychological terms. It does not have regular paid employment and it is inspired by a subversive mentality regarding the established order.⁷³

This description of the 'provotariat' had little to do with economics or psychology, but everything to do with age. This is something on which we should reflect further, partly because in many discussions of the turbulent 1960s, much weight is attached to the rebellious 'generation'.⁷⁴

The idea of a generation goes back to a very abstract theory that was proposed by Mannheim in 1928.⁷⁵ He asserted that a generation only acquired some substance if – and to the extent that – it was consciously perceived. It was thus not simply a birth cohort, but a group that claimed to have something in common (experiences or ideals) and that presented itself as a 'generation' on this basis.⁷⁶ This was generally considered to be important, as it was linked to the illusion that with this, one could anticipate the course of history: the spokesmen of a new generation would point the way to the future. That was the interpretation of the idealistic youth movement in the interwar period, while after the Second World War the German sociologist Schelsky attracted attention with his concerned discussion of a 'sceptical generation', for which he held out little hope. In this light, the actions of young rebels in the 1960s, despite all of the problems they brought, could be seen as the return of ideals.⁷⁷

The fact was thereby overlooked, however, that initially the young people were less focused on adults than on others of their own age.⁷⁸ In a pioneering study, the sociologist Van Hessen pointed to the institutional character of this 'being young together', the permanent place that it occupies between the family and society as a kind of separate, screened-off micro-society. The problem with thinking in terms of generations, he argued, is that young people are burdened with the duty to correct and regenerate society. In other words, young people are seen as adults, whereas 'being young together' should above all be seen as a 'collective dialogue among young people' about particular norms and rules. For some, changes within this become condensed into a certain style, leading to a battle, as it were, to spread this to everyone of that age (to establish a 'youth order').⁷⁹ Due to the over-valuation of this in public opinion, one might add, a 'theatre of generational action' emerged before a large – even international – and generally sympathetic audience.⁸⁰ The most essential element of the new youth order that would take shape in the 1960s, however, was less political idealism than pop music.⁸¹

The Provo movement presented itself first of all with an appeal to other young people: 'PROVO wants to renew anarchism and bring it to young people'.⁸² After this, however, the temptation to reach a larger audience proved irresistible.⁸³ The sympathy of the audience was thereby put heavily to the test, as there was little consistency or depth in the Provo movement's writings. Police officers in Amsterdam, for example, made great efforts to discern 'what really lies behind the Provo movement' and held regular discussions with 'provos':

The general impression is that as a rule, they are very pleasant young people to talk to, but one doesn't find out what they want: what they assert at the beginning of the conversation, they then contradict at the end. One might ask oneself whether they even know exactly what they want.⁸⁴

The most important contribution of the Provo movement was therefore not the renewal of anarchism, but the broad dissemination of the idea that young people were trying to make society a more decent place.

Marxism

After anarchism, interest turned to Marxism, and this happened largely as a consequence of the student movement. Student uprisings were a common international phenomenon, mainly in the period between 1968 and 1969.⁸⁵ This was partly a consequence of the friction between the classical ideal of education and the explosion in student numbers. In the Netherlands, too, the number of students had grown at a formidable rate:

Numbers of students in university education, per 100,000 inhabitants

1950	267	1970	868
1960	367	1980	988

Source: C.J. Schuyt: *Op zoek naar het hart van de verzorgingsstaat* (Leiden/Antwerp 1991), 354

The new students resisted the style that had hitherto prevailed, such as that which had developed in the traditional student bodies, the so-called 'gezelligheidsverenigingen [social clubs]'.⁸⁶ The new students looked to social engagement as an alternative. In a *demokratisch manifest* (September 1963), the Students' Union announced: 'It is one of the primary responsibilities of intellectuals to devote themselves to the solving of social problems'.⁸⁷

They styled themselves as 'moral agents', as enthusiastic representatives of the anti-Americanism that had become manifest worldwide in response to the intensification of the Vietnam War (which could be followed daily on television).

As part of this, they clung to the work of Marx. Within a few years this would lead to a re-run of all of the ideological battles that had been fought by the early socialists (with a remarkable disregard for 'really existing Communism' in Eastern Europe).⁸⁸ The most activist group of students ended up in the Communist Party of the Netherlands (CPN), giving it a final boost in its waning years, but also in various small splinter groups.

Social democracy

More long-lasting success was achieved by New Left (Nieuw Links), a movement of thirtysomethings who wanted to bring new life to social democracy. October 1966 saw the publication of *Tien over Rood. Uitdaging van Nieuw Links aan de PvdA* (*Ten over Red. New Left's challenge to the PvdA*).⁸⁹ This left-wing group within the Labour Party reproached the latter on the grounds that 'its sometimes conservative, unclear and undemocratic manner of acting had alienated it from the people'. An alternative must be sought in a kind of 'return to the source', although Marx was somewhat outdated. The longest part of *Tien over Rood* was dedicated to how to combat capitalism's most exasperating tendency: massive income inequality. It would only be possible to fight this effectively by centralizing wage policy, combating unearned income (*rentiers*), nationalizing the monetary sector and taking a systematic approach to the economy and government budget. This was a harking back to the enthusiasm of socialist planning, such as that which had flared up in the 1930s and died out again in the late 1940s.

The new aspects were mainly to be found in the enthusiastic tone and in a number of inconsistencies that were sure to be appreciated at that time, as they gave the whole a sense of vitality and authenticity. According to New Left, for example, on the one hand decision-making should be delegated to as low a level as possible in business, but on the other hand corporate constructions were resolutely bypassed: wage policy should be discussed and decided upon in parliament. How central planning might be reconciled with the class struggle and the wage campaigns of the trade unions remained unclear. This core part of the document was supplemented with a number of eye-catching proposals in the area of international politics: the Netherlands could remain in NATO, but only if fascist countries such as Portugal were

expelled, and Spain were not admitted. The Netherlands could also remain in the EEC, but mainly in order to democratize the institution and oppose market concentration. Germany had to be kept under control and should be obliged to accept the Oder-Neisse line, the Netherlands should recognize the GDR, the United States should no longer be followed uncritically and expenditure on defence should be cut drastically (by abolishing pretty much the entire navy, among other things). This lively politics of independence was supplemented with a desire to increase the amount spent on development aid to 2 per cent of the national income and the revival of an old plan, namely the establishment of an international police force. And finally, in the classical republican tradition, it was proposed that the monarchy should be abolished once Queen Juliana had stepped down.

With these proposals, the Labour Party would regain its sharp profile and be able to distinguish itself clearly from the other centre parties. It was assumed that the proposals would lead to great electoral success, as they would appeal to a dormant group of 'malcontents' that was thought to prevail in large parts of society. These malcontents were defined more than they were analysed (provos, students, 'de-pillarized' believers, workers who wanted 'more'): New Left mixed up generational thinking, secularization and class conflict with a certain degree of ease.⁹⁰ The problem, however, was that this electoral success would have to be rather major to implement such a programme (in fact, the confessional parties would more or less have to go under); and this did not materialize. The more that the PVDA moved in the direction of the New Left and became 'polarized' (both externally and internally), the less other parties were prepared to work with them.⁹¹ This was a major cause of the fact that in the period between 1966 and 1989, the PVDA spent only five years participating in government, even though the spirit of the age implied that it could expect greater success. Just as between 1918 and 1939, in effect, social democracy found itself isolated.

Progressive liberalism

The 1960s also saw the return of progressive liberalism; or rather, the Free-thinking Democratic League (VDB) was re-founded. The VDB (1901-1946) had been founded 'hastily and carelessly'; it lacked any real goal aside from fulfilling a mediatory role between liberalism and socialism, and was characterized by a failure to produce any detailed political programme, let alone dogmatic principles. The world had become too complicated for this, and society was constantly changing too much. The VDB wished only to follow

one guideline: that of democracy, which must offer everyone equal chances to develop. All other issues were met with a 'principled opportunism'. This made it a party for the few, and also one that did not aim for power, but was satisfied with influence.⁹² In short, this was also the profile of the D'66 party, which was founded in the autumn of 1966. The publicity for the new party went as follows:

This is a time of regeneration. The current order is sick and tired. It makes compromises, it falters. We want to break through it. We want a new democracy, a new electoral system. And a practical politics; and clarity; and openness; and freedom. We also want you to have your say.⁹³

D'66 stood for a 'principled lack of principles'; after all, it was the dogmatic (confessional) parties that were hindering the pursuit of an energetic, clear politics. The party leader, Van Mierlo, therefore declared himself frankly in favour of a 'practical rather than ideological politics, because ideologies no longer offered any answers to the questions that were occupying the country'.⁹⁴ In order to make such a politics possible, 'radical democratization' would be necessary. The constitution would have to be amended for this purpose: the existing electoral system should be replaced with a plural constituency voting system, and the prime minister should be elected directly. These changes would also shake up the political landscape and bring it closer to the Anglo-Saxon system, where elections almost immediately delivered a mandate to govern. Regarding what should happen to the existing parties, the answer was that they should '*ontploffen* [explode]'.

This led to a singular problem: a change to the constitution would require a two-thirds majority in parliament; in other words, D'66 could only achieve its programme with the aid of parties that, having done their duty, could go ahead and 'explode'. Whilst a new electoral system might well have been a blessing for the country, this was perhaps asking a little too much. Despite this, the party's first showing in elections in 1967 proved a remarkable success, delivering seven parliamentary seats. This was partly due to an unusually slick campaign by an advertising agency that 'managed to position [D'66] like a product in the market'. In addition, the notion of 'sick and tired' appealed to an aversion to party politics (a little over half of the votes for this party were in protest against the current order and existing parties). In this light, D'66 was meanly described as the 'Farmers' Party for intellectuals' (Koekoek had also gained seven seats at these elections).⁹⁵ In the longer term, with significant ups and downs, the party would occupy the ground between liberalism and socialism.

Women

Given the reappearance of a whole range of progressive intellectual debates from the turn of the century, it is not surprising that feminism also returned to the fore. It began almost unwittingly in 1967, with an article in *De Gids* by Joke Kool-Smit entitled 'Het onbehagen van de vrouw [The discontent of the woman]'.⁹⁶ In this she described the fundamental difference between men and women: a man was largely dependent on his own efforts for his life's fulfilment, whereas a woman's future was dependent upon the man she had married. This left the woman with little else than to keep house, which was also for her own peace of mind, but she did not participate in society as a result:

To a significant degree, marital problems stem from the fact that men and women currently live such different lives. And if one wants to change this, one has to ensure that their lives start to resemble one another.⁹⁷

In order to achieve this, it was not enough to throw open the world of work to women, although this was already a momentous task. In those days, female participation in the labour market was notably low: less than 10 per cent of married women undertook paid work, while the figure was around 30 per cent in neighbouring countries.⁹⁸ Smit went further than the classical argument, in which (aside from political rights) the degree of emancipation was largely based on participation in the labour market. She advocated a general division of duties between men and women, thus one that included the areas of housekeeping and childcare. This would only be possible, however, if both were to work a 30-hour week, for example, whereby the traditional breadwinner model would also be rejected.

In fact, she was turning against the notion of the difference between the sexes, which – to the extent that it existed – had been created by deeply divergent processes of socialization. Motherhood or specific female qualities were no longer used as arguments for gaining more space, if not a more just place, in society. In this sense, the argument was less one for equivalence (a concept in which a certain distinction between groups still resounded) than for equality (a concept that was in principle based on the individual).⁹⁹ This was now more possible than ever before, due to the cutting of the tie between sexuality and procreation, as symbolized by 'the pill': 'finally, women have been separated from the rabbits'.¹⁰⁰ This implied the right to one's own body, something that was also expressed in the demand for the right to abortion: to be 'the boss of one's own belly'.

Despite the differences, the 'second wave' of the women's movement resembled the first in many respects. For example, complex ideological debates were again held between (variants of) feminism and (variants of) socialism.¹⁰¹ Once again, the socialists wanted to pay lip service to women's emancipation, but left-wing combativeness sometimes resulted in very masculine performances.

The relationship with the established political parties was also more or less comparable. After the introduction of female suffrage, women did appear on candidate lists, but mainly in order to please the female electorate. Only in the course of the 1960s would various parties also pay more attention to women's interests in their programmes. A few parties even had the ambition of having more – or considerably more – women on their candidate lists; that is to say that they attempted, in this respect, to be representative of the whole electorate. Paradoxically, however, this had the result that the growing consensus on the place of women in politics led to a situation in which sex was less significant in the conflict *between* the parties, whereas the conflict *within* the parties (about both the programme and the filling of positions) intensified.¹⁰²

As in around 1900, it proved difficult to develop a clear feminist ideology. There was no consensus, for example, on the importance of the state: on the one hand, it preserved inequality ('oppression'), but on the other, it was invoked as an ally in the abolition of the same inequality (particularly oppression by the 'patriarchy', including within the nuclear and wider family). Nor did clarity develop on the ancient issue of the equality, or inequality, of men and women. And finally, a difficult point was captured in the saying, 'the personal is political': indeed, with this, the separation between public and private was principally abolished, meaning that it became unclear where privacy (and with it, individual autonomy) should be located. The women's movement achieved great influence with regard to many material points and immaterial developments, but it did not produce a new ideology.¹⁰³

Green politics

The only new ideology that developed was that in relation to the environment. Its roots can be traced back to the book *Silent Spring* (1962) by the American writer Rachel Carson, which attacked a chemical industry that was so busy poisoning the earth with DDT that the chatter of birds would eventually fall silent. This was joined by other concerns, so that in the course

of the 1960s a widespread feeling of alarm developed about environmental pollution. In the early 1970s this prompted the founding of various associations and campaign groups, at both the national and local levels.¹⁰⁴ The emphasis was initially on the potential dangers to public health, which also explains why public health and environmental protection were brought together in one ministry in 1971.¹⁰⁵ From the start, however, 'the environment' offered a means of bringing broader socio-cultural concerns to the fore. For example, in the first government policy statement in which the environment was addressed (1971), Prime Minister Biesheuvel sketched out what he called the 'broader background'. He noted that the Netherlands had never been so prosperous; but this was immediately followed with: 'Many have the strong feeling that the disadvantages of material wealth are starting to outweigh the advantages in both number and size'. In addition, the division of wealth, nationally, but also particularly internationally, remained very unequal. And there was more that gave rise to great concern:

In modern society, many people feel lost, controlled by powers and processes that they cannot perceive and that they often experience as hostile. For many, this leads to despondency and lack of interest, for others to protest, resistance and sometimes aggression.

Here, a somewhat abrupt step was made – from the environment to anomie – which then led to serious intentions:

The Government not only has an eye to these problems, but with its policy it wants to steer and control worrisome developments in our society where possible. It wants to do this, for example, by using a larger part of our growing wealth to fight the unpleasant side effects of our prosperity, such as the pollution of our environment. In doing so, it does not consider economic growth to be counter to human wellbeing, but rather in its service.

It would be essential to have the cooperation of the citizens: 'No government can deal with the problems of a densely populated country if, behind its efforts, the citizens are not prepared to make sacrifices, including personal ones'.¹⁰⁶ Interestingly, in this woolly benevolence, environmental policy was linked with the making of personal sacrifices, whereby it was given a moral dimension. Moreover, it was asserted without irony that the unpleasant side-effects of growing affluence would be fought by promoting growing affluence (wellbeing, after all, could not be undermined). One year later, an analysis was published that emphatically declared this to be an illusion.

There had already been some advance publicity. On 31 August 1971, for example, the *NRC-Handelsblad* newspaper had reported on its front page: 'Disaster threatens world. Computer predicts catastrophe'. In March 1972, the Dutch edition of the long-awaited *Report to the Club of Rome* was published: *Grenzen aan de groei* (*The Limits to Growth*). The authors first explained that there was a problem with the idea of 'growth'. People usually assumed that population growth and growth in industrial production was linear, but it was exponential. In the near future, this would lead to the depletion of minerals and food production would fall behind. Second, the authors emphasized the complexity of the problems. These were usually viewed in isolation – then they were already complicated enough – but they were above all closely interlinked. The report was an attempt to show this interaction using computer models. This produced a 'standard run scenario', whereby it was clear at a glance that without a change in policy the 'world system' would rapidly hit limits that, once exceeded, would lead to chaos and misery. Different variants were then presented of a 'stable world model', which could only be reached by means of quite far-reaching measures such as technological innovations, but also mainly by countering further population growth.¹⁰⁷

The report generally avoided striking an alarmist tone, but it left little doubt that humanity had reached a point where 'it had to develop an entirely new path for its cultural evolution'.¹⁰⁸ In the Netherlands, a country of theologians who were secularizing with astonishing zeal, this came like manna from heaven. For example, the parliamentary leader of the PVDA, Den Uyl, declared frankly: 'We are nearing the end of the industrial age'. A colleague, Van Mierlo of D'66, went even further. He was of the opinion that 'something is fundamentally wrong with our prosperity':

In a shocking manner, for those who wish to see them, the omens that the welfare state has us by the throat are proving [...] that we have made a mad chaos of society...¹⁰⁹

Within a few months of publication, 250,000 copies of the report had been sold. The following year, four days of discussions were held under royal supervision in the Royal Palace on Dam Square on the consequences of the report for the Netherlands.¹¹⁰ The most spectacular convert was Mansholt, the man who like no other had transformed agriculture into a bio-industry, and was thereby exemplary of a policy that, in the Club of Rome's view, had only brought catastrophe closer: unlimited production increases, heavy pressure on the environment and discrimination against the Third World

through the EEC's protectionist measures. He now travelled the world like a prophet, however, as sombre as he was radical. He now argued for a substantial reduction in population growth ('We must not hesitate to combat outdated religious ideas'), the introduction of a non-polluting system of production and the centralized distribution of scarce raw materials and end products. In his personal life, too, it was not the most stable phase of his long career.¹¹¹

What made 'green ideology' so attractive was its all-encompassing nature: it could just as well lead to the construction of a crossing-point for migrating toads as a campaign against the use of nuclear energy. This made it possible to consider green ideology not as competition, but as supplementary, if not a form of renewal. In this way, for example, it was conceivable that the confessionals could create room around the concept of 'stewardship' for an active policy on nature. For the liberals, 'green' provided an opportunity to emphasize the personal responsibility of the citizen, who lacked sufficient encouragement from the welfare state and who could now be provided with a new incentive. For progressives, it was attractive to use the new scarcity and the anticipated conflicts about the division of scarce materials to give new meaning to the concept of 'solidarity'. This would all happen as part of the constant maintenance and rebuilding activities that had to be carried out on ideologies.

Politics in the Netherlands even proved to be very obliging in this respect. In the 1970s, for example, the already costly Delta Works were made many times more expensive by deciding on environmental grounds not to close off the Oosterschelde, but to leave it 'half-open' using sluice gates. The engineers of the Ministry of Waterways and Public Works, who had until then been unassailable in their domain, now had to share power with biologists and ecologists and significantly adjust and scale back their ambitions. A second example came not much later: the forcing back of the unquestioned dominance of the green front, particularly due to growing objections to the manure policy (1983-1993) on the grounds of protecting nature and the environment.¹¹² Green ideology spread quickly. After a cautious start, in 1980 more than half a million people belonged to an environmental or nature organization, and two decades later this had increased to more than three million.¹¹³ For the somewhat harder core of the environmental movement, there was not even a 'natural enemy' left to fight.¹¹⁴ The environmental movement would not achieve a position that was comparable with that of the green front, however.¹¹⁵

It was thus easy to link green ideology to more common ideologies, but it also deviated from them significantly on a number of points. The most

important difference was that green ideology did not have a ‘key problem’.¹¹⁶ After all, the environmental problem concerned the way in which pretty much everything fitted together. As a result, the all-embracing meaning of the ideology was susceptible to lacking any meaning at all, as it offered an opportunity to pursue all manner of campaigns whilst making it difficult to set priorities.¹¹⁷ This impeded the emergence of interesting political debate. The concept of ‘sustainability’ was used, for example, but given that it could only really be achieved by means of a wholesale reorganization of society, it was more an invitation to express a mentality than an impetus for political action.¹¹⁸ Despite the breadth of the concept, it was therefore difficult to move over to forming a party on the basis of this ideology.

This was done most successfully in West Germany, where a green party was founded in 1980.¹¹⁹ Three years later, it reached the electoral threshold and Die Grünen entered the national parliament. Between 1998 and 2005, the party even took part in a coalition government. It also formed the core of the European Green Party. However successful it may have been, the party was plagued by turbulent development. The weaknesses of the ideology were revealed in the fact that it was less ‘ökologiepoltischer Differenzen’ that determined the disagreements between the factions than numerous other points, including the relationship with (left-wing) politics as such.¹²⁰

A similar process could also be observed in the Netherlands, where in 1984 three left-wing parties (the CPN, the PSP and the PPR) stood for the European elections with one common list, and in 1990 founded the Green Left party (Groen Links). Ecology was the essential element that brought together three very divergent parties and thereby saved them from ruin.

Number of seats in the House of Representatives

	CPN	PSP	PPR	Green Left
1971	6	2	2	
1977	2	1	3	
1986	0	1	2	
1989				6
1994				5
1998				11
2002				10

Source: www.parlement.com

The new party might have been ‘green’, but it did not have a consistent political programme on the environment. When the party was founded, it was

solemnly declared that 'humanity is for nature, nature is not for humanity'; but this led to little more than an argument for a 'green tax' (a tax on products that were harmful to the environment). Also problematic was the fact that the party did not reject economic growth, which was perhaps essential if it wanted to be able to finance traditional 'left-wing' aspirations such as increasing the minimum wage and benefits. Moreover, among the middle strata of the party, feminism and pacifism weighed more heavily than ecology.¹²¹ Here too, then, the environment functioned more as cement than as a cornerstone.

How should we thus conclude this overview? The Provo movement refused to institutionalize and disbanded itself in May 1967; the student movement died out after a new law on university administration (the WUB) gave students far-reaching influence in 1970; New Left was very successful in obtaining a number of key positions in the PVDA, but lost itself in 'strategic' debates that were as dogged as they were futile; the women's movement had the ground cut from under its feet because the parties largely capitulated to its wishes; and D'66 and Green Left won a modest place in the political order, but mainly as pilot fishes for the social democrats (and they were very dependent on the quality of political leadership). Viewed as a whole, the rebellious innovators were not successful in significantly regenerating the ideologies to which they clung. It proved too difficult to find a balance between the desire for authenticity and the will to win power (or at least, some power).

There was one attempt to assume real power and to transform the cultural revolution into a political one: the Den Uyl Cabinet (1973-1977), with the social democrats under the leadership of Den Uyl at its heart.¹²² This cabinet split the country so sharply between progressives and conservatives that it even became a *lieu de mémoire*, a symbol of diametrically opposed interpretations: for some, the only ray of hope in a bare desert; for others, the nadir of post-war parliamentary history.¹²³

The cabinet was deeply ambitious, as was revealed when the government made its policy statement. Den Uyl:

Mister Speaker! In its policy, the cabinet wants to be led by the goal of abolishing inequality and discrimination. It is convinced that fighting inflation and the almost constant pressure to overspend can only have a chance of success if it is placed in a broader framework of forcing back existing inequalities of income, possession, power and knowledge.¹²⁴

This implied a 'restructuring of the division of wealth', which should mainly benefit 'people at the bottom of society'. Private consumption should be forced back for the benefit of public services. This would require sacrifices,

which the population would be prepared to make, in the cabinet's view, if they were accepted as 'just and necessary'. And this would be possible due to an important extension of participation and transparent governance. Ultimately, this had to result in a new mentality, with new norms and values, in which greater importance was attached to development than to the accumulation of more and more consumer goods:

The mentality of our industrial society has the character of a miserly society, in which having is more important than being, in which more of a premium is put on displaying possession than gaining inner values. It is not for the Government alone – and in some respects, not even for it in the first place – to bring about fundamental changes in mentality. However it can act in an exemplary and stimulating way and remove obstacles to the better flourishing of human and social development.¹²⁵

This immediately revealed the problems with which the cabinet would wrestle: the moderation of private consumption was bound to provoke strong opposition, as would an improvement in public services that was only to be financed by increasing taxes or by allowing the budget deficit to grow, which would give rise to many objections. Moreover, the cabinet was going against the tide. It was confronted with the consequences of the structural reform of the labour market, which had led to a sharp increase in benefit payments. This could be financed with the revenues from natural gas, but this implied that too little money would be left for innovation. And on top of this, in 1973 the oil crisis broke.

Nevertheless, the cabinet was able to implement large parts of the intended policy. In 1973, inflation was running at 7.8 per cent and it rose to 9.6 per cent in 1975, but was reduced to 6.1 per cent in 1977. The budget deficit grew somewhat, but not dramatically (it would only rise sharply after 1977). Income inequality fell clearly, whilst participation in education (both in terms of duration and level) increased.¹²⁶ Against this, returns in the private sector decreased, and in 1974 the so-called 'netto-netto kop-peling' – which made the net minimum benefit level almost equal to the net minimum wage – was introduced, whereby structural and trend rises in wages affected benefits payments, intensifying the pressure on government spending, including in the longer term.¹²⁷ All in all, there was only room for 'small steps', which had the consequence that there was increased pressure to do something serious for once about fundamental social reform.¹²⁸ The mediocre results of this encouraged the tendency to focus on international politics, where the space for 'symbolic politics' was utilized to the full.¹²⁹

What made this cabinet unique was not this sober profit-and-loss account, but the change that it brought in the political culture: it tried to give shape to the views and, in particular, the stylistic elements of the cultural revolution. Not that Den Uyl showed 'alternative' sides, but he did his best to liberate politics from the iron cage of technocracy and corporatism. In this period, there was much talk of the 'malleability' of society, whereby it became particularly clear that politics should no longer consist of *faits accomplis*, but should be driven by ideals, by wanting something, even the impossible.

Den Uyl was a professional politician, of course, but he showed that he lived for, not off, politics – to draw on the well-known distinction made by Max Weber.¹³⁰ He was a representative of the common man, who fought against the 'smart gentlemen and ladies', the traditional leaders with their blue blazers and plummy voices.¹³¹ He thereby put himself forward as someone who could be trusted, almost independently of the results that he managed to achieve: after 'Papa Drees', there was now 'Uncle Joop'.

Politics is always personal, but this was particularly true of this cabinet: 'the openness, the emotions shown and the personal tone made politics spectacular and ensured that it reached a large audience'.¹³² All this was also wonderful for the press, of course.¹³³ The voters might still have little interest in politics, but they were interested in politicians, their backgrounds, their problems and their conflicts.¹³⁴ Politicians thereby became not only people of flesh and blood, but also, above all, bearers of a politics in which people could put their trust (or not). This was both the advantage and the disadvantage of authenticity. It was largely in this sense that the Den Uyl Cabinet was the heir to the cultural revolution.

It was the fate of this cabinet that the revolution was dying out precisely at the beginning of the 1970s. Den Uyl was aware of this. He believed that the cabinet had come just 'too late': 'I never made a fuss about it, but I was aware from the beginning that we were acting while the opposition forces were already assembled'. And these forces only became stronger. It was an omen, he noted in an aside, that people were having their hair cut at the hairdresser's for the first time in fifteen years. The fall of his cabinet – and perhaps even more, the failure of an attempt in 1977 to create a 'second Den Uyl Cabinet' – meant that the cultural revolution did indeed manage to bring about a change in political style, but it went no further than this. According to Den Uyl, this limited success could only have the consequence that the 1960s would be repeated in the 1980s, 'perhaps even more strongly [...] with rebellions, with riots, perhaps with ghastly hostage-taking, I don't know, I can't make predictions, but I think that it will end in deadlock'.¹³⁵ This would indeed be the case.

The procession of Echternach

From 1973, partly as a result of international economic trends and partly as a result of government policy, growth would fall and would even become negative from 1981; unemployment would rise, as would spending on social security; and consequently the government finances would derail. The low-point in the decline came in 1982. From then on the situation would gradually improve due to the pick-up in the world economy and significant cuts at the national level. More generally, these years would be characterized by a constant alternation between growth and decline, growing prosperity and sudden crisis. After several decades of continuous improvement, the economy was like a procession of Echternach: three steps forward, two steps back. A comparable pattern could be observed in relation to European integration: in periods of stagnation and even crisis, firm steps were taken on the path to closer cooperation.¹³⁶

The Dutch economy had in fact become part of the German one, as was clear from the tight monetary linkage to the mark. Thanks to the policies of the Bundesbank, inflation was brought down rapidly (from 5.9 per cent in 1982 to 0 per cent in 1986) and economic growth rose again to around 3 per cent. Significant wage restraint could be achieved thanks to agreements between employers and employees in 1982 in the celebrated Wassenaar Agreement, which provided for the reduction of working hours (to drive back unemployment) and the facilitation of part-time work, which would mainly promote the entry of women into the labour market.¹³⁷ The corporate consultations that had lapsed into a general atmosphere of polarization in the 1970s were thereby taken up again, at least partially.¹³⁸ But the government deficit remained quite high for years (meaning that the public debt rose sharply), and it would be driven back only during the 1990s. Moreover, it took great effort to limit the increase in spending on social security, if not to halt it altogether (an important brake on the growth of disability benefits, 'WAO' benefits, was only reached in 1991 under great political pressure). All in all, in the period between 1950 and 1983, expenditure on social security rose by 15 per cent, and in the subsequent period between 1984 and 2003 it fell by 7 per cent.¹³⁹

However painful this may have been for many people involved, it is an exaggeration to portray this development as the fall of the welfare state. Research by the Socio-Cultural Planning Agency shows that in the last quarter of the twentieth century around 80 per cent of the population believed that the Netherlands was a prosperous country, whereas only 40 per cent were of the opinion that the government was doing enough to

increase prosperity. Although things were getting better, viewed over a longer period, the financial aspirations were therefore never completely fulfilled: 'The government and the population were probably reasoning in different terms'.¹⁴⁰ It was not socio-economic policy, however, but the area of international relations that prompted demonstrations. In particular, the belief that NATO was intensifying the arms race with the Soviet Union by developing new atomic weapons and rocket systems brought many out to protest in public. A first demonstration in 1978 drew 50,000 people; five years later, there were more than half a million.

This is all the more remarkable because it was precisely in this period that international relations seemed to be becoming more peaceful, particularly after the signing of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe in 1975. The participating states pledged to respect each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity. The leaders of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) and the German Democratic Republic (GDR) sat next to each other at the signing in Helsinki; in fact, this represented the acceptance of the partition between East and West.

The improvement in Germany's position in international relations had a parallel in the strengthening of the *Westbindung*: in an effort to prevent potential disquiet as far as possible, the country was prepared to take major steps in the further integration of Europe. If integration had initially focused on the removal of mutual barriers to trade (a customs union, in effect), thinking increasingly focused on the formation of a real economic community, in which not only goods, but also people and capital would be able to move freely in one economic space. Europe had to become a 'solidarity community'. This process was strengthened by the countries' desire to protect themselves from significant international exchange rate fluctuations, which made the financing of the Common Agricultural Policy, for example, extremely complicated; irritation at the policy of the United States (Chancellor Helmut Schmidt in particular was not entirely convinced of President Carter's qualities); and fear of the rise of economic heavyweights such as Japan. Within Europe, however, the various economies were very different, whereby the main question was which path integration should take. Should a political union first be forged that would subsequently lead the harmonization, or should the aim be to bring the different economies closer together first, and then conclude with political union? The first path implied a surrender of sovereignty and proved impassable. The second path was unattractive for Bonn, given that the burdens of such a harmonization would weigh hard on Germany, as the strongest economy in Europe. The Bundesbank in particular feared

undisciplined spending and an uncontrollable tendency towards inflation. With many fits and starts, the second path was finally taken, leading – after the fall of the Berlin Wall and German reunification in 1989-1990 – to the decision to introduce a single European currency. The expectation was that international capital would act as a disciplining force and would compel harmonization, whereby – perhaps – a political union would follow as the final piece.¹⁴¹

Dutch views carried little weight in this important debate; moreover, these views were somewhat inconstant, to put it mildly.¹⁴² It was particularly striking that it hardly became a public debate: at most, the electorate showed a benevolent indifference and rewarded the strengthening of the European Parliament's powers with falling turnouts: at the first direct elections to the European Parliament in 1979 the turnout was 58 per cent, after which turnouts fell steadily to 30 per cent in 1999.¹⁴³ It was as if there had been a tacit agreement to leave 'Europe' to the politicians, even though the country's economic fate was dependent on it to a great degree. Paradoxically enough, this democratic deficit made the process of integration possible, or at least no more difficult than it already was. In this dimension of politics, the ideas of Saint-Simon had finally been realized to the full.¹⁴⁴

The cultural revolution that took place in the 1960s had a complex impact on the political culture. There was a great politicization of all kinds of issues, but many of these did not become part of the political enterprise, or did so only temporarily. The rebels were mainly focused on shaping an 'expressive politics', in which it was quickly sufficient for one's own authenticity to take shape. The question is thus whether the effect of the cultural revolution on the political culture has not been overestimated. This could have been a consequence of the over-valuation of the conflicts and events, caused and fought out by insurgent minorities and eagerly reported, if not urged on, by journalists. On the basis of long-term electoral research, in 2000 political scientists found that in any case, in the period between 1971 and 1998 'there was no lasting change in the level of political interest'. They identified as a particular problem the fact that the political parties had begun to resemble each other, whereby the voters – who were no longer guided by religion or class – had difficulty making a choice.¹⁴⁵

On the other hand, two important pillars that had supported the political culture in the course of the nineteenth century perished in the violence of the revolution: the political party and ideology. The parties lost members at a rapid rate: the percentage of the electorate that belonged to a political party fell steadily (from 14 per cent in 1956 to 3 per cent in 1990).¹⁴⁶ The parties therefore turned back to the past: they were largely electoral associations

again. This was linked to the loss of ideology. This is where the bond had lain between a person's political-philosophical outlook and their daily life; this quality had made parts of the electorate into political communities. All of this was now replaced, however, by a process of gathering together, at every election, all kinds of policy intentions, focused on obtaining the largest possible share of the voting market. The most important effect of the 1960s was that in the battle to make the Netherlands ready for the 21st century, modern conservatism might have been beaten by the cultural revolution of authenticity, but the fruits of the victory remained unharvested. In all of the ideological overheating of the period the 'system of internal relations' collapsed, whereby the prospects for action became blurred. Neo-liberalism, which had long been waiting in the wings, was able to capitalize on this. The neo-liberals now asserted, with success, that 'politics' was at best an obstacle and at worst a harmful phenomenon. The 'malleability' of society should be taken out of the politicians' hands and left to the market.

8. That's Not Politics!

2002: Populism

On Saturday 9 February 2002 an interview appeared in *de Volkskrant* with Pim Fortuyn, the leader of the new political party Liveable Netherlands (Leefbaar Nederland). In the interview he described Islam as a 'backward culture'. If it were up to him, no more Muslims would enter the country: 'It is a full country'. And if one were not allowed to say such things, then Article 1 of the constitution should be amended: the right to freedom of speech was more important than combating discrimination.¹ That same evening, the party executive gathered to inform him that this was so much in conflict with the programme that their ways would have to part. When this became clear, Fortuyn burst into a furious tirade:

But folks, we're on the brink, not in the Netherlands, but in Europe. Is that what you want? I support this country! What we've built here over five, six centuries! And we've got a goddamned fifth column here... Let me say everything now... A fifth column, eh, of people who want to bring the country to damnation. And I won't accept that. [...] But you are letting yourselves be walked all over! And I *won't* do it any more! And that's why I'll win those parliamentary seats, because this country has had *enough*. C'est ça! That's what I stand for. And if I have to put it differently: fine! But it's about your children, your grandchildren. What else could it be about? Do I have to explain further here? I *can't* do it differently and I *won't* do it differently. Destroy it then. Okay, fine.

But the problem, sir, remains. People have had more than enough of it. God damn it, in my city, Moroccan youths, Turkish youths, who don't rob the Turks and the Moroccans, but you and me, old ladies. And the police, what do they do? God damn it: nothing! They say: 'If you say that, that's discrimination'. So then I'll say it for the Dutch people – that's what I *stand* for. It's not allowed? Okay. I respect you. C'est ça.

After a short pause, the members of the party executive gave their cautious responses:

- The worst thing is that I also agree with you.
- Yes, me too.
- Yes.
- But you can't say it that way – that's not politics!²

Fortuyn had transgressed the borders that the political culture had set until then. As he left the meeting, he declared to the waiting journalists: 'I shall become the new prime minister of this country. Make no mistake about it! I shall become prime minister!' It sounded like boasting, but it was hardly that. On 6 March 2002, with a local list, he gained more than a third of the votes cast in municipal elections in Rotterdam. Everything indicated that with a hastily founded party, the Pim Fortuyn List (Lijst Pim Fortuyn, LPF), he would be the great winner at the parliamentary elections on 15 May and he might indeed become prime minister. These hopes and fears were brought to an end on 6 May when, after giving a radio interview, he was shot and killed in the Mediapark in Hilversum by an animal rights activist. When the news broke, an angry crowd threatened to storm the Binnenhof the very same evening. A car was set alight in the car park underneath the parliament building. In this extremely tense period, it was decided that the elections should be held nevertheless. The LPF won 26 seats. The party was subsequently included in a governing coalition, but it quickly fell apart due to its remarkable lack of any qualities. Politics had entered a maelstrom: 'everything was adrift in those days, irrationality had taken hold of the Netherlands'.³

Whilst the Netherlands had been a paragon of openness and tolerance since the 1960s, and since the 1980s had been a model of how to solve problems using rational consultation thanks to the 'polder model', now various ambassadors openly commented that the Netherlands had become 'a confused and introverted country'.⁴ Depillarization had removed the shock absorbers from society, and the equanimity of the welfare state was no more. This turbulence was not a specifically Dutch phenomenon, though, but an international one. The Netherlands was thus by no means an exception, although the storm blew up unexpectedly.

The crisis that engulfed the Netherlands was a deeply stratified phenomenon, in which developments that had been occurring for some time became more distinct as a result of incidents and unforeseen circumstances. Forming an important background to the crisis – and thereby to populism – was the ongoing restructuring of the welfare state, itself a consequence of changes in the international economy. The country had decided to participate in the process of European integration, mainly to protect itself from international instability. This protective construction now proved inadequate, however, and some thought that it was even part of the problem. In this sense, populism was the expression of a nostalgic longing for the 1950s, a time when, according to a popular song, 'happiness was still normal'.⁵

Fortuyn

Pim Fortuyn saw himself as a man with a mission, even to the extent that he quoted from the Bible:

I am sought of *them that* asked not for me;
 I am found of *them that* sought me not:
 I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation *that* was not called by my
 name.
 Isaiah 65:1⁶

He had attempted to win a place in politics in various parties, but nothing had come of this, after which he increasingly turned against national politics and styled himself as a 'politician outside the parties'.⁷ With the columns that he wrote and the many lectures that he gave, he steadily gathered a following that drew robust support from employers from small and medium-sized enterprises.

Like a prophet, he passed judgement on the welfare state that had once been founded to guarantee the working class a decent existence, but had since degenerated into a benefits factory that was forcing tens of thousands of people to do nothing, thereby making their lives meaningless. The majority of the population had thus turned away impotently from politics, and was suffering under falling standards in the public sector. Wherever one looked, whether at educational standards, the extent of the prosecution and sentencing of crimes and offences, the quality of care for the sick and the elderly: everywhere, a growing number of managers could be observed and a parallel increase in the 'mess'.⁸ Even the trains no longer ran on time. This could only be changed through unsparing reform of the state and society. The 'human dimension' would have to be brought back to public administration, which could be made smaller and more connected thanks to ICT networks; the civil service apparatus should be halved at the very least (without reduced pay). The 'intermediary layer [*middenveld*]', the remains of the corporate pillarized order, should be abolished completely. Citizens should no longer receive subsidies or benefits without being obliged to do something in return. Here, it is not difficult to recognize a way of thinking that had developed in the United States: the government did not offer any solutions and the population must once again take responsibility for its own fate.⁹

Fortuyn rejected the idea that a small country such as the Netherlands did not, in fact, have many options. After all, this kind of thinking had reduced

politics to the governance of the status quo and a passive acceptance of the future. He likewise rejected the notion that politics was largely determined by the economy. Whilst the latter was not unimportant, in his opinion politics consisted of much more, namely public debate about the quality of society and about the strategic choices that could be made. At root, it should be about the identity and cohesion of a population that had been 'abandoned': namely, the political class no longer understood the age, and had turned away from the population and excluded creative intellectuals.

Gradually, Fortuyn turned more and more against Islam.¹⁰ In 1989, the fatwa against Salman Rushdie could perhaps be considered an exceptional event that stemmed from the unique circumstances in Iran, but such thinking was no longer possible after the attacks in September 2001 on the Twin Towers and the Pentagon. In the 'clash of civilizations' that according to the American political scientist, Huntington, would inevitably come, Fortuyn was the preacher of 'modernity'.¹¹ The Netherlands must not become a multicultural society, but should remain the Netherlands:

We have been working on this for centuries and rivers of blood have flowed for it. As a result, we are a beacon of light in the world when it comes to (individual) liberties and human rights.¹²

The march of 'a backward desert culture' was unmistakable, however:

A win for the Turkish football team transforms my city, Rotterdam, into a small Istanbul in one fell swoop. That might seem harmless, but it is not. It makes me feel as though our city has been occupied temporarily by foreign oppressors, who also behave like that at that moment, and makes it clear that integration still has a very long way to go.¹³

It was this aspect in particular that brought Fortuyn so much electoral success, whilst at the same time he distanced himself from politicians such as Haider in Austria, Le Pen in France and De Winter in Belgium. And that then leads to the question of what these diverse politicians have in common, and what lies at the heart of populism.

Populism

Populist movements have occurred in different periods (including in the nineteenth century) and on different continents, and are difficult to locate

on the usual left-to-right scale, given that they combine progressive and conservative elements. This explains why it was once claimed that populism is less a political phenomenon than a psychological one, an emotional response to a process of change that is perceived only as falling apart.¹⁴ This could explain why the rise of such a movement is sometimes as abrupt and unpredictable as its decline is steady and predictable.

Whilst there is no intellectual tradition to which populist movements can appeal, we can identify a number of basic views.¹⁵ In fact, there is just one: society can be split into two homogenous, sharply opposed groups, namely the 'honest, hardworking people' versus the 'corrupt elite' that neglects the wellbeing of the people and simply does not do what a great majority of the population, or what 'common sense', wants.¹⁶ It is clear that who counts as 'the people' or 'the elite' can be randomly determined; the antagonism is in line with the view of the German constitutional philosopher, Carl Schmitt, namely that politics is ultimately about the distinction that is made between friend and foe.¹⁷ The main emphasis thereby lies less on the 'what' of politics than on the 'who'.

Given the fact that this is the main point, populism is a 'thin ideology', whose further elaboration is strongly determined by its environment, or whether it becomes attached to a more substantial ideology.¹⁸ In this light, socialism, seen historically, was a populist movement that drew strength from the attack on the 'bourgeoisie'. In the 1980s, populism in Western Europe made a general shift from left to right, just as Fortuyn, in the wandering path that took him past different parties, made the same transition in his relationships and opinions.

There is a difference, however, between the old, largely left-wing populist movements and the new, largely right-wing ones. The former saw 'the nation' as consisting of active citizens, full of self-confidence and focused on the future, with that characteristic faith in the 'malleability' of society. The new movements, on the contrary, see the nation as a community of hardworking people who are suffering the consequences of the erosion of their world by criminals and foreigners, aided blindly by the progressive elite. It is a vision that harks back to the past – one that is often coloured with nostalgia – and is largely focused on defence.¹⁹

However motley and varied the range of movements might be, every populist movement bases itself on the notion of popular sovereignty; this is its 'foundation myth'.²⁰ Populists are not opposed to the principle of representative democracy; they are simply of the opinion that the existing parties only represent themselves. Populism is thus less in favour of direct democracy as a matter of principle than its temporary and partial use in

order to break up the party establishment. Holding referenda is one way of doing this, for example; referenda are a demonstration of the size of the silent majority, granting not only political weight, but also moral authority.

The style of populism should also be seen in this light: if the people are sovereign, then politics should also be comprehensible for the people. In other words, problems have to be translated into clear choices, discussed in the language of ordinary people and decided upon using transparent procedures. Populists do not want to be bothered by the details and by the implementation of decisions. A characteristic example of this is the way in which Fortuyn concluded a passage where he had argued for a drastic reorganization of the national administration:

It is clear that here we are concerned only with a grand design, in order to define ideas. The elaboration of a concrete plan along the lines described above will require a lot more thinking. But I am no Thorbecke, only a simple sociologist from Rotterdam, and I thus consider myself to be excused from this duty.²¹

This direct style is also associated with a use of language that challenges the normal conventions of 'parliamentary language'.²² With every change in the political culture, there have been complaints about a loss of courtesy and good manners. In such periods, incivility is used deliberately to erode an opponent's authority and thereby carve out the space to force social change. At the end of the twentieth century, populists adopted a style that built on a change that had started in the 1960s, whereby authenticity was accorded a higher value than self-control and politeness.²³

This 'ill-mannered' style is indeed used to present populists as members of an underclass that must unfortunately be tolerated in a democracy. In a friendly variant of this, they were the victims of great social changes. Society demanded an ever-higher level of education – even in order to stay at the same social level – and the changes that resulted from globalization produced losers: 'the tattooed class'.²⁴ This largely appears to be a misconception, however: voters for populist parties essentially consist of a cross-section of the entire electorate.

That people feel attracted to populism is linked above all to their vision of society. This is characterized by the idea that society is in decline. More generally, the electorate as a whole sets great store on what can be called the 'golden triangle of the welfare state': a stable economy, a high level of social security and the maintenance of a 'more friendly and less impersonal society'.²⁵ According to many people, these are aspirations that politics is

addressing less and less. The choice of populism is driven by the hope of forcing a change in this.²⁶

In this respect, populism is a response to a number of far-reaching changes in the political culture. Class and religion were initially able to bind the individual and the political domain to one another, but this function was largely taken over by education and the media: one's level of education and use of media strongly determine one's interpretation of the world and one's own place in it, and particularly the group to which one feels one belongs.

Also important here is the fact that the distance between the elite and the rest of the population – the dividing line being based on whether or not one has followed higher education – has become greater, and that differences in power have also accordingly become greater. This process has been veiled because the elite adopted an egalitarian ethos in the 1960s, which made social relations more informal. Whilst the distinction between high and low culture appeared to have been abolished, this was naturally not the case for the difference in social capital. The process of civilization, however, which to a major extent was based on imitation and example, did come to a halt; 'moralism' became an expression of bad taste and the urge to distinguish oneself was henceforth sought in a *charme discret*, namely in an ironic style.²⁷ In this sense, it is understandable that populists suspected that whilst members of the elite were now on first-name terms, they had not yet granted them a share of the power.²⁸

From the mid-1950s a further professionalization of politics occurred, as a consequence of the increasing complexity of the welfare state.²⁹ Politicians went into battle with government bureaucracy and thereby became entangled in a jungle of regulations, details and obscure procedures. Being an MP became less and less compatible with additional functions; the sheer number of hours that was spent on political work meant that it was almost impossible for a politician to have a traditional family life. In 1998 an MP would summarize this aspect as follows: 'When I left the house in the morning fourteen years ago, my daughter was three years old. When I came home again in the evening, she was eighteen'.³⁰ This alone meant that the political class had less intensive contact with the voters. As mentioned above, the number of members of political parties, which in a previous political culture had fulfilled an important mediatory role between the different social layers, fell constantly.³¹ They now only very partially fulfilled a binding role.

Moreover, the political parties were starting to resemble one another more and more, both in terms of the social origins of their representatives (very few entrepreneurs and hardly any workers any more) and in terms of their programmes. The expression of deviant opinions – such as the idea

that wage restraint slowed technological innovation, that the expansion of the European Union (for example, to include Turkey) was undesirable, that the permissive policy on drugs (*gedoogbeleid*) might be an expression of tolerance, but it was eroding the constitutional state – was seen as breaking taboos, rather than as a legitimate contribution to the democratic debate. In Dutch political culture, there had long been great intolerance of anything that was perceived as intolerant. This depoliticized important issues, leaving only the ‘drivel’ of pub talk. From 1989, parties that had once used each other as opponents in order to style themselves now cooperated in all kinds of combinations in coalition governments, and pursued broadly the same policies, despite all the fluctuations. The difference between the parties became so small that there was no real choice any more – at least, that was the general feeling. Such an analysis even became generally accepted in 1990.³² Politicians were frequently painted as ‘regents’, driven by vanity and self-interest, shut up in an ‘ivory tower’ and wholly alienated from everyday reality.³³ This created an opportunity for populists to attack consensus as ‘political correctness’, to assume the role of taboo-breaking muckrakers, and to point to the difference between ‘everything that was not as it appeared and ought to be’.³⁴

The welfare state was thus expected to bear responsibility for social security and a gradual improvement in people’s lives, but this no longer appeared to be the case. Towards the end of the twentieth century, complaints increased about falling educational standards, growing waiting lists in healthcare and, above all, the inadequate approach to fighting crime.³⁵ But all the criticism seemed to come together in the rejection of the notion that the Netherlands was becoming a ‘multicultural society’.

It was in this area, perhaps, where the strongest taboo was to be found. As early as 1972, the sociologist Van Doorn, prompted by an attack on a boarding house for Turkish ‘guest workers’ in Rotterdam, asked a number of pressing questions:

Is the Netherlands getting a social substratum of second-class citizens? After the partial emancipation of the manual labourers, are we now seeing the emergence of a social class that is sure to miss out on every chance of emancipation and integration? Have we already resigned ourselves to this fact, and are we limiting ourselves to pointing to the economic advantages, for them and for us? Are we really prepared to pay the price for the increasing frustrations and tensions with regard to other minorities, because the term ‘race’ is taboo and Dutch tolerance cannot even be discussed?³⁶

Simply asking these questions was already considered quite improper. After all, from the mid-1960s onwards, any reference to racial difference was seen as an outpouring of fascism; Dutch society was officially tolerant. In fact, however, this led to matters largely being left to take their course.

The problems became greater when in addition and further to the guest workers, who had been recruited to reduce the pressure on the overstrained labour market, the number of migrants increased (both in the context of family reunification and on the basis of asylum legislation). Whilst the number of 'non-Western immigrants' had been around 200,000 in 1970 (1.5 per cent of the total population), in three decades that figure rose to 1.6 million (9.7 per cent of the population). The largest groups of immigrants were those with Turkish and Moroccan roots, whereby Islam became the second religion in the Netherlands.³⁷ From the 1970s onwards, radical right-wing parties tried to appoint themselves as the mouthpiece for the growing discontent and argued for the protection of the Dutch national character. At the 1982 elections, they succeeded in getting a representative, Janmaat, into the House of Representatives.³⁸ He initially presented himself as a 'canny consumer': how much would those immigrants cost the Netherlands, both in terms of the jobs they would take and in benefits? There were also too many of them: 'The Netherlands is full, jam-packed'. But to an increasing extent, the message could also be heard that Islam posed a threat to Dutch society.³⁹

After the 1982 elections the Socialist Party (Socialistische Partij, SP) was, by its own account, confronted with a growing number of questions about 'the foreigners'. They could not be understood, they had 'strange' customs, and the atmosphere in the street was no longer what it had been. In response the party executive drafted the pamphlet *Gastarbeid en kapitaal* (*Foreign labour and capital*, 1983), in which the cause of the problem was sought in the private sector: foreign workers were being recruited to put pressure on wages. It would only be possible to deal with the situation by having the immigrants make a choice within a two-year period: either to return or to integrate. In the first case they would be given a hefty pay-off, in the second case they would at least have to manage to learn Dutch. These proposals were generally condemned as 'populism', the preliminary phase of fascism.⁴⁰

A new attack was made on the taboo in 1991, when the political leader of the VVD, Bolkestein, announced at the Liberal International in Lucerne that the integration of 'minorities' was becoming a problem that no longer left any room for 'permissiveness or taboos'. Islam, in this regard, should be bound to a number of basic principles: the separation of church and state, freedom of speech and the principle of equality (Article 1 of the constitution),

particularly the ban on discrimination on the basis of gender and sexual nature. This, too, was generally denounced as 'breathless populism'.⁴¹

The breakthrough only came a decade later, when a political commentator of unimpeachable progressive credentials, Paul Scheffer, wrote a piece for the *NRC-Handelsblad* in which he asserted that despite all the good intentions, 'islands of poverty and ignorance' had emerged, mainly in the large cities, with the levels of crime that came with this:

The current policy of liberal admission and limited integration is magnifying inequality and contributing to a feeling of alienation in society. Tolerance is groaning under the burden of overdue maintenance. The multicultural drama that is taking place is thus the greatest threat to social harmony.⁴²

This article led to a two-day debate in the House of Representatives, in which every expression was carefully avoided that might be perceived as painful by any side. It was cautiously observed, for example, that 'The figures on school drop-out rates, unemployment and criminality make for unpleasant reading'. When the SP declared that the policy pursued until now had failed, Minister Van Boxtel answered: 'It is an ongoing effort, focused on making integration work, but "failed"? I really do not consider this a correct or fair description'. It was acknowledged that much agreed policy had not been implemented, although this was because the national government was dependent on the municipalities or independent organizations in key areas such as education, housing and the labour market. A proposal that a parliamentary inquiry be set up to investigate why integration policy had had such little effect, was not taken up. Such an inquiry took place only in December 2002, in the form of a Temporary Investigative Commission on Integration Policy.⁴³ By then, however, the circumstances had changed radically, as a result of the attacks in the United States on the Twin Towers and the Pentagon and the reports in the media that foreign youths in the Netherlands had reacted to these with cheers. Van Doorn concluded that a multicultural society could no longer be considered 'a meeting place of cultures and religions, but as a powder keg that the government must permanently endeavour to keep wet'.⁴⁴ It proved that this would have to be taken literally. August 2004 saw the release of the film *Submission* by Ayaan Hirsi Ali and Theo van Gogh, in which the misogynistic character of Islam was denounced. Van Gogh was murdered (2 November 2004) and Hirsi Ali went into hiding, and has needed permanent protection since.⁴⁵ Moreover, from October the MP Geert Wilders needed permanent security.

After Fortuyn's death, Wilders had stepped into the electoral vacuum and had made fighting Islam his key point. It was also typical that he then founded a political party in 2006, the Freedom Party (Partij Voor de Vrijheid, pvv), of which he was the only member. This saved him a 'good deal of trouble' such as 'conferences and members' affairs'. The elections would show what the electorate thought of the programme and representatives. And it was self-confidently declared that the pvv was the 'first modern party in the Netherlands'; like elderly elephants, the other parties were searching for a final resting place, kept alive only by the governmental subsidy.⁴⁶

Populism would strike a chord and would do substantial harm to the classical parties, as successive election results make clear:

Election results for the major parties in the House of Representatives, 1998-2006, in percentages of votes cast

	1998	2002	2003	2006
CDA	18.3	27.9	28.6	26.5
VVD	24.6	15.4	17.9	14.7
LPF		17	5.7	2
PVV				5.9
D66	8.9	5.1	4.1	2
PVDA	28.9	15.1	27.3	21.2
Green Left	7.2	7	5.1	4.6
SP	3.5	5.9	6.3	16.6

Source: www.parlement.com

There is a tendency to explain the turbulence in terms of specifically Dutch developments. In this respect, some point to the fact that pillarization had been such an integral part of Dutch society that depillarization was bound to lead to some kind of anomie; or that Fortuyn's qualities had been exceptional. Both explanations fail to take account of the fact that towards the end of the twentieth century it could be observed across the world that faith in parties, politicians and parliaments could no longer be taken for granted: 'Millions of people around the world sensed trouble in the house of democracy. [...] Was the bad moon rising over democracy a sign of rough times to come? Perhaps democracy was sliding towards another death, this time on a global scale'.⁴⁷ The search for an explanation for the developments in the Netherlands therefore has to be embedded in a broader perspective.

Globalization

The lesson that was drawn from the Great Depression of the 1930s was that a government should intervene actively in the economy and that full employment could be achieved during a downward economic spiral by increasing government spending.⁴⁸ Theoretically, this was based on the work of Keynes. In the 1970s, however, it was shown that increased government spending did not automatically lead to economic recovery, but to inflation and a growing budget deficit.⁴⁹ Such 'stagflation' thus pointed to the limits of Keynesianism and opened up, in other words, space for a different set of views.⁵⁰ These came out of an undercurrent in economic thinking that had developed shortly after the Second World War in the circles surrounding the Austrian economist, Hayek. Hayek had published *The Road to Serfdom* in 1944, in which he categorically rejected the government's new ambition to suppress life's socio-economic risks: 'the general approval given to the demand for security may become a danger to liberty'.⁵¹ In Hayek's view, it should be realized that fascism was not the consequence of a few criminals, but of socialism. Liberty meant almost absolute respect for 'the individual man *qua* man', the recognition that he had a right to his own opinions and preferences. At root, such liberty was based on economic liberty ('the prerequisite of any other freedom'): this was where the core of individual autonomy was to be found, and every limit on this would ultimately lead only to a government bureaucracy that would start determining what is good and bad in almost every respect.⁵²

Hayek was aware that he was thereby going against the current, and surrounded himself with an international group of economists, politicians and journalists that would develop these ideas. This became known as the Mont Pèlerin Society, after the place in Switzerland where it met for the first time in 1947.⁵³ In 1970 the American economist Milton Friedman took over the leadership of the society from Hayek. This marked a new phase in which there was a shift from defensive arguments to an offensive campaign for neo-liberalism.⁵⁴ This was also the moment, after the collapse of the Bretton Woods regime and the failure of Keynesianism, when neo-liberalism got the chance to show that the market mechanism was the rational solution to well nigh every problem.

In this neo-liberalism, a number of central views were linked together and given the status of an ideology. This was about more than economic views; the central value was that of 'liberty'. This concept was not given substance, but largely concerned 'negative liberty': individual members of society had to be able to pursue their own interests by going to the market

and offering or using services on the basis of their own deliberations. Linked to this was the misconception that such deliberations would be based on rational grounds ('rational choice theory'). Be that as it may, the state had to create as free a market as possible (that is to say, deregulate). Full employment was abandoned as a key goal of government policy.⁵⁵ This way of thinking was embraced by Margaret Thatcher in England (1979) and Ronald Reagan in the United States (1980).

The consequences of this new paradigm were not long in coming, all the more so when deregulation also took place in the financial markets. International macroeconomic cooperation was superseded by a new supranational structure in which capital, technology and information could move almost unhindered. The magnitude and mobility of capital flows forced countries towards a similar regime in the area of monetary and fiscal policy, based on the 'Washington consensus' of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).⁵⁶ This globalization integrated markets and thereby promoted growth, but it also undermined politics; or as Thomas Friedman put it: 'Your economy grows, and your politics shrink'.⁵⁷ This was presented to the electorate as inevitable; in England it came to be known as TINA ('there is no alternative'), and in France as *la pensée unique*, whereby political debate was reduced to the adding of nuances.⁵⁸ For many, globalization now became a threatening term, one that largely came to stand for increasing inequality: poorer countries' money flowed to the richer countries, and within these to the richest citizens.⁵⁹ This is one explanation for the decreasing trust in democracy and the increasing social problems in many countries.⁶⁰ In this new phase of capitalism, society was no longer divided into classes, but into winners and losers.⁶¹

Europe

Europe could initially be counted among the winners: viewed over the longer term, integration was a remarkable success. In 2012 economists from the World Bank established that despite the crisis in the first decade of the new century, Europe's share of global production had remained level at 30 per cent (and that with 10 per cent of the world's population). The continent played a role in almost half of global trade in goods and services. The European social model paid quite a significant amount of attention to social security for the sick, unemployed and elderly; there was an extremely favourable balance between work and leisure time; and the private sector paid a great deal of attention to sustainable production (both socially and in

terms of environmental technology). Perhaps most importantly, according to the World Bank, Europe was a 'convergence machine'. Although the different European countries were very diverse, their incomes and standards of living were becoming more and more similar. This was being driven by a powerful expansion in trade, which provided the fuel for an extremely efficient movement of capital. This last verdict was particularly remarkable, in view of all the criticism of financial institutions. In Europe, capital flowed from the richer countries to the poorer ones, first to Southern Europe and then to Eastern Europe, with reasonable growth in the richer countries and strong growth in the poorer ones as a result. All in all, Europe had achieved the 'highest quality of life in human history'.⁶² Compared with the situation in 1945, this might be called a miracle, although such an opinion is not commonly held.

The integration of a number of countries in Western Europe was an extremely complex undertaking, one that was initially driven by the idea that this would bring an end to the threat of war that had plagued the continent. The founding fathers of Europe, especially Monnet, had expected that closer economic cooperation would force closer political integration, at the expense of classical national sovereignty. Back in 1939, Hayek had explained where this would get deadlocked. Namely, the adoption of a common economic policy by different countries demanded common values and ideals.

Although, in the national state, the submission to the will of a majority will be facilitated by the myth of nationality, it must be clear that people will be reluctant to submit to any interference in their daily affairs when a majority which directs the government is composed of people of different nationalities and different traditions.⁶³

He welcomed economic cooperation, though, on the grounds that it was precisely this that would force government interference in society to be limited to where it was most needed, giving space to the market and private initiative. The economy would keep politics under control, and this would mean, in Hayek's view, that democracy would be maintained.

The problem that Hayek had addressed did not initially appear to arise. As economic integration became more significant political cooperation did indeed increase, although with many fits and starts, and absolutely no progress, moreover, was made in key areas such as foreign policy and defence. In this respect, Monnet's expectations were also disappointed. In the period between 1985 and 1995, however, major steps were taken on the

suggestion of an ambitious European Commission chaired by the French politician, Delors. 'Europe' had to be transformed from being a customs union into a bloc of countries with a common economic and monetary policy.

In 1969 government leaders had already agreed on the goal of monetary union, but very little had been done to follow up on this decision. The turbulent foreign exchange markets did not make things any easier; France, in particular, pleaded for a European solution to the problems that were being created by the dollar. Germany refused to commit, however, partly because it was loath to undermine relations with the United States, but also because it did not want to be saddled with what it considered to be the irresponsible inflationary budget policies of countries such as France. The situation changed when Schmidt, the German Federal Chancellor, had had enough of the vacillating policy of the American President Carter in the area of both monetary policy and security, and when in 1983 Mitterand decided to abandon France's inflationary budget policy and modernize the French private sector by exposing it to international competition. In this light, the monetary union can be understood as Europe's attempt to wrest itself somewhat from American policy and to regain sovereignty over monetary politics, even though this was only possible by taking the policy to the European level.

Moreover, the agreements on a monetary union were given a rapid boost when developments in the Soviet Union suddenly opened up the prospect of an end to the partition of Germany. For the Federal Chancellor, Kohl, it was axiomatic that the reunification of Germany should only be possible if there were to be a simultaneous strengthening of European integration; in his opinion, they were two sides of one coin. The fall of the Berlin Wall on 9 November 1989 was the deciding factor in pushing forward. In view of the strength of the German economy – and with this, the mark – France had long had the objective of reducing dependence on German monetary policy, and saw monetary union as a chance to exercise influence in this area. Kohl was prepared to weather the resistance in his own country (namely that of the Bundesbank) and to take the risk that Germany would bear an even greater share of the costs of European integration. In 1992 this led to the Maastricht Treaty and the introduction of the euro, which became daily tender from 1 January 2002.⁶⁴ This was as bold as it was risky, because it entailed the relinquishing of a fundamental part of the sovereignty of the participating countries, coinage rights. After this, it was no longer possible to decide freely on interest rates and exchange rates, whilst budget policy was also subject to strict limits.

A few wicked fairies appeared at the signing of the Maastricht Treaty on 7 February 1992. Some influential economists opposed the treaty. After all, it was in fact based on the 'religion of the central banks': reducing deficits. This would have to be achieved by keeping the budget deficit under 3 per cent and not allowing public debt to exceed 60 per cent of GDP. In general, however, heavy-handed deficit reduction led to a deflationary policy that was more likely to hinder economic growth than to promote it. In fact, what was so wrong with deficits, so long as they could be financed reasonably? Moreover, the economies of different European countries were of very unequal levels: Germany and Greece were unlike each other in every respect. Some convergence would require every country to go at its own pace and in its own direction.⁶⁵ All of this then led to the most important question: where was the authority that would be able to make the participating countries comply with the treaty commitments? This question quickly proved to be relevant. In 2003, neither Germany nor France was able to keep its budget deficit under 3 per cent. Both countries, however, were able to prevent the agreed sanctions from being applied. Without a supranational political agency, it was not possible to force compliance with agreements. Very cautious steps in this direction were only taken after the Great Recession of 2008 also brought the euro into great difficulties.

European integration initially occurred without too much interference, let alone influence, from the electorate. Monnet had bet on the power of *faits accomplis* and put his faith in 'une sorte de doux despotisme éclairé', as Delors would put it in his memoirs.⁶⁶ The voters were not particularly moved by the European Parliament, even after 1979, when it was elected directly, and from 1992 when it got new powers. This would change, however, when the consequences of integration could be felt directly.

After Denmark had rejected the Maastricht Treaty in a referendum as early as 1992, complaints could be heard that bringing the euro into circulation had made life more expensive, and there were increasing fears about the inflow of workers from Eastern Europe after the European Union was expanded by ten member states in 2004.⁶⁷ The problems really came to light in 2005, when the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe was rejected in referenda in France (29 May) and the Netherlands (1 June). After this, other countries cancelled their referendum plans. The shift within the electorate had been preceded by one among parliamentarians, who had started to express their 'Euroscepticism' after the fall of the Berlin Wall. Now that the German threat had been laid to rest, it seemed that there was no longer any reason to pay lip service to the ideal of a federal Europe. An exit from the Union was not generally advocated – it would almost be

impossible, due the high costs that it would bring⁶⁸ and the unforeseeable consequences for international relations – but passive acceptance was now rapidly being replaced by resistance (from ‘permissive consensus’ to ‘constraining dissensus’).

This transition found increasing support among the different populations as a result of two developments. First, as a consequence of Delors’ programme, regulation from Brussels became increasingly noticeable in everyday life. Resistance to growing regulatory pressure at the national level thereby broadened into frustration at that from the European Union. This was strengthened by the fact that many politicians were unwilling to burden their own electorates with the sometimes unpleasant truth and blamed ‘Brussels’ for all kinds of measures, even if they had endorsed them beforehand.⁶⁹ Second, although economic integration had proved to be very advantageous to business, it was not accompanied by a European social policy, although Delors, for example, had argued for this. This was included in treaties as a fine intention, but it failed to materialize. On the contrary, it seemed as if the countries were forcing each other into austerity and cuts, into an erosion of social and even political rights. ‘Brussels’, as it was increasingly called, offered no common defence against globalization and the power of ‘capital’; the European Union had degenerated into a neo-liberal project.⁷⁰ What is more, it was increasingly unclear as to what should and should not fall under European policy. Even worse, it was not even clear which countries and areas should count as ‘Europe’: where did ‘Europe’ stop?⁷¹

Kissinger is said to have remarked that he did not have a telephone number for when he wanted to call ‘Europe’. Contrary to the expectations of the founding fathers, political integration trailed significantly behind economic integration. Moreover, ‘Europe’ lost significance, both as a result of the end of the Cold War and due to 9/11 and the subsequent reordering of world politics. The relationship between Europe and the United States became weaker, but the core of Europe, the Franco-German axis, also became unbalanced as a result of reunification, the strong German economy and a more self-confident foreign policy from Berlin. At the same time, the differences within the European Union only became greater as a result of expansion (to 28 countries in 2013), whereby every country had its ‘own’ commissioner at the European Commission. This hardly promoted the governability of the whole.

The situation did not get easier when the crisis hit in 2008. What initially appeared to be an attack on the euro quickly developed into a crisis in the European Union as such. The French researcher Heisbourg recently

suggested that the euro should be abolished in controlled fashion. This would allow the different countries to pursue their own monetary policies again, relieving the pressure of austerity on the population and freeing up money for investment and accordingly a reduction in unemployment (mainly of unacceptable youth unemployment). It was essential to take this enormous step in order to save the European Union, namely by gradually abolishing it in the hope of better times.⁷²

The Netherlands

A great majority of Dutch people were satisfied with their own lives, but at the same time, there was a feeling that things were not going well for the country. This ambivalence would later be captured in the expression: 'I'm doing well, but we're doing badly'.⁷³ Now according to all kinds of data, the Dutch economy was not doing badly at all. Structurally, growth might have dropped to a lower level (in 1960, for example, it had been 9 per cent; in the period between 1980 and 2010 it was on average between 2 and 3 per cent), but the disposable income of the average household grew by a quarter in this period. The number of households under the low-income threshold fell sharply, from 22 per cent in 1985 to 7.7 per cent in 2010.⁷⁴ But these macro-economic developments did not lead to a favourable assessment of the quality of society. There was a general sense of dissatisfaction that condensed into the view that society was suffering from a kind of 'structural decay', essentially even a 'decline'.⁷⁵ This indicates that the political turbulence of the turn of the century had not been an accident, but that it had built up over the longer term and was deeply stratified.

To start with, there was the diminished status of the government. The neo-liberal paradigm, which presents government largely as a problem, had also gained ground in the Netherlands. This could be observed, in part, in the policy of privatization, which started in 1988 with the Loodswezen (the Dutch maritime pilots service) and rapidly picked up speed.⁷⁶ The most interesting privatization took place in the area of employment services: following a series of failed reorganizations of existing government services, the Netherlands – along with New Zealand – is the only modern country that does not have a government organization to mediate between the unemployed and employers, but has delegated this to the market.⁷⁷ Another important factor was that diverse parliamentary inquiries revealed the mediocre workings, or failures, of various government services in their supervisory role. In 1983-1984, for example, it became mercilessly clear that

the industrial policy that had been pursued to date had involved the spending of considerable sums on missed opportunities, incorrect appraisals and sensitive egos. A decade later a woeful picture was sketched of the way in which employers, employees and civil servants, jointly and in conjunction, had abused social security as a very generous benefits policy.⁷⁸ The media presented a picture of government performance, as summarized in 2002, which was constantly determined by failure (something that, in any case, says as much about the functioning of the government as its framing by journalists).⁷⁹ Consequently the authority of the state was diminished, of course, and ideological appreciation of the market rose; until here, too, various abuses could be observed.⁸⁰

In addition, the atmosphere deteriorated as a result of the constant reports of cuts. This 'rationalization' became one of the permanent themes of politics. The political class presented this process of 'shaving and scraping' less as a correction of an excessive level of welfare than as something that had been compelled by the circumstances.⁸¹ In a competitive global economy, the government was left with no choice but to make cuts. There were hardly any differences in opinion on the main points of policy, such as the contracting out of tasks, the privatization of government services and ongoing austerity. The first interventions in 1982 did not go far, but in the period between 1983 and 1989, the level of benefits for unemployment, sickness and incapacity to work was lowered and 'decoupled' from wage movements; and from 1989, access to disability benefits was also made more difficult.⁸²

In stark contrast to this were the reports, emerging from the mid-1990s onwards, that senior managers in the private sector – largely in the financial world – were granting themselves fat remuneration packages; a year's income alone was a fortune.⁸³ According to recent research by the Amsterdam Institute for Advanced Labor Studies, the Gini index, which revealed a relatively small level of income inequality, was misleading; more detailed research suggested that since the end of the 1970s, the position of the poorest 10 per cent had declined by 30 per cent, whereas that of the richest 10 per cent had risen by 23 per cent.⁸⁴

Combined with the idea that the government was evidently unable to tackle crime or do something about the social problems linked to the migrant inflow, all of this led to a diminishing of the role and status of the government, political parties and public institutions. There was an increasing sense of unease, which grew into a feeling of crisis. This was attached to the disappointing economic trends, but if the economy did better, it was linked to complaints about the quality of society, increasing aggression in

public life and the loss of values and norms. People felt powerless and they were dissatisfied with the response of politics: 'The Hague' was letting major matters drift, if not directly responsible for everything that was going wrong.⁸⁵

The feeling of powerlessness had a very real basis, in the sense that the Netherlands, as a small country with a very open economy, was becoming increasingly dependent on the world.⁸⁶ There was accordingly an increasing need to cushion the country from the sometimes unpleasant social effects that this had, but this vulnerability seemed to be getting only greater. The state had become a kind of business, bound to the same requirements as other businesses. From now on, it was about the management of 'the Netherlands Ltd', as an MP from the CDA put it in 1982.⁸⁷ It was typical that the PVDA 'cast off its ideological principles' in public.⁸⁸ This tied in with a long tradition in socialism, which had started with Saint-Simon, continued with the 'engineers' socialism' of the inter-war period, and was now resumed with the 'third way', the notion that the essence of socialism could be achieved by taking a liberal path.⁸⁹

In this way, a very broad central ground now emerged that could again be characterized as 'modern conservatism'.⁹⁰ The great difference between this variant and that of the early 1960s, however, was that the 'malleability' of society was no longer a political responsibility, but one that was entrusted to the market.

This modern conservatism facilitated a very pragmatic politics, but it was difficult to hide the fact that the legitimacy of the two large parties, the CDA and the PVDA, had been eroded. After the Second World War both parties had taken responsibility for building the welfare state, an incredibly ambitious social project, which had steadily expanded in the golden years of economic growth. Now that this was no longer possible, the parties' role and significance were diminished, leading to confusion at the heart of the political order; and this created a vacuum that could be filled.

It was initially filled by the SP, which had had two representatives in the House of Representatives since 1994 and was engaged in an electoral advance (to 25 seats in 2006). This party, which originated from the sectarian left, became the mouthpiece of principled resistance to 'neo-liberalism'. The social democrats, described as the 'fifth column of neo-liberalism', were a particular target.⁹¹ In 2001 an umbrella organization known as the 'Stop de uitverkoop van de beschaving [Stop the sell-off of civilization]' foundation was set up, whereby the resistance gained broader support. The foundation published a manifesto that registered protest against 'the sell-off of the public sector', which involved key parts of society being withdrawn from

democratic control. Moreover, the results of the sell-off and the neo-liberal paradigm of 'the market as panacea' were actually deplorable in every area of public services. Civilization was being eroded because everything – even things that were not quantifiable – was now expressed in terms of money and figures, meaning that essential values were being lost.⁹²

Fortuyn would likewise step into the vacuum and denounce the disappointing performance of the public sector, and would owe much of his electoral success to this. He linked this, however, to a strong neo-liberal course – a considerable reduction in the size of government and a drastic shifting of collective care arrangements to independent, individual arrangements – whereby many of his supporters, had he come to power, would have got more than they had bargained for.

The loss of the stable middle ground in the political order was followed by fragmentation and turbulence.

The major parties in the House of Representatives, in numbers of seats

	2006	2010	2012
CDA	41	21	13
VVD	22	31	41
D66	3	10	12
PVV	9	24	15
Green Left	7	10	4
PVDA	33	30	38
SP	25	15	15

Source: www.parlement.com⁹³

The electorate was volatile (like 'shifting sand'),⁹⁴ parties grew and shrank, and it was becoming more and more difficult to form stable government coalitions: every cabinet after 2002 ended prematurely (there were six cabinets in twelve years).

The instability was less the consequence of increasing populism than, at root, caused by the difficulties in which the welfare state found itself; partly due to over-demand from the citizens, partly due to the structural reduction in economic growth, and partly due to the change in the composition of the population as a result of immigration. 'Europe' was no longer a solution to this, but an additional problem.

As early as 1991 Bolkestein (VVD) had turned against the ambition of a federal Europe, which had been broadly supported until then. He described it as 'chasing a chimera': Europe had to be seen as a partnership

of independent states.⁹⁵ Fortuyn would go even further. According to him, European integration was a 'phenomenal experiment' that had made a major contribution to peace on the continent, and it had even made an 'invaluable' contribution to the prosperity of the member states. But the people had not taken the project to heart, owing to their aversion to 'megalomania, large-scale thinking and interference'. In his view, the people were right in this: the European Union was a 'hobby' of the political class, who transferred sovereignty to Brussels 'unthinkingly and often unnecessarily', and justified this by suggesting that 'Brussels produces a kind of law of nature, which we can do nothing about and which we can only go along with'.⁹⁶ With this, he struck a tone that would become a general feeling: rational appreciation was inextricably mixed with emotional aversion.

On 1 June 2005 the European 'constitution' was rejected in a referendum. The most remarkable thing about this was the gulf it revealed between parliament and the voters: so far as it can be gathered, 127 members of the House of Representatives were in favour the Treaty and 22 against, whilst among the voters, with a turnout of almost two-thirds of those entitled to vote, 61.6 per cent were against and 38.5 per cent in favour.⁹⁷ The government campaign for the constitution, with the motto 'Europa. Best belangrijk [Europe. It's important, you know]', had also been pathetic. Parliament yielded to the negative outcome, and most political parties diluted their programmes with a degree of Euroscepticism.

The result of this movement was that when the storm broke in 2008 and major decisions had to be taken in order to keep the European Union afloat, Dutch politicians were unable to explain to voters what purpose the Union served and which steps should be taken in order to bring this goal closer. In fact, the debate was avoided, something that was revealed by the Prime Minister Rutte in 2012, when he asserted that he had no need for 'unwieldy visions'.⁹⁸ To all intents and purposes, politics thereby became voiceless in an area that had for decades been a pillar of foreign policy and a sheet anchor for the economy.

In the same period, yet another pillar was swept away: that of the welfare state. In its annual report for 2012, the Council of State, the most important advisory body to the government and parliament, stated that it was only with some difficulty that a recession that had already been underway for five years could be described as a crisis. It was time to recognize that the country would not return to 'normal' relations more or less automatically; changes were taking place that were of a permanent and structural nature, closely connected to the enormous changes in global political and economic relations. As a result, the character of the state would have to change profoundly:

This means that citizens' expectations and arrangements in relation to care, facilities and services will have to be revised downwards.⁹⁹

In all kinds of respects, the government could no longer stand surety for 'security'. Although the Council of State warned that this message could lead to citizens feeling 'assaulted and deceived', this confirmed a suspicion that had already been manifest for some time.

In the 1980s the term 'doom-mongering [*doemdenken*]' had become popular.¹⁰⁰ This mood could be grafted onto a long tradition of cultural pessimism, although the problem of 'mass man' had since been transformed into the problem of individualization.¹⁰¹ Various forms of unease and discontentment, some recent, others older, now blended with one another. There had been prosperity since the 1960s, but this was threatened by a succession of plagues: first inflation, then the unmanageability of the government budget deficits, and finally the uncontrollable expansion of private credit and the resulting private debt situation that created extreme vulnerability. Liberty prevailed, but people were frustrated by the use that others made of their liberty, resulting in the paradox that the state was called upon to act more toughly, but at the same time not to interfere in citizens' lives. European integration, once seen as a way to anchor the nation state more securely than would be possible for a nation alone, was now viewed with distrust.

Many fell under the spell of 'declinism'.¹⁰² The evaporation of the ideologies left a vacuum that could be filled by neo-liberalism: the political parties' loss of meaning created a space for political entrepreneurs. All of the structural elements that had successively developed in the political culture lost their power. The citizen, who as a result of the Atlantic Revolution at the end of the eighteenth century had been proclaimed the bearer of the political culture, trailed behind as a discontented spectator and sought refuge in private life: I'm doing well, but we're doing badly.¹⁰³ Politics is still in the midst of a transitional phase, and it is unclear where it is going. As a Friesian farmer wrote two centuries ago: 'How little a person knows what the next moment shall bring...'¹⁰⁴

9. A Tiny Spot

Political culture

Surveying the two centuries that have been described here, we can identify four phases in the development of a modern political culture. In 1813 William I had assumed sovereignty 'under the guarantee of a wise constitution'; but he told his son that a constitution should be seen only as 'a plaything in the hands of the crowd, as an illusion of liberty, while one adapts it to the circumstances'.¹ The king thought that this illusion would be sufficient to allow him to pursue an international dynastic politics whilst exercising patriarchal authority at the national level. But he thereby underestimated the importance of the phenomenon of a constitution such as that which had been introduced in the Netherlands in 1798. The constitution might have been the product of a revolutionary age, but it proved to have its own dynamic, one that brought with it the core of a new political culture. Gradually, in many countries the dynastic politics of kings gave way to the constitutional politics of citizens.

This constitutional politics was to have been carried by citizens who saw themselves as the heirs of classical Athens, the birthplace of democracy, of government by the people. Revolutionaries at the end of the eighteenth century such as Ockerse, however, already had doubts about the suitability of the citizens. They were familiar with Montesquieu's warning: 'The principle of democracy is corrupted not only when the spirit of equality is lost, but likewise when it becomes a spirit of extreme equality...'.² This was a risk that could not be avoided, however, given that the 'spirit of the age' was pushing unstoppably for more equality in almost every respect: as Tocqueville would remark, wanting to hold back democracy was comparable to going into battle with God himself.³ King William II, for example, stubbornly refused to permit any constitutional reform for years, but finally yielded to what he saw as 'the spirit of the age'. In 1848 this led to the resumption of the path that had been taken in 1798.

A second phase thereby began, one that started with a liberal constitution. For this reason, the liberals were referred to as the 'constitutionalists' in the mid-nineteenth century. The central role in the polity was fulfilled by parliament. The key principle that underlay this was not popular sovereignty, as it had been in 1798. Following Thorbecke, the representatives of the people functioned 'without any bond with the voter'. It thus concerned the establishment of a parliamentary system. Most striking, however, was yet

another key principle, namely that of limiting the political domain. As Thorbecke put it, it was the hallmark of a liberal state and a liberal government to 'promote the development of autonomous power; autonomous power in the province, the municipality, the association and for the individual'.⁴ There was no absolute power any more; indeed, the quality of politics and society benefitted from the acceptance of separate responsibilities at every level: liberalism practised 'the art of separation'.⁵ Autonomy did not mean independence, though; the whole art was to establish a balance between the different responsibilities. This was the intention of the constitution of 1848.

In society citizens should be able to join together to achieve their goals, whatever these might be. In that respect, associations played a prominent role; they combined the strengths of organized virtue, they formed the heart of civil society.⁶ This is where public opinion was shaped; associations spread civilization and took the tasks of the age to heart. This intermediary layer thus fulfilled an essential role, both with respect to the political order and with respect to the population, although the borders between the two were closely guarded: in practice, the political class constituted a relatively closed oligarchy, associations limited themselves to drafting petitions, and the population was expected to accept all of this in deferential fashion.

From the last quarter of the nineteenth century onwards, the orderly balance between the three domains of the liberal political culture was upset, whereby a third phase began. Abraham Kuyper succeeded in radically changing the nature of representation by introducing the political party and ideology, or 'principle', as he called it. This saw the removal of the separation between the political order and the intermediary layer. Consensus disappeared from sight and compromise was now the most that could be achieved. The old ideal of unanimity could no longer be maintained; on the contrary, division now emerged as the key characteristic of the nation. In a small and vulnerable country, surrounded by countries that were increasingly avowing the doctrine of *Realpolitik*, this was a dangerous development. In order to avert it, the illusion was cherished that the Netherlands was an exemplary nation, with the increasingly popularity of the House of Orange as its symbol of national unity and independence. This was further advanced by the unforeseen transition in 1890 from martial kings to charming queens.

As the parties wished to have supporters in order to augment their moral and political legitimacy, this gave a powerful impulse to the expansion of suffrage – something that had been predicted by Thorbecke, but held off for some decades. This expansion of the franchise was risky, given that large parts of the population were considered hardly able to hold a well-grounded

opinion on politics, let alone a wise one. The paradox was thus that the more the franchise was expanded, the more the population was drawn into a system of sanctions and rewards. To this end, the political parties colonized the intermediary layer and established a form of indirect rule.

To this system of 'unity in disunity', one that was in principle unstable, was added an increasingly powerful movement to organize interests, mainly in response to the consequences of the second wave of globalization from 1860/1870 onwards. A complex dynamic accordingly arose between interests and principles. This would lead to a pillarized-corporate order that would mainly take shape during the First World War. The confessional parties played a dominant role in this; they wove state and society together in intricate fashion. They were then joined by the social democrats, initially mostly at the local level, and after 1945 at the national one. Jointly and in conjunction, the pillarized-corporate system was used to build the welfare state.

This welfare state emerged from very diverse developments and had to satisfy many requirements. First, it was the product of an egalitarian ethos, such as that which had developed from the end of the eighteenth century onwards and taken shape in a broad humanitarian movement. Lying at the heart of this was the equality of every human being, what the German sociologist Joas has called 'the sanctity of the person'. Inequality was increasingly labelled as 'slavery', whether it concerned real slaves, workers or women.

Second, it was a reaction to the integration in the world economy: the more this increased, the more the need grew – if not the necessity – to protect the country from fluctuations in the economy, to spread the risk by creating a safety net for the victims of changes in the labour market. Around the turn of the century, there was thus a blurring of the age-old distinction between the 'deserving poor' (widows and orphans, the elderly) and improvident labourers and workers.

In addition to these two developments, a third was important. The testimonial parties wished not only to mobilize their supporters on ideological grounds, but also to bind them with the aid of more material provisions. Behind the rhetoric of 'solidarity', a tough fight thus took place about control of the agencies that were responsible for providing benefits and subsidies. This significantly delayed the building of a statutory system of social security. The rise of two totalitarian movements led to a breakthrough: in order to hold off the lure of fascism and communism, the concept of democracy was expanded. Democracy was no longer limited to political rights, but now also covered socio-economic rights. The main objective of

politics was to guarantee socio-economic security, which implied that the state committed itself to achieving economic growth, both for the sake of full employment and to be able to finance the security of its citizens 'from the cradle to the grave'.

European integration was essential for this growth, although there was simultaneously the concern that France and Germany would manage to impose their interests on small countries. This also explains the constant attempts by The Hague to involve Great Britain in the integration process. In addition, there was an instinctive awareness that security in a dangerous world was ultimately only guaranteed by the United States.

Initially, European integration was a form of security insurance, focused both on averting new wars in Western Europe and with an eye to the Cold War. The means of achieving this was to combat the 'jealousy of trade', which as early as the eighteenth century had been identified by various authors as a source of war and conflict. Economic cooperation had to prevent this. Whilst the nation state might not have been 'rescued' by European integration, as Milward has argued, it was in any case anchored in the European Community. A path was thereby taken 'from which there can be no return', as the Minister of Foreign Affairs declared in October 1957. The political culture of the Netherlands would thus slowly become interwoven with a supranational political domain.

The pillarized-corporate political culture was undermined in the 1960s. This saw the beginning of the fourth phase, one that has not yet ended. In the past, numerous political theorists asserted that democracy would only work in what Bagehot called a 'deferential society'; a society in which respect for the elected leaders was taken for granted, along with that for older people, fathers and spouses.⁷ This 'virtue', however, was lost in the 1960s. The political order suffered gravely as a result of this development, as shown, among other things, by the growing sympathy for 'civil disobedience' and 'extra-parliamentary campaigns'.⁸ Almost every ideology lost its ability to bind the voters; political parties came adrift, unable to shape and give direction to the public debate. Serious attempts to amend the constitution came to nothing.⁹ It is thus difficult to speak of a new order; since then, change and confusion have gone hand in hand.¹⁰

This development took place under an unlucky star. Democracy in the Western world had been guaranteed by steady economic growth; growth that, so the thinking went, was manageable. After the Second World War the G7 countries, the most important industrial countries, enjoyed 60 years of growth without major fluctuations. However, this success veiled the fact that growth had already begun to level off in the 1960s and ended up

at a much lower structural level: in the 1960s average growth in industrial countries was 5.2 per cent of GDP, but this fell to 1.4 per cent around the turn of the millennium.¹¹ Combined with the fundamental restructuring of the economy from a traditional industrial economy into a modern service-based economy, the disappearance of the agrarian labour force and the shift of jobs to low-wage countries, this put a heavy burden on the welfare state.

Whilst the welfare state might have provided benefits to take care of these problems, at the same time access to social regulations and the size of benefit payments were under constant pressure for the sake of balancing the budget. In general the real income of the population rose, but inequality increased. In the Netherlands, for example, the top incomes rose considerably (mainly after 1994), whilst heavy sacrifices were made at the bottom (from the 1980s onwards).¹² Taken together, this explains much of the mood of decline, such as that expressed by the famous phrase: 'I'm doing well, but we're doing badly'.

In *The Wealth of Nations* (1776) Adam Smith had stated: 'It is hard in the stationary, and miserable in the declining state'. Stagnation means that decline, apathy and melancholy determine the social climate.¹³ In view of the ceaseless pessimism, this observation seems to have lost little of its power.¹⁴ The American political scientist Putnam once made a comparison between the last two decades of the nineteenth century and the years around the turn of the millennium. Both periods saw technological revolutions, concentrations of prosperity and affluence among the few, the globalization of trade, the restructuring of the labour market, sizeable migratory movements and a change in relations between men and women and between the generations. In both periods, there were deep concerns about the consequences that this might have, about the loss of community life, decreasing social justice and growing poverty, the feeling that democracy was being trumped by more powerful business interests, and an increase in political detachment, whereby the citizen exchanged the role of active participant in politics for that of an increasingly unwilling spectator. Progressives in the nineteenth century, however, devoted themselves actively and optimistically to solving problems such as those summarized in the catch-all term, 'the social question'; civil society flourished and the foundations of the welfare state were laid. This optimism and activism has disappeared.¹⁵

The nation state

The Netherlands is thus only partly comparable to the nation state that emerged in the Batavian Republic two centuries ago. That was no easy

beginning. The first experiment with a constitution was put to a sizeable electorate in 1797 and subsequently rejected: the voters in the eight provinces saw themselves as different peoples with their own states, with their own identities. The *Staatsregeling* was drawn up one year later, thanks to a *coup d'état* and pressure from France. The people subsequently became attached to it; in 1813 there was no desire for a return to the old Republic, and a modern nationalism was shown in the conflict with Belgium in 1830. The nation state was shaped further by two key institutional socialization mechanisms, namely military service and education. Religious division became starker in the course of the nineteenth century, but at the same time, in a dialectical manner it provided the form in which the new process of national integration took place, with a new nationalism around 1900: the national anthem was sung with gusto, the queen was cheered and there was pride in the colonial possessions.¹⁶ This community of fate was spared the miseries of the First World War and afflicted by the horrors of the Second World War, after which it was bound together more tightly and more homogeneously than ever in the welfare state. From the 1960s onwards this homogeneity came under pressure, both due to the fundamental changes in labour relations and conditions and due to growing immigration. There was a general feeling that society was unravelling, that it was subject to centrifugal forces that could not be controlled.¹⁷ Resistance to this was initially focused on immigrants, and subsequently on a national political class that was no longer able to offer the prospect of a better life; the citizens would have to be responsible for themselves. The difference between the *pays réel* and the *pays légal* became disconcertingly clear on 1 June 2005, when a sizeable majority rejected the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe. 'Europe' proved unable to reassure people that it could protect national identity at a higher level in a rapidly changing world; on the contrary. Just as Kuyper had fought against rapid nationalization, the 'curse of uniformity', in the nineteenth century, internationalization was now rejected as a neo-liberal conspiracy that had left an abandoned population trailing in its wake.

This is particularly remarkable because 'Europe', however imperfect it might be, had been a successful means of restraining the age-old conflicts that had plagued this part of the continent. Moreover, it had advanced economic growth and had thereby made a major contribution to achieving a certain level of security, if not civilization. Despite all the doubts and frustrations, going further down this path may well be unavoidable in order to deal with two critical problems that cannot, or can hardly, be solved at the national level. These are, first, the problem that with a shrinking and

ageing population, Europe's economic weight is expected to decline further, with all the social consequences that this will bring. Second, it should be borne in mind that Europe is surrounded by a number of regions that are contending with a diverse range of serious problems. It is extremely unlikely that this will not pose a direct threat to Europe sooner or later.¹⁸

This is not a view, however, that is shared by many within the different countries; on the contrary. Dutch political culture is interwoven with Europe, but this is increasingly experienced as a burden. The most serious crisis to occur since the 1930s, which began in September 2008 with the collapse of Lehman Brothers, was not only an economic crisis, but also eroded trust in the European integration project as such, and thereby continued a path that Eurosceptics had already been treading for some years. It became painfully clear that political integration did not more or less follow on from economic integration, not even after a common currency had been created. The emphasis on diversity within the European Union led above all to a strengthening of the desire to preserve national individuality. Further democratization thus seems an obstacle to deeper integration, whilst the expansion of the European Union to 28 states did not make it any easier to govern.¹⁹ In any case, it no longer appears possible to continue the integration process beyond the current borders of the Union, as had been the case until now. To the extent that there was convergence, this has now come up against firm limits. These not only include the problems relating to the size and scope of the European Union, and the desired balance of tasks and responsibilities between the nation states and an integrated Europe, but, perhaps even more so, that still unanswered core question with which nation states were already grappling at the end of the century: what is the scope of citizenship?

A small country

The nation state and the political culture were created by one another, and provided each other with opportunities and limits. Finally, then, the question is whether all of the changes do not at root share a common basis; something that has remained stable, despite all the changes. We referred above to the view – held by Huizinga, for example – that the Netherlands was pre-eminently a bourgeois country. That was not incorrect, if one is thereby thinking above all of the almost complete absence of a feudal-military tradition and the predominantly urban character of the country. In this respect one can also refer to the view of the British historian Schama,

who emphasized what he called this area's 'moral geography': from ancient times a communitarian order had developed in the fight against water. In this community, which was as precarious as it was virtuous, a form of self-governance became established that was based on mutual consultation. This idea became known as the polder model. Despite the popularity of this idea, it must be said that there is no automatic line between the institutional design of water management in the middle ages and early modern period on the one hand, and on the other, the neocorporate organization of the collective bargaining economy that would develop at the beginning of the twentieth century.²⁰

Of more importance appears to be the fact that the Netherlands was a small country. According to classical political theory, a compact state had its advantages. In any case, it made it possible to maintain a democratic regime, such as those that had prevailed in Greek city-states. The great disadvantage was military weakness, particularly in view of the fact that population size became a major factor in the transition from relatively small professional armies to armies based on mass conscription. This weakness meant that it was very important to remain united, for good or ill; difference of opinion only heightened the risk of undesired interference from the outside. This resulted in a high level of social pressure on the political debate; an almost principled preference for moderation, if not mediocrity. This was something that Tocqueville had pointed out in his analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of small and large states. Small nations are characterized by strong internal control, and focus above all on increasing their own material prosperity. They do not yearn for glory, but their ambitions are limited by necessity; and as a result of this, the behaviour of the population is as peaceable as it is simple. Even the desires of the citizens are straightforward, if not narrow-minded: this is the price that they pay for their freedom.²¹ This price was paid in the Netherlands with conviction.²²

The Netherlands could not afford to seek the country's meaning in power; instead, it was to be found in virtue. In the course of the nineteenth century, this theme became more and more commonplace. It found its classic expression in the proclamation made by the Queen Regnant Emma on the accession of her daughter Wilhelmina to the throne in 1898, when she wished that the country: 'Be great in everything in which a small nation can be great!'²³ This was linked to the emphasis on the development of international law and the acceptance of development aid as a moral duty. The meaning of the Netherlands as an 'exemplary country' was fashioned accordingly.

This moral position, however, implied a major limitation in the country's understanding of the forces that became visible in the world. In the nineteenth century, for example, it had taken some effort to realize that the unification of Germany could also have consequences for the Netherlands. The belligerents' recognition of the country's neutrality in the First World War strengthened the feeling that the Netherlands had the right to be left in peace. The German invasion of May 1940 was condemned in a proclamation by Queen Wilhelmina as 'an unprecedented violation of good faith and an infringement of appropriate relations between civilized states'.²⁴ The precedent had already been set a month beforehand, however, with the German attack on Denmark and Norway; what is more, it had been unmistakably clear for some years that Germany was no longer a civilized state.

A similar sense of disorientation can be noted in the decolonization of the East Indies. The leaders of the independence movement were seen as collaborators, whereby the country's own experiences of war on the European continent formed the reference point for the interpretation of developments in Asia. The American intervention in favour of an independent Indonesia was seen as inappropriate meddling; for years afterwards, it was a major goal of foreign policy to prevent the question of New Guinea from even being discussed at the United Nations.

In the years that followed, the international situation was also misjudged on a number of occasions. For example, on 'Black Monday', 30 September 1991, at the preparation for the European summit in Maastricht, the Dutch proposals for further political integration were swept roughly from the table. The power of evil in the world could also be overlooked, as was shown by the fall of Srebrenica in July 1995. This can be seen as a consequence of those things that, despite all of the changes, have remained constant in Dutch political culture over the last two centuries: a generally pragmatic mode of interaction, the weightlessness of the past, and the awareness – sometimes rudely awakened – of being but a 'tiny spot on the earth'.

Acknowledgements

This book is the outcome of two long-term research programmes. In the 1980s, under the leadership of J.C.H. Blom and H. van der Wusten, a programme of research was begun that focused on pillarization, mainly at the local level. From 1995 onwards this research programme was continued under the leadership of J.C.H. Blom, P. de Rooy and H. te Velde, although now in the wider framework of Dutch political culture in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Numerous universities and research institutes contributed to the research, and the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research provided essential funding.

This book can be seen as the conclusion to this research. At the same time, additional research was carried out for this book, and any errors or omissions are thus the responsibility of the author alone. A number of these were avoided, however, thanks to the critical comments that Hans Blom and Maarten Brands provided on a draft version, something for which I am exceedingly grateful. My greatest thanks go to Anca. I dedicate this book to Pepijn, Anna and Jannes.

Notes

Introduction

1. R.J. Schimmelpenninck in the National Assembly, sitting of 23 November 1796. In the nineteenth century it became common to speak of 'our little country', to the extent that this occasionally even elicited protest. In 1873 the man of letters Johannes van Vloten condemned this 'despondent moaning' as an 'exasperating phenomenon': cited by E.H. Kossmann, 'Verdwijnt de Nederlandse identiteit? Beschouwingen over natie en cultuur' in Koen Koch and Paul Scheffer (eds), *Het nut van Nederland* (Amsterdam 1996), 56-68, here 56-57. In 1908 it was proclaimed: 'We think that a stop must be put to this sulking about "our little country" and about our insignificance.' H. Meyer, 'Holland achterlijk?' in *Neerlandia* 12 (1908), website of the Digital Library of Dutch Literature: www.dbnl.org.
2. W.J. Hofdijk, *Ons Voorgeslacht*, (Leiden [1864] 1875) VI, 323-324.
3. The development of this 'exemplary country' (*gidsland*) theme is described succinctly in Joost Herman, 'The Dutch Drive for Humanitarianism: Inner Origins and Development of the Gidsland Tradition and Its External Effects' in *International Journal* 61 (Autumn 2006), 859-874. As a consequence of this tradition, one should note that in 2000, the Constitution (Article 97) included the statement that the Dutch armed forces not only served 'the interests of the Kingdom', but also those of the 'international legal order'.
4. Johan Huizinga, 'Nederland's geestesmerk' [1934] in *Verzameld Werk* (Haarlem 1950), VII, 279-312, here 287. See also: Te Velde, 'How High Did the Dutch Fly? Remarks on Stereotypes of Burger Mentality' in Annemieke Galema, Barbara Henkes and Henk te Velde (eds), *Images of the Nation* (Amsterdam 1993), 59-79. The historian Robert Fruin noted as early as 1870 that 'in no other country is the bourgeois element so predominant than as here': Robert Fruin, 'Het karakter van het Nederlandsche volk' in *Verspreide Geschriften* ('s-Gravenhage 1990), I, 1-21, here 12.
5. This picture was disseminated at the international level by A. Lijphart, *The Politics of Accommodation* (Berkeley 1968). More or less at the same time, a comparable picture was sketched by H. Daalder, 'Leiding en lijdelijkheid in de Nederlandse politiek' [1964] in idem, *Van oude en nieuwe regenten* (Amsterdam 1995), 11-39. See also the interview with Lijphart in L. Munck and Richard Snyder, *Passion, Craft, and Method in Comparative Politics* (Baltimore 2007), 234-272. On the development of a 'culture of meetings', see Wilbert van Vree, *Nederland als vergaderland* (Groningen 1994).
6. The term 'polder model' appears to have been coined in 1995 at a meeting on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the Dutch Social Economic Council: see *Jaarverslag 1997* by the VNO-NCW. It was inspired by Simon Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches* (London 1987). Its popular use can be

- seen in Marcel Metze, *Let's Talk Dutch Now. Harmonie in de polder: uitvinding of erfenis?* (Amsterdam/Antwerp 1999). It was recently used to analyse the social-economic history of the Netherlands as a whole: Maarten Prak and Jan Luiten van Zanden, *Nederland en het poldermodel* (Amsterdam 2013). In appreciation of the system of social-economic consultation in the Netherlands, the chairs of the Social Economic Council received the prestigious Bertelsmann Prize in Germany in 1997. In the same year, Bill Clinton was full of praise for the Dutch approach at the G8 summit in Denver.
7. Niek van Sas, *Bataafse Terreur* (Nijmegen 2011).
 8. Niles Eldridge and Stephen Jay Gould, 'Punctuated Equilibria: An Alternative to Phyletic Gradualism' in Thomas J. Schopf (ed.), *Models in Paleobiology* (San Francisco 1972), 82-115.
 9. Giovanni Capoccia and R. Daniel Keleman, 'The Study of Critical Junctures. Theory, Narrative, and Counterfactuals' in *World Politics* 59 (April 2007), 341-369. Michael Mann called this 'moments of tracklaying': Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power* (Cambridge 1986), 1, 28.
 10. A characterization by J.R. Thorbecke cited in Jouke Turpijn, *Mannen van gezag* (Amsterdam 2008), 86.
 11. The following draws significantly on Istvan Hont, *Jealousy of Trade* (Cambridge, Mass. and London 2005).
 12. The great variety in the population, which initially had a largely ethno-cultural character (which found particular expression, for example, in a wide range of costumes), was now given an ideological connotation and politicized in one and the same movement. See Eveline Koolhaas-Grosfeld, *De ontdekking van de Nederlander in boeken en prenten rond 1800* (Zutphen 2010).
 13. An overview of parliamentary history, including systematic attention to the Constitution, is provided by J.Th.J. van den Berg and J. Vis, *De eerste honderdvijftig jaar* (Amsterdam 2013).
 14. There is a substantial literature on political culture. The following proved particularly useful: Glen Gendzel, 'Political Culture: Genealogy of a Concept' in *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 28 (Autumn 1997), 225-250 and Ronald P. Formisano, 'The Concept of Political Culture' in *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 31 (Winter 2001), 393-426.
 15. Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (London/New York 1973).
 16. L. Hunt, *Politics, Culture and Class in the French Revolution* (Berkeley e.a. 1984).
 17. Jürgen Osterhammel, *Die Verwandlung der Welt* (München 2009).
 18. A useful overview of the building of the colonial empire is provided by J. van Goor, *De Nederlandse Koloniën* (The Hague 1992); the role of the Netherlands in the 'early Enlightenment': Jonathan Israel, *A Revolution of the Mind* (Princeton 2010).
 19. Pankaj Ghemawat and Steven A. Altman, *DHL Global Connectedness Index 2012*.
 20. This explains why the nineteenth century is described as the age of 'constitutional politics': Henk te Velde, 'Constitutionele politiek. De parlementair-

- politieke praktijk en de Grondwet van 1848' in N.C.F. van Sas and H. te Velde (eds), *De eeuw van de Grondwet* (Deventer 1998), 145-181.
21. G.W.F. Hegel propounded in 1821: 'Die Schöpfung der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft gehört übrigens der modernen Welt an' in idem, *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* (Berlin [1821] 1842), 241. This idea was developed in the classic study by Jürgen Habermas, *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit* (Darmstadt and Neuwied 1962). For a recent general overview, see: James Van Horn Mellon, *The Rise of the Public in Enlightenment Europe* (Cambridge 2001).
 22. The 'mœurs proprement dites, qu'on pourrait appeler les habitudes du cœur': A. De Tocqueville, *De la démocratie en Amérique* (Paris [1835, 1840] 1992), 331. For an overview of the use of this concept, see Jan Romein, *Beschouwingen over het Nederlands volkskarakter* (Leiden 1942). In addition, Remco Ensel, *De Nederlander in beeld* (Amsterdam 2014).
 23. 'The national spirit, it is said, is the life of the state, just like the unknown principle that breathing and the pulse are the life of the person. Just as the statue, however like and complete it may be, will be nothing but recast stone so long as God's divine spark does not set it aglow, so shall the most excellent institutions of the state remain empty shells as long as the devotion and love of the people do not live within them': C. Backer, 'Aanmerkingen over den volksgeest, en de onverschilligheid bij het volk' in *Nederlandsche Letteroefeningen* 1826, 345-358, here 345. Compare: 'The new history is mainly the history of the national spirit'. J. De Bosch Kemper, *De staatkundige geschiedenis van Nederland tot 1830* (Amsterdam 1868), 245.
 24. Here I draw upon John R. Alford, Carolyn L. Funk and John R. Hibbing, 'Are Political Orientations Genetically Transmitted?' in *American Political Science Review* 99 (May 2005), 153-167; see also Ira H. Carmen, 'Genetic Configurations of Political Phenomena: New Theories, New Methods' in *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 614 (November 2007), 34-55. For a cautious initial overview ('much more research is to be done'): Peter K. Hatemi and Rose McDermott (eds), *Man is by Nature a Political Animal. Evolution, Biology, and Politics* (Chicago and London 2011).
 25. Bernard Crick, *In Defense of Politics* (London and New York [1962] 2009), 10-11.
 26. Ido de Haan, *Zelfbestuur en staatsbeheer* (Amsterdam 2003), 3.
 27. Mann, *The Sources of Social Power*, I, 1.
 28. Tony Judt, *Postwar. A History of Europe since 1945* (London 2005), 304. A comparable perspective on unpredictability is to be found in J.J. Woltjer, *Recent Verleden* (Amsterdam 1992), 515.
 29. Peter J. Bowler, *The Non-Darwinian Revolution* (Baltimore 1988) and idem, *The Invention of Progress* (Oxford 1989).
 30. Daniel Kahneman, *Thinking Fast and Slow* (London 2011); Jonathan Haidt, *The Righteous Mind* (New York 2012).
 31. Eeleco Runia, *De pathologie van de veldslag* (Amsterdam 1995), here 35-36.
 32. Doeke Wijgers Hellema, *Kroniek van een Friese boer, 1821-1856* (Franeker 1978), 157.

1. Long Live the Republic!

1. R.R. Palmer, *The Age of Democratic Revolution* (Princeton 1959-1964). An analysis of the period between 1780 and 1820 as 'a truly global crisis' can be found in C.A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780-1914* (Oxford 2004).
2. Thomas Paine, *Rights of Man, Common Sense and Other Political Writings* (Oxford 1995).
3. Burke (1775), quoted in F.R. Ankersmit, *Political Representation* (Stanford 2002), 115.
4. Guizot on 1 March 1843 in the House of Representatives, quoted in Aurelian Craiutu, 'Tocqueville and the Political Thought of the French Doctrinaires (Guizot, Royer-Collard, Rémusat)' in *History of Political Thought 20* (Autumn 1999), 456-493, here 460.
5. Wyger Velema, 'Republikeinse democratie' and Niek van Sas, 'De Republiek voorbij' in Frans Grijzenhout, Niek van Sas and Wyger Velema (eds), *Het Bataafse experiment* (Nijmegen 2013), 27-63 and 65-100 respectively.
6. All male citizens aged twenty and older who had lived in the Republic for a year or more were given the right to vote, unless they were wards of court and or dependent upon poor relief. Everyone who had the right to vote had to endorse the principle of popular sovereignty. For every 500 voters, an elector and a deputy were chosen, and subsequently for every twenty electors, one people's representative.
7. *Dagverhaal der Handelingen van de Nationale Vergadering representeerende het Volk van Nederland*. Also available online, including via the website of the National Archives of the Netherlands.
8. Ernestine van der Wall, 'Geen natie van atheïsten. Pieter Paulus (1753-1796) over godsdienst en mensenrechten', in *Jaarboek van de Maatschappij der Nederlandse Letterkunde* 1996, 45-58.
9. N.C.F. van Sas, *De metamorfose van Nederland* (Amsterdam 2004), 109-113.
10. Sitting of 29 March 1796.
11. An overview is provided by Joris Oddens, *Pioniers in schaduwbeeld* (Nijmegen 2012).
12. The restoration of democracy in 1945 is a good example of such a process, in which a major role must be granted to the event-dominated and path-dependent character of the transition to a new political order; see Nele K. Beyens, *Overgangspolitiek* (Amsterdam 2009).
13. For a good picture of the functioning of a corporate order in a city, see Maarten Prak, *Republikeinse veelheid, democratisch enkelvoud* (Nijmegen 1999).
14. Quoted in C. Wiskerke, *De afschaffing van de gilden in Nederland* (Amsterdam 1938), 44.
15. Address of 30 June 1796, printed in the report on the sitting of 6 July 1796.
16. Guy Vanthemsche, *De paradoxen van de staat* (Brussels 1998), 71. For a general overview on the concept of 'equality': Pierre Rosanvallon, *The Society of Equals* (Cambridge [Mass.] 2013).

17. IJ. van Hamelsveld (Reformed) versus J.A. Krieger (Catholic); sitting of 10 March 1796.
18. See Edwina Hagen, 'Een zaal van staatsmannen, niet van godgeleerden' in Grijzenhout et al. (eds), *Het Bataafse experiment*, 125-153.
19. W.J. Goslinga, *De rechten van den mensch en burger* ('s-Gravenhage 1936), 93.
20. J.F.R. van Hooff (Catholic), sitting of 30 July 1796.
21. R.J. Schimmelpenninck (Reformed), sitting of 23 May, and P. Bosveld (Reformed), sitting of 19 July 1796.
22. A. Ploos van Amstel (Reformed, later Catholic), sitting of 1 July 1796.
23. P. Vreede (Mennonite), sittings of 29 July and 4 August 1796.
24. G.W.J. baron van Lamsweerde (Catholic) and J.B. Auffmorth (Reformed), sitting of 28 July 1796.
25. J.G.H. Hahn (Waals Reformed), sitting of 4 August 1796. A number of people in Friesland defied authority for a while by continuing to ring the bells. They received corporal punishment for this or were thrown into prison. See Jacques Kuiper, *Een revolutie ontrafeld* (Franeker 2002), 219.
26. *Decreten der Nationale Vergadering* 5 August 1796; see *Dagverhaal*, sitting of 5 August 1796.
27. On the attempts at a kind of redress – that is to say, returning to the Catholics the churches that had been taken from them several centuries before – which were as endless as they were fruitless, see P. Noordeloos, *De restitutie der kerken in den Franschen tijd* (Nijmegen and Utrecht 1937) and J.Th. de Visser, *Kerk en Staat, Part III* (Leiden 1927).
28. Quoted in J.Th. de Visser, *Kerk en Staat, Part II* (Leiden 1927), 136. This article is one of the fundamental principles of the Reformed Political Party (founded in 1918) and also formed part of the declaration of faith of the Protestant Church in the Netherlands (founded in 2004 by the Dutch Reformed Church, the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Kingdom of the Netherlands).
29. Willem Frijhoff and Marijke Spies, 1650. *Bevochten eendracht* (The Hague 1999), 359. See also Benjamin J. Kaplan, *Divided by Faith* (Cambridge (Mass.) 2007).
30. Translator's note: the Synod of Dort set forth the Reformed doctrine, namely total depravity, unconditional election, limited atonement (the argument that Christ's act of atonement was intended only for the elect and not for the rest of the world), irresistible (or irrevocable) grace and the perseverance of the saints. These are sometimes referred to as the Five Points of Calvinism. The Stadholder and the States General were strong adherents of the decisions of the Synod. The Synod also requested the States General to order a new translation of the Bible, which resulted in the authoritative edition of 1635.
31. C.C. de Bruin, 'Invoering en ontvangst van de Statenvertaling' in *De Statenvertaling 1637-1937* (Haarlem 1936), 31-49.
32. Edwina Hagen, *'Een meer of min doodlyken haat'* (Nijmegen 2008).
33. In particular, on the payment of the salaries of the pastors or of all religious officials, an issue that was discussed repeatedly without leading to a clear

- decision, see: Oddens, *Pioniers*, 134-137 and passim. Initially the salaries were not paid at all in various years, due to the state's lack of money. The financial relationship between the churches and the state only came to a definitive end in 1983; see W.H. den Ouden, *De ontknoping van de zilveren koorde* (Zoetermeer 2004).
34. S. Bloemgarten, *Hartog de Hartog Lémon* (Amsterdam 2007), 62-70.
 35. J.G.H. Hahn (Waals Reformed), sitting of 1 August 1796.
 36. J.A. [Uitenhage] de Mist (Reformed), sitting of 30 August 1796.
 37. *Decreeten der Nationale Vergadering* 2 September 1796; see *Dagverhaal*, sitting of 30 August 1796.
 38. Bloemgarten, *Lémon*, 71.
 39. In June 1795, Dutch revolutionaries determined that coats of arms on gravestones had to be destroyed and monumental tombs pulled down. An exception could be made, however, for the tombs of statesmen, heroes, scholars and artists.
 40. Barrington Moore, *Moral Purity and Persecution in History* (Princeton 2000).
 41. Joh. van Lokhorst (Reformed), sitting of 23 August 1796.
 42. Arend H. Huussen, 'The Dutch constitution of 1798 and the problem of slavery' in *Tijdschrift voor Rechtsgeschiedenis* 99 (1999), 99-114.
 43. Petronella Moens, 'Bij het afschaffen van den Slaavenhandel door de Fransche Natie' in idem, *Vruchten der Eenzaamheid* (1798), quoted by Angelie Sens, *Mensaap, heiden, slaaf* (The Hague 2001), 98.
 44. A.N. Paasman, *Reinhart: Nederlandse literatuur en slavernij ten tijde van de Verlichting* (Leiden 1984).
 45. Pieter Paulus, *Verhandeling over de vrage: in welken zin kunnen de menschen gezegd worden gelyk te zyn?* (Haarlem 1793), especially 187-214.
 46. A short initial discussion took place on 22 April 1797.
 47. P. Vreede (Mennonite), sitting of 22 May 1799.
 48. G.J. Schutte, *De Nederlandse patriotten en de koloniën* (Groningen 1974).
 49. At any rate, the abolition of slavery was reversed by Napoleon in 1802. Denmark was the first country to abolish slavery (1803). England abolished the slave trade in 1807 and slavery in 1833. France followed with a definitive ban on the slave trade in 1831 and a ban on the possession of slaves in 1848.
 50. The republic was a matter for men, as Rousseau had already made clear. The explanation was that the particular 'douceur et sagesse' of women – with which they ensured the maintenance of peace, justice and the general welfare ('le bonheur public') – was something that was exercised pre-eminently within families. As men simply couldn't do without women, this gave women a position of power. In fact, they made the decisions: 'Aimables et vertueuses Citoyennes, le sort de vôtre sexe sera toujours de gouverner le nôtre.' Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discours sur l'origine et les fondements de l'inégalité parmi les homes* (Paris [1755] 1965), 32. The much-cited opinion of Samuel Johnson also follows this line: 'Nature has given women so much power that the law has wisely given them little.'

51. Catherine Larrière, 'Le sexe ou le Rang? La condition des femmes selon la philosophie des Lumières' in *Encyclopédie Politique et Historique des Femmes* (Paris 1997), 169-203. A similar evaluation ('[After 1795] women were given a made-to-measure straitjacket that was laced more and more tightly') is to be found in Joost Kloek and Wijnand Mijnhardt, *1800. Blauw-drukken voor een samenleving* (The Hague 2001), 256. More generally, see Geneviève Fraisse, *Reason's Muse. Sexual Difference and the Birth of Democracy* (Chicago 1994) and Alyssa Goldstein Sepinwall, 'Robespierre, Old Regime Feminist? Gender, the late Eighteenth Century, and the French Revolution Revisited' in *The Journal of Modern History* 82 (March 2010), 1-29.
52. Dorinda Outram, *The Body and the French Revolution* (New Haven and London 1989), 124 ff; Jennifer Ngair Heuer, *The Family and the Nation* (Ithaca and London 2005). According to Heuer, formal exclusion largely took shape during the Napoleonic period, although the term 'citoyenne' remained one that continued to resonate with the plea for women, as individuals, to count among the members of the French nation: Heuer, *Family*, 197-202.
53. P.B.v.W., *Ten Betooge dat de Vrouwen behooren deel te hebben aan de Regeering van het Land* (Harlingen 1795). According to the historian G.A. Wumkes, *Stads- en dorpskroniek van Friesland* (Leeuwarden 1930-1934), referring to an item in the *Leeuwarder Courant* of 11 July 1801, this concerns the Mennonite minister Freerk Hoekstra of Harlingen. The latter also wrote *Leerreden over de gelijkheid der menschen* (1795, reprinted in 1801). With thanks to the staff of TRESOAR in Leeuwarden.
54. See Mart Rutjes, *Door gelijkheid gegrepen* (Nijmegen 2012), 147 ff.
55. In the Republic in the Golden Age, it was already the case that the husband and father of the family represented his family in public. See Artur Weststeijn, *De radicale republiek* (Amsterdam 2013), 73 ff.
56. J.B. Auffmorth (Reformed) and R.J. Schimmelpenninck (Reformed), sitting of 27 April 1796.
57. Betje Wolff, *Proeve over de opvoeding aan de Nederlandsche moeders* (Meppel and Amsterdam [1780] 1977).
58. Myriam Everard, 'In en om de (*Nieuwe*) Bataafsche Vrouwe Courant. Het aandeel van vrouwen in een revolutionaire politieke cultuur' in *Mededelingen van de Stichting Jacob Campo Weyerman* 24 (2001), 67-87; Claudette Baar-de Weerd, *Uw sekse en de onze. Vrouwen en genootschappen in Nederland en in ons omringende landen (1750-c.1810)* (Hilversum 2009).
59. On the shifting meaning of the term 'female citizen' (*burgeres*; which only related to political aspirations in the first phase of the revolution), see Myriam Everard and Mieke Aerts, 'De burgeres: geschiedenis van een politiek begrip' in Joost Kloek and Karin Tilmans, *Burger* (Amsterdam 2002), 173-229, especially 196. Here the observation is also made that at the beginning of the nineteenth century, 'burgerlijk' was largely another word for 'politics'. See also Eveline Koolhaas-Grosfeld, 'Voor man en maatschappij' in Grijzenhout et al., *Het Bataafse experiment*, 185-213.

60. See *De Bosatlas van de geschiedenis van Nederland* (Groningen 2011), 299, Map C.
61. Quoted in Eveline Koolhaas-Grosfeld, *De ontdekking van de Nederlander in boeken en prenten rond 1800* (Zutphen 2010), 166.
62. W.A. Ockerse, *Ontwerp tot eene algemeene characterkunde* (Utrecht and Amsterdam, three volumes, 1788-1797), III, VIII-XI. The work is available online at www.dbnl.org. On Ockerse: W. Frijhoff, 'Het zelfbeeld van de Nederlander in de achttiende eeuw: een inleiding' in *Documentatieblad werkgemeenschap achttiende eeuw* 24 (1992); Kloek and Mijnhardt, *1800. Blauwdrukken*, 230-232; Van Sas, *Metamorfose*, 303-313.
63. An early representative of this in the Netherlands was Johannes Le Francq van Berkhey (1729-1812), who published a *Natuurlyke historie van Holland* in nine volumes between 1769 and 1811. See Koolhaas-Grosfeld, *Ontdekking*, 91 ff.
64. E.O.G. Haitsma Mulier, 'De Bataafse mythe opnieuw bekeken' in *Bijdragen en Mededelingen betreffende de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, 111 (1996), 344-367.
65. Ockerse, *Ontwerp*, III, 45-46, 196 and 204.
66. Ockerse, *Ontwerp*, II, 261.
67. Ockerse, *Ontwerp*, III, 20.
68. Ockerse, *Ontwerp*, III, 293.
69. *Staatsregeling voor het Bataafsche Volk 1798* (Nijmegen 2005).
70. *Staatsregeling* Article 61.
71. C.H.E. de Wit, *De strijd tussen aristocratie en democratie in Nederland 1780-1848* (Heerlen 1965) and Prak, *Republikeinse veelheid*.
72. David Hume, 'On the Jealousy of Trade', available online at www.david-hume.org/texts. See also Koen Stapelbroek, 'Dutch Decline as a European Phenomenon' in *History of European Ideas* 36 (2010), 139-152.
73. Tom Pfeil, *Tot redding van het vaderland* (Amsterdam 1998); Henk Boels, *Binnenlandse Zaken* ('s-Gravenhage 1993).
74. P.L. van Kastelee, quoted in Jan Luiten van Zanden and Arthur van Riel, *Nederland 1780-1914* (Amsterdam 2000), 62-63.
75. Pfeil, *Redding*, 532.
76. Den Ouden, *De ontknoping*, 58; see also J.C.A. van Loon, *Het Algemeen Reglement van 1816* (Wageningen 1942). A summary can be found in Joris van Eijnatten and Fred van Lieburg, *Nederlandse religiegeschiedenis* (Hilversum 2005), 250-255.

2. A New Society is Being Created Here

1. Jacob van Lennep, *Dagboek. Van mijne reis; in 1823 door de provinciën Noord-Holland, Friesland, Groningen, Drenthe, Over-ijssel, Gelderland, Noord-Brabant, Utrecht en Zeeland gedaan, van den 28sten Mei tot den 2den September*; D. van Hogendorp, *Reis door de Noordelijke Provinciën der Nederlanden, in den zomer van 1823*. Both works are available at the website www.negentiende-

- eeuw.nl. Geert Mak and Marita Mathijsen have retold the diary of Van Lennep in Geert Mak and Marita Mathijsen, *Lopen met Van Lennep* (Zwolle 2000).
2. Van Lennep, *Dagboek*, entry of 5 July 1823.
 3. Van Lennep, *Dagboek*, entry of 6 July 1823.
 4. Anna Bezanson, 'The Early Use of the Term Industrial Revolution' in *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 36 (February 1922), 343-349; D.C. Coleman, *Myth, History and the Industrial Revolution* (London 1992), 1-42.
 5. Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (Harmondsworth [1790] 1969), 267.
 6. Benjamin Constant, 'De la liberté des anciens comparée à celle des modernes', in idem, *Écrits politiques* (Paris 1997), 589-619, quoted on 602. On the political-theoretical conceptualization of the importance of trade as a means to curb unbridled passions and lead to peaceful societies: Albert O. Hirschman, *The Passions and the Interests* (Princeton [1977] 1997) and Istvan Hont, *Jealousy of Trade* (Cambridge Mass. and London 2005).
 7. Vincent E. Starzinger, *Middlingness* (Charlottesville 1965).
 8. 'Understood broadly, "conservatism" was therefore not very theoretical. As such, it was the ideology of practical politics and diplomacy, with all the compromises and complications this entailed. It expressed itself in deeds and policies, not abstract theories': Michael Broers, *Europe after Napoleon* (Manchester and New York 1996), 19. The concept of 'productive virtue' as part of liberalism in a broad sense is derived from Boschloo, *Productiemaatschappij*.
 9. Although this idea was not completely absent. See Wilfried Uitterhoeve, *1813 – Haagse bluf* (Nijmegen 2013), passim.
 10. J.R. Thorbecke, 'Anton Reinhard Falck' [1860] in idem, *Historische Schetsen* ('s-Gravenhage 1872), reprinted in C.H.E. de Wit, *Thorbecke en de wording van de Nederlandse Natie* (Nijmegen 1980), 353-373, here 356.
 11. Van Sas, *Metamorfose*, 459 ff; Van den Berg and Vis, *De eerste honderdvijftig jaar* (Amsterdam 2013), 181 ff.
 12. The House of Orange, initially an 'alienating bone of contention', was now 'the slogan of union'. This was a wonder: 'it had existed for some time before it manifested itself': J.H. van der Palm in 1816, quoted in Van Sas, *Metamorfose*, 345.
 13. Van Sas, *Metamorfose*, 401-455; cf. C.A. Tamse and E. Witte (eds), *Staats- en natievorming in Willem I's Koninkrijk (1815-1830)* (Brussels and Baarn 1992).
 14. J.A. Bornewasser, *Kirche und Staat unter Wilhelm Friedrich van Oranien, 1802-1806* (Nijmegen 1956).
 15. For a reconstruction of the Congress of Vienna that is both readable and ironic, see: Zamoyski, *Rites of Peace*; for a careful reconstruction of the emergence of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands, see: N.C.F. van Sas, *Onze Natuurlijkste Bondgenoot* (Groningen 1985); in addition, on Prussia, see: Matthew Levinger, *Enlightened Nationalism* (Oxford 2000).

16. See Van Sas, *Metamorfose*, Van den Berg and Vis, *Eerste honderdvijftig jaar*, Tamse and Witte (eds), *Staats- en natievorming*.
17. J.G. baron Verstolk van Soelen, 'Rapport over de Buitenlandsche Staatkunde der Nederlanden, 23 januari 1829' in *Gedenkstukken der algemene geschiedenis van Nederland van 1795 tot 1840* ('s-Gravenhage 1905-1922), vol. IX, 2, 442-513; cf. Van Sas, *Natuurlijkste bondgenoot*, 232-239.
18. *Gedenkstukken* IX, 2, 467.
19. *Gedenkstukken* IX, 2, 483.
20. *Gedenkstukken* IX, 2, 459.
21. *Gedenkstukken* IX, 2, 457.
22. *Gedenkstukken* IX, 2, 511.
23. *Gedenkstukken* IX, 2, 512.
24. Emo Bos, *Souvereiniteit en religie* (Hilversum 2009), 161 and 232. See also Vincent Viaene, *Belgium and the Holy See from Gregory XVI to Pius IX (1831-1859)* (Brussels 2001).
25. P. Estié, *De stichting van een kerkgenootschap. Ontstaan en aanvaarding van het Algemeen Reglement van 1818 voor het bestuur der Evangelisch-Lutherse Kerk in het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden* (Amsterdam 1982), 164-165.
26. Nicholas Hope, *German and Scandinavian Protestantism 1700-1918* (Oxford 1995).
27. Bart Wallet, *Nieuwe Nederlanders* (Amsterdam 2007).
28. From a policy memo of 1818 by the most important civil servant in this area, J.D. Jansen, quoted in Estié, *Stichting van een kerkgenootschap*, 161.
29. The piece is printed in *Gedenkstukken* IX, 2, 319-324; see also J.A. Bornewasser, "'Het Credo... Geen reden van twist". Ter verklaring van een koninklijk falen (1826-1829)' in *Archief voor de geschiedenis van de Katholieke Kerk in Nederland* 1977, 234-287.
30. Helmut Walser Smith (ed.), *Protestants, Catholics and Jews in Germany, 1800-1914* (Oxford and New York 2001). Also see the detailed 'Mémoire sur la marche, l'esprit et l'état actuel de l'église réformée en Hollande, 3 mai 1840' by the French ambassador to Thiers in *Gedenkstukken* X, 2, 508-520 and 558, particularly 511.
31. Ricardo: 'In politics he is almost an advocate for absolute government; he has not any correct notions of representative government, nor of the securities for freedom. On these points his views are quite crude, – he has read on these subjects, but he has not read enough, I have recommended one or two books to him but I do not think he will read them.' Quoted in Arie L. Molendijk, 'Tegen de tijdgeest. Isaäc da Costa's *Bezwaren* (1823), het Réveil en de Verlichting' in F.G.M. Broeyer and D. Th. Kuiper (eds), *Is 't waar of niet?* (Zoetermeer 2005), 18-37, here 26.
32. Isaac da Costa, *Bezwaren tegen den geest der eeuw* (Leiden 1823), 6; also available at the website www.dbnl.org.
33. Da Costa, *Bezwaren*, 85.
34. Da Costa, *Bezwaren*, 54.

35. Da Costa, *Bezwaren*, 58-59.
36. Molendijk, 'Tegen de tijdgeest'; also W.A. de Clercq, *Willem de Clercq (1795-1844)* (Amsterdam 1999), 159-161.
37. G.J. Schutte, *Het Calvinistisch Nederland* (Hilversum 2000), 115.
38. Bos, *Souvereiniteit*, 294 ff.
39. Schutte, *Het Calvinistisch Nederland*, 112.
40. G. Groen van Prinsterer, *De maatregelen tegen de Afgescheidenen aan het staatsregt getoetst* (Leiden 1837), 40.
41. Groen, *Maatregelen*, 23.
42. Groen, *Maatregelen*, 41.
43. Bos, *Souvereiniteit*, 349.
44. Bos, *Souvereiniteit*, 350.
45. Daniel L. Dreisbach, *Thomas Jefferson and the Wall of Separation between Church and State* (New York 2002).
46. W.A. Ockerse, *Ontwerp tot eene Algemeene Characterkunde* (Utrecht 1778), part I, 152.
47. Ockerse, *Ontwerp*, I, 154.
48. 'Mémoire sur la marche, l'esprit et l'état de l'église réformée en Hollande, 3 mai 1840' in *Gedenkstukken* x, 2, 508-520 and 558, here 514.
49. *Gedenkstukken* x, 2, 558.
50. *Gedenkstukken* x, 2, 515.
51. *Gedenkstukken* x, 2, 517.
52. O. Blaschke, 'Das 19. Jahrhundert: Eines Zweites Konfessionelles Zeitalter?' in *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 26 (2000), 38-75.
53. J.E. Elias, *Het geslacht Elias* ('s-Gravenhage 1937), 212.
54. Jeroen van Zanten, *Schielijk, Winzucht, Zwaarhoofd en Bedaard* (Amsterdam 2004).
55. Van Zanten, *Schielijk*, 40.
56. John Bowring, *Brieven geschreven op eene reize door Holland, Friesland en Groningen, voorafgegaan door Iets over de Friesche Letterkunde en gevolgd door Iets over de Hollandsche Taal en Letterkunde* (Leeuwarden 1830) [the translator's foreword is dated May 1829].
57. For Belgium: Els Witte, *De constructie van België 1828-1847* (Leuven 2006), 104 and passim, and idem, *Het verloren Koninkrijk* (Antwerp 2014); for the Netherlands: Van Sas, *Metamorfose*, 408 and passim.
58. A concise overview is to be found in Van Zanden and Van Riel, *Nederland 1780-1914* (Amsterdam 2000), 109 ff.
59. Van Zanden and Van Riel, *Nederland 1780-1914*, 204-205.
60. According to some historians, the period between 1750 and 1850 should be seen as the 'agrarian century': agriculture helped the Netherlands through its difficulties and made modernization possible. This also implied the political predominance of the (landed) nobility, under the leadership of the House of Orange. This perspective can be found in Arno Mayer, *The Persistence of the Old Regime* (London 1981). See Paul Brusse and Wijnand

- Mijnhardt, *Towards a New Template for Dutch History* (Zwolle and Utrecht 2011) and Wijnand W. Mijnhardt, 'De bloeiende eeuw. "Eeuw van verval" blijkt juist eeuw van groei' in *Geschiedenis Magazine* 47, 4 (June 2012), 14-19.
61. 1798 Constitution, Article 47; cf. Boschloo, *Productiemaatschappij*, 66-67.
 62. E.H. Kossmann, *De Lage Landen 1780/1980* (Amsterdam [1798] 1986) 1, 106; J.J. Westendorp Boerma, *J. van den Bosch als sociaal hervormer* (Groningen 1927) and idem, *Een geestdriftig Nederlander* (Amsterdam 1950).
 63. Gertrude Himmelfarb, *The Idea of Poverty* (New York [1983] 1985).
 64. J. van den Bosch, *Verhandeling over de mogelijkheid, de beste wijze van invoering, en de belangrijke voordeelen een Algemeene Armen-Inrigting in het Rijk der Nederlanden, door het vestigen eener Landbouwende Kolonie in deszelfs Noordelijk gedeelte* (Amsterdam 1818).
 65. Quoted in Westendorp Boerma, *Geestdriftig Nederlander*, 35. On life in these colonies: Wil Schackmann, *De proefkolonie* (Amsterdam 2006); Suzanna Jansen, *Het pauperparadijs* (Amsterdam 2008).
 66. *De Star*, vol. 8, 1826, opening report.
 67. The goal of the Society, according to Ockerse, was the creation of 'productive citizens of the State': *De Star* 1823, 499.
 68. Concerning the progressive element, see the translation of William Cobbett, *Cottage Economy*, included in *De Star* 1823 and the 'Levensbericht van den graaf de Saint Simon [obituary of the Count of Saint Simon]' in *De Star* 1842, 148-150. In addition, there is the characteristic attention to statistics; see *De Star* 1826, 779-794.
 69. Toon Horsten, *Landlopers. Vagebonden, verschoppelingen en weldadigheidskolonies* (Amsterdam 2013).
 70. Westendorp Boerma, *Geestdriftig Nederlander*, 187.
 71. In a letter of 31 July 1830 to J. van den Bosch, J.C. Baud quoted Minister A.W.N. van Tets van Goudriaan. *Briefwisseling tussen J. van den Bosch en J.C. Baud* (Utrecht 1956), II, 32.
 72. Letter from Van den Bosch to Baud, 4 June 1831, in *Briefwisseling Van den Bosch*, I, 93.
 73. Letter from Van den Bosch to Baud, 27 August 1831, in *Briefwisseling Van den Bosch*, I, 102-103.
 74. Van Zanden and Van Riel, *Nederland 1780-1914*, 220-225. Compare Janny de Jong, *Van batig slot naar ereschuld* ('s-Gravenhage 1989).
 75. Van Zanden and Van Riel, *Nederland 1780-1914*, 144.
 76. Sarane Alexandrian, *Le socialisme romantique* (Paris 1979), 63.
 77. Antoine Picon, *Les saint-simoniens* (Paris 2002), 211: 'Nous venons instituer en France la monarchie industrielle, comme Charlemagne a institué la monarchie militaire.'
 78. For a concise analysis: Albert Schrauwers, "'Regenten' (Gentlemanly) Capitalism: Saint-Simonian Technocracy and the Emergence of the "Industrialist Great Club" in the Mid-Nineteenth Century Netherlands' in *Enterprise and Society* 11 (2010), 753-783.

79. Van den Berg and Vis, *Honderdvijftig jaar*, 268 ff.
80. Letter of 23 December 1839 in *Gedenkstukken* x, 1, 535: 'It is my duty to offer your Lordship some remarks on the most important debate which has occurred for many years in this country, and from which many very considerable consequences will flow.
It does not involve a mere question of money, but a great constitutional principle. It is the commencement of an attempt on the part of the States General to compel the King to clear up all doubts on the constitution; to grant ministerial responsibility; to allow the a share in the government, and to give over the whole of the general revenue to their direction.'
81. Van den Berg and Vis, *Honderdvijftig jaar*, 278-279.
82. See also letter of the French ambassador of 21 December 1839 in *Gedenkstukken* x, 2, 482.
83. H. Box to Thorbecke, letter of 12 March 1840 in *De briefwisseling van J.R. Thorbecke* (The Hague 1975-2002) III, 380.
84. On the breaking of promises, in Thorbecke's opinion: *Gedenkstukken* x, 3, 134 [in message from Lottum to Frederik Willem IV, 18 July 1840]; on religious disputes and leading parliament up the garden path: letter from A.R. Falck to Thorbecke of 28 September 1837 and A.R. Falck to D.J. van Lennep of 24 February 1841 in A.R. Falck, *Brieven 1795-1843* ('s-Gravenhage 1857), 367 and 406.
85. Quoted in Bos, *Souvereiniteit*, 384.
86. Jeroen van Zanten, *Koning Willem II – 1792-1849* (Amsterdam 2013).
87. Van Zanten, *Schielijk*, 47; see also Jaap van Rijn, *De eeuw van het debat* (Amsterdam 2010).
88. The anonymously published booklet: *Schaduwtrekken der Natuurlijke, Wettige en gebruikelijke betrekkingen van de beide Geslachten tot elkander, in deze en vorige tijden* (Groningen 1822). Reviews in *Vaderlandsche Letteroefeningen* 1822, 561-565 and *Boekzaal der Geleerde Wereld en Tijdschrift voor de Protestantsche Kerken in het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden* 1822, 29-31.
89. Fenna Mastenbroek, 'De vrouw en de boeken' [1818] in J.P. de Keyser, *Nederland's Letterkunde* (Arnhem 1873) I, 346-348.
90. After a journey through the Netherlands in 1836, the French philosopher and educational reformer Victor Cousin wrote: 'In Holland there were no ideals anywhere. If it were not foolish to express oneself thus, I would say that in Holland, art, just like philosophy, the arts, morality, and politics, has something prosaic and bourgeois about it; everything is practical and is aimed at utility. [...] They are more of an honest than a great people'. Victor Cousin, *Over het openbaar onderwijs in Holland* (Amsterdam 1840), 9-10.
91. Ph.W. van Heusde, quoted in P.P. de Quay, *De genoegzaamheid van het natuurlijk gezond verstand* ('s-Gravenhage 2000), 109.
92. J.H. van der Palm, quoted in E.H. Kossmann, 'Hollandse middelmaat: de Gids 1837-1987' in idem, *Vergankelijkheid en continuïteit* (Amsterdam 1995), 47-59.
93. *Leeuwarder Courant* 13 March 1840.
94. *Briefwisseling Van den Bosch*, I, 93.

95. Cousin, *Over het openbaar onderwijs*, 10, see also 100-101.
96. *Briefwisseling Thorbecke*, III, 568.
97. Report by Lottum to Frederik Willem IV of 18 July 1840: 'Un des coryphées du parti doctrinaire est le professeur Thorbecke. Honnête, intègre, profondément instruit, très-actif et voulant le bien, il est l'homme le moins pratique et il peut par conséquent faire beaucoup de mal sans s'en douter. On pourrait le surnommer le Royer-Collard de la Hollande,' in *Gedenkschriften* x, 3, 133.
98. Van den Berg and Vis, *Honderdvijftig jaar*, 304.
99. Report by Lottum to Frederik Willem IV of 18 July 1840, *Gedenkschriften* x, 3, 137.

3. Everything is a Motley

1. See: 'Allocutie van Z.H. Paus Pius IX in het geheim consistorie gehouden den 7den Maart 1853' and 'Apostolische Brief van Zijne Heiligheid, waarbij het Bisschoppelijk Kerkbestuur in Holland wordt hersteld' in *De Katholiek. Gods-dienstig, geschied- en letterkundig maandschrift* XXIII [1853], 204-224 and 225-241.
2. Jurjen Vis and Wim Janse (eds), *Staf en storm* (Hilversum 2002); Piet de Rooy, "Een reuk ten dood". De Fakkel van het antipapisme in Nederland 1848-1865' in Conny Kristel et al. (eds), *Met alle geweld* (Amsterdam 2003), 60-77; Peter Jan Margry, "Jezuïetenstreken". De attributie van bedrog en de constructie van mythen in het Nederland van de negentiende eeuw' in *De Negentiende Eeuw* 28 (2004), 39-63; Annemarie Houkes, *Christelijke vaderlanders* (Amsterdam 2009), 25-46.
3. Dik van der Meulen, *Koning Willem III – 1817-1890* (Amsterdam 2013), 77 ff.
4. Addresses and speeches printed in *Boekzaal der Geleerde Wereld en Tijdschrift voor de Protestantsche Kerken in het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden* 1853, 500-514. For the report in the press, see the *Leeuwarder Courant* of 19 April 1853, among others. Also see G.J. Hooykaas, 'Koning Willem III en de grondwet in april 1853' in *Bijdragen en Mededelingen betreffende de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden* 109 (1994), 53-56.
5. Harriet Martineau, quoted in E.R. Norman, *Anti-Catholicism in Victorian England* (London 1968), 23.
6. D.G. Paz, *Popular Anti-Catholicism in Mid-Victorian England* (Stanford 1992).
7. Letter to the Duchess of Gloucester, 12 December 1850, in *The Letters of Queen Victoria*, II 1844-1853 (London 1908), 281: 'Sincerely Protestant as I always have been and always shall be, and indignant as I am at those who call themselves Protestants while they in fact are quite the contrary, I much regret the unchristian and intolerant spirit exhibited by many people at the public meetings. I cannot bear to hear the violent abuse of the Catholic religion, which is so painful and cruel towards the many good and innocent Roman Catholics.'
8. P.J. Margry, *Teedere Quaesties* (Hilversum 2000), 294-306.
9. *De Fakkel*, 24 March 1854.

10. D. Koorders, 'De Aprilbeweging' in *De Gids* 1854, 1-41, 330-366 and 595-667; here 665-666.
11. Thorbecke wondered in 1846 whether an irresolute nation was not doomed to fall: 'A fate that, with the concentration of all the forces that lie in the ordering of the new era, more or less threatens all small states. [...] Great reforms await us, I am convinced of that. But will they be our own work, or will they be the work of foreigners? Does this nation still have the power and the character that it deserves to be independent in more than in name only?' Quoted in J.C. Boogman, *Rondom 1848* (Bussum 1978), 44.
12. J.R. Thorbecke, 'Onze betrekking tot Duitschland' in idem, *Historische Schetsen* ('s-Gravenhage [1860] 1872), 19-22, here 21-22.
13. Natascha Doll, *Recht, Politik und "Realpolitik" bei August Ludwig von Rochau, 1810-1873* (Frankfurt am Main 2005).
14. Respectively: 'wir müßten nach Tatsachen, aber nicht nach Idealen rechnen' and 'nicht durch Reden und Majoritätsbeschlüsse werden die großen Fragen der Zeit entschieden – daß ist der Fehler von 1848 und 1849 gewesen –, sondern durch Blut und Eisen.' Quoted in Christian Graf von Krockow, *Bismarck* (Stuttgart 1997), 87 and 147.
15. Johan Hora Siccama, *Neerlands Volksaard en Staatswezen* (Utrecht 1844), 41-42.
16. P.J. Veth, 'De duitschers en de Nederlanden vóór den munsterschen vrede' [a response to the lecture of the same title by Amsterdam's Professor J. Bosscha] in *De Gids* 1847, 817-834. He tactfully refrained from pointing out that the father of independence, William of Orange, was 'of German blood'.
17. Minister P.P. van Bosse, quoted in J.C. Boogman, *Nederland en de Duitse Bond 1815-1851* (Groningen 1955), II, 422-423.
18. For a concise overview of this discussion, see André Beening, *Onder de vleugels van de adelaar* (Amsterdam 1994), 39 ff. On the extremely complicated place of Limburg between the Netherlands (it belonged to Belgium between 1830 and 1840) and Germany, see Eric Lemmens, *Aan Vorst en Vaderland gehecht, doch tevreden zijn ze niet* (Amsterdam 2004).
19. Boogman, *Rondom 1848*, 9.
20. G.W. Verweij Mejan, 22 August 1848, quoted in Boogman, *Nederland en de Duitse Bond*, part II, 600.
21. Hofdijk, *Ons voorgeslacht*, VI, 323-324.
22. *Briefwisseling Thorbecke*, VII, 486.
23. Multatuli [a pseudonym for E. Douwes Dekker], 'Een en ander over Pruisen en Nederland' in *Volledige Werken* (Amsterdam 1950-1995), IV, 9-91, here 54.
24. Himmelfarb, *Idea of Poverty*, 270-287.
25. Friedrich Engels, 'Die Lage der arbeitenden Klasse in England' in *Marx Engels Werke* (Berlin/FDR 1972), II, 229-506.
26. Engels, *Lage*, 351.
27. Benjamin Disraeli, *Sybil: or The Two Nations* (London [1845] 1970), 67; cf. Himmelfarb, *Idea of Poverty*, 489-503.

28. J.R. Thorbecke, 'Verhandeling over den invloed der machines op het samenstel der maatschappelijke en burgerlijke betrekkingen' (1830), quoted in Drentje, *Thorbecke* (Amsterdam 2004), 245. Also interesting is Anna Bezanson, 'The Early Use of the Term Industrial Revolution' in *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 36, 2 [1922], 343-349; D.C. Coleman, *Myth, History and the Industrial Revolution* (London 1992), particularly 1-42.
29. Thorbecke, 'Verhandeling', quoted in Boschloo, *De productiemaatschappij*, 168.
30. Van Zanden and Van Riel, *Nederland 1780-1914*, 243 [Table 6.1].
31. In 1840, 12 per cent of the population lived in cities with over 50,000 inhabitants; in 1899 this had risen to 27 per cent. See Rob van Engelsdorp Gastelaars, 'Verstedelijking in Nederland' in Ed Taverne and Irmin Visser (eds), *Stedebouw* (Nijmegen 1993), 174-179, Table 6.
32. Living conditions would only really deteriorate after 1870. See Auke van der Woud, *Koninkrijk vol sloppen* (Amsterdam 2010).
33. Frans van Poppel, Ingeborg Deerenberg, Judith Wolleswinkel-Van den Bosch and Peter Ekamper, 'Hoe lang leefden wij? Historische veranderingen in de levensduur en het doodsoorzakenpatroon' in CBS, *Bevolkingstrends*, 3rd quarter 2005, 13-25; Frans van Poppel and Ruben van Gaalen, 'Sociale klasse, sociale mobiliteit en sterfte in Nederland' in Ineke Maas, Marco H.D. van Leeuwen and Kees Mandemakers (eds), *Honderdvijftig jaar levenslopen* (Amsterdam 2008), 203-236.
34. *Rapporten van de gouverneurs in de provinciën 1840-1849* (Utrecht 1950), III, 387 ff.
35. Th. van Tijn, 'Het sociale leven in Nederland 1844-1875' in J.C. Boogman et al., *Geschiedenis van het moderne Nederland* (Houten 1988), 28-53.
36. 'Le développement graduel de l'égalité des conditions est donc un fait providentiel, il en a les principaux caractères: il est universel, il est durable, il échappe chaque jour à la puissance humaine; tous les événements, comme tous les hommes, servent à son développement. [...] Vouloir arrêter la démocratie paraîtrait alors lutter contre Dieu même, et il ne resterait aux nations qu'à s'accomoder à l'état social que leur impose la Providence.' Tocqueville, *De la démocratie en Amérique*, 7. This passage was quoted by G. de Clercq, 'Louis Blanc' in *De Gids* 1846, 7-33, 43-78, and 131-163, here 27. On the prediction of a Terror: idem, 'Louis Blanc', 28.
37. Joachim Remak, *A Very Civil War* (Boulder 1993).
38. Johannes Paulmann, 'Searching for a "Royal International". The Mechanics of Monarchical Relations in Nineteenth-Century Europe' in Martin H. Geyer and Johannes Paulmann (eds), *The Mechanics of Internationalism* (Oxford 2001), 145-176.
39. Jonathan Sperber, *The European Revolutions, 1848-1851* (Cambridge 1994).
40. This about-turn was also encouraged by the use of blackmail by radical democrats, who capitalized on the knowledge that the king had also been in contact with homosexuals. See Van Zanten, *Koning Willem II*, 545-554.

41. Boogman, *Rondom 1848*. Neither the drafting of the constitution nor the drumming up of parliamentary approval for it was exclusively Thorbecke's work; see: Van den Berg and Vis, *De eerste honderdvijftig jaar*, 313 ff.
42. M.J.F Robijns, *Radicalen in Nederland (1840-1851)* (Leiden 1967), 249 ff.
43. Boogman, *Rondom 1848*, 62-63. A good example: between 1814 and 1957, *all* of the royal commissioners were from the nobility. Note from C.O.A. baron Schimmelpenninck van der Oije. On the increasingly middle-class origins of MPs: J.Th.J. van den Berg, *De toegang tot het Binnenhof* (Weesp 1983), particularly 47, 121 and 133-134.
44. It is also notable that in this period, there was a fall in close contact between the House of Orange and the leaders of major enterprises. Initially, under the instigation of William II and William III, a network of training programmes for senior engineers was created, where personnel were trained for key positions in government (in particular, public works and the railways) and business. The Royal Academy in Delft, for example, was founded by William II and was visited on an almost weekly basis by William III. See Ronald van Raak, *In naam van het volmaakte* (Amsterdam 2001), 117 ff. See also Albert Schrauwers, "Regenten" (Gentlemanly) Capitalism: Saint-Simonian Technocracy and the Emergence of the "Industrialist Great Club" in the Mid-Nineteenth Century Netherlands'. Various members of the royal family were involved in major projects, such as the Paleis voor Volksvlijt and the North Sea Canal; but they did not play an important role in the construction of the railways, for example. See Guus Veenendaal, *Spoorwegen in Nederland van 1834 tot nu* (Amsterdam 2008), 217-219. The political role of William III was limited considerably by the liberals, and the same was also true for his economic significance: higher education was regulated by Thorbecke and the railways would be built by the state. Modernization, which had started under royal patronage, would be completely taken over by an oligarchy (one that was largely Amsterdam-based), with a 'core elite' of 35 people in 1886. See Huibert Schijf, *Netwerken van een financieel-economische elite* (Amsterdam 1993), 120 [Table 6.4].
45. For the exact procedures, see Lodewijk Blok, *Stemmen en kiezen. Het kiesstelsel in Nederland in de periode 1814-1850* (Groningen 1987).
46. There is a substantial literature on the concept of representation. Here, the following were drawn upon: Hanna Fenichel Pitkin, *The Concept of Representation* (Berkeley 1967); Bernard Manin, *The Principles of Representative Government* (Cambridge 1997); F.R. Ankersmit, *Political Representation* (Stanford 2002); Henk de Smaele and Jo Tollebeek (eds), *Politieke representatie* (Leuven 2002); Nadia Urbinati, *Representative Democracy. Principles and Genealogy* (Chicago 2006); Sonia Alonso, John Keane and Wolfgang Merkel (eds), *Representative Democracy* (Cambridge 2011).
47. *Leeuwarder Courant* 21 November 1848.
48. William III was a loose cannon. The British ambassador reported to his government that William III's actions stemmed from 'ignorance of the world and of mankind, on which ignorance has been engrafted a considerably

- dose of Russian despotism...' Letter from E.C. Disbrowe to Palmerston of 10 August 1849, quoted in Boogman, *Rondom 1848*, 82. The last remark refers to the fact that William III was the grandson, on his mother's side, of the extremely bizarre Tsar Paul I. Since then, strange behaviour on the part of members of the House of Orange has been put down to 'Russian blood'.
49. Turpijn, *Mannen van gezag*.
 50. Letter of 7 June 1872, Groen to Kuyper and 10 June 1872, Kuyper to Groen in *Briefwisseling van Mr. G. Groen van Prinsterer met Dr. A. Kuyper 1864-1876* (Kampen 1937), 185-186.
 51. *De Fakkel*, 16 August 1850.
 52. *De Fakkel*, 1 July 1853, 16 June 1854 and 6 February 1857.
 53. R.J. Fruin, 'Het antirevolutionaire staatsrecht van Groen van Prinsterer ontvouwd en beoordeeld' in idem, *Verspreide Geschriften*, x ('s-Gravenhage [1853 and 1854] 1905), 76-238, here 81. Compare the warning from a supporter of Groen, H.J. Koenen: 'I am a great supporter of Stahl. But surely we cannot applaud that semi-Catholic Lutheranism without renouncing our cause?' Quoted in W.G.F. van Vliet, *Groen van Prinsterers historische benadering van de politiek* (Hilversum 2008), 61.
 54. 'La liberté individuelle, je le répète, voilà la véritable liberté moderne.' Benjamin Constant, 'De la liberté des Anciens, comparée à celle des Modernes' in idem, *De la liberté chez les Modernes* (Paris 1980), 491-515, here 509. See also: Cornelis Anne den Tex, 'Oude en nieuwe vrijheid' [originally c. 1824] in De Keyser, *Neerland's Letterkunde*, 396-399.
 55. G.A. Kelly, *The Humane Comedy* (Cambridge 1992), especially 'Constant versus Tocqueville', 39-84; cf. Seymour Drescher, *Dilemmas of Democracy* (Pittsburg 1968), 42 ff.
 56. 'Ainsi, non seulement la démocratie fait oublier à chaque homme ses aïeux, mais elle lui cache ses descendants et le sépare de ses contemporains; elle le ramène sans cesse vers lui seul et menace de le renfermer enfin tout entier dans la solitude de son propre coeur'. Tocqueville, *De la démocratie*, 612-614. Tocqueville noted that the term 'individualism' was very recent; the entry only appeared in the *Dictionnaire de l'Académie Française* in 1835.
 57. A.J. Van Dijk, 'Ongeloof en Revolutie' in C. Bremmer (ed.), *Een staatsman ter navoring* (n.p. [The Hague], n.d. [1977]), 181-190; J.W. Kirpestein, *Groen van Prinsterer als belijder van Kerk en Staat in de negentiende eeuw* (Leiden 1993); Roel Kuiper, *"Tot een voorbeeld zult gij blijven"* (Amsterdam 2001) and Van Vliet, *Groen van Prinsterers historische benadering van de politiek*.
 58. G. Groen van Prinsterer, *Ongeloof en Revolutie* (Leiden 1847), 3.
 59. Burke quoted in Michael Burleigh, *Earthly Powers* (London 2005), 121.
 60. Groen, *Ongeloof en Revolutie*, 180.
 61. Groen, *Ongeloof en Revolutie*, 242-243.
 62. Groen, *Ongeloof en Revolutie*, 253. Here he quoted Tocqueville, *De la démocratie en Amérique*, 11.
 63. Groen, *Ongeloof en Revolutie*, 254-255.

64. Groen, *Ongeloof en Revolutie*, 203.
65. In view of the organic laws, the structure of the government (the division between national, provincial and municipal authorities) is still described as the 'house of Thorbecke'. We do not know when this meaning was attached for the first time. In 1887, Multatuli – in his *Idee 1050d* – used 'the house of Thorbecke' mainly to refer to the multitude of uncritical admirers and political followers of Thorbecke. With thanks to N.C.F. van Sas for this reference.
66. Kirpestein, *Groen van Prinsterer*, 97-103, here 101; cf. Ido de Haan, *Het beginsel van leven en wasdom* (Amsterdam 2003), 70-77.
67. De Haan, *Beginsel van leven en wasdom*, 77-87.
68. Mr. G. Groen van Prinsterer, *De Anti-Revolutionnaire en confessionele partij in de Nederlands Hervormde Kerk* (Goes [original French edition 1860] 1954).
69. Kirpestein, *Groen van Prinsterer*, 151 [martyr], 76 [Thorbecke quote], 155 [stranger]. See also the remark by Thorbecke in *Handelingen Tweede Kamer* 24 September 1851: 'He supposes that he is in exclusive possession of divine truth'.
70. *Briefwisseling Thorbecke*, VII, 486.
71. Respectively: Thomas Nipperdey, *Deutsche Geschichte 1800-1866* (Munich 1984), 290 and S. Stuurman, *Wacht op onze daden. Het liberalisme en de vernieuwing van de Nederlandse staat* (Amsterdam 1992), 160.
72. 'Der Liberalismus war zuerst und zuletzt eine Verfassungsbewegung': Nipperdey, *Deutsche Geschichte*, 286-300, here 297.
73. Michael Walzer, 'Liberalism and the Art of Separation' in *Political Theory* 12 [August 1984], 315-330.
74. [C.J. Fortuijn,] 'Liberalismus, door Mr. T.M. Roest van Limburg Leiden, P.H. van den Heuvel' in *De Gids* 1838, 303-313.
75. In a remark in 1822: 'ein eigenthümliches von Allen übrigen verschiedenes durch sich selbst nach dem Gesetz seiner Individualität (das heisst *frei*) sich gestaltendes und wirkendes Wesen'. Quoted by Drentje, *Thorbecke*, 130.
76. *Briefwisseling Thorbecke*, V, 469-470.
77. J.A. Bornewasser, 'Thorbecke en de kerken' in *Bijdragen en Mededelingen betreffende de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden* 87 [1972], 375-395. Also see Thorbecke's 'Aantekeningen over G. Groen van Prinsterer' in *Briefwisseling Thorbecke*, VI, 544-547 and 557-559.
78. Drentje, *Thorbecke*, 353-355.
79. Drentje, *Thorbecke*, 476-479 and 484-486.
80. Thorbecke, 'Verslag van de Grondwetscommissie' of 11 April 1848 in: *Briefwisseling Thorbecke*, V, 516-520, here 517.
81. J.R. Thorbecke, 'Over hedendaagsch staatsburgerschap' [1844] in idem, *Historische Schetsen*, 84-96, reprinted in De Wit, *Thorbecke en de wording van de Nederlandse Natie*, 266-278.
82. This explains why these two variants have to be kept analytically separate: Shirley M. Gruner, *Economic Materialism and Social Moralism* (The Hague 1973), 101-110.
83. Thorbecke, 'Over het hedendaagsch staatsburgerschap', 92-95.

84. Blok, *Stemmen en kiezen*, 258-261.
85. In 1850, 80,000 people were entitled to vote in a population of more than 3 million inhabitants. The expansion of the electorate was mainly a consequence of population growth: Gert van Klinken, *Actieve burgers* (Amsterdam 2003), 25.
86. Van Riel and Van Zanden, *Nederland 1780-1914*, 308-309.
87. H.J. Broers, 'De cholera' in De Keyser, *Neerland's Letterkunde*, 1, 688-694, here 693-694.
88. Multatuli, 'Idee 451' in *Volledige Werken*, III, 74-148, here 119, 144 and 146-147.
89. Ute Frevert, "*Mann und Weib, und Weib und Mann*." *Geslechter-Differenz in der Moderne* (Munich 1995), 40-132, here 112.
90. Christopher Lasch, *Haven in a Heartless World* (New York 1975).
91. Peter Gay, *Education of the Senses* (Oxford 1984) and idem, *The Tender Passion* (Oxford 1986). The legislative process was more unequivocal: 'Revisions of the law in country after country testify to the tenacity of the patriarchal ideal and a systematic denial of realities'. Peter Gay, *The Cultivation of Hatred* (London [1993] 1995), 364.
92. G.W. Vreede argued for the right to vote 'on behalf of the so long oppressed, charming half of the female sex' in his pamphlet *De regtstreeksche verkiezing tot de vertegenwoordiging bestreden* (Amsterdam 1848), 11. He referred to two predecessors: Herman Tollius, *Nederland's staatsgebreken en derzelver geneesmiddelen* (1797) and Johan Meerman, *De burgerbyke vryheid in hare heilzame, de volks-vrijheid in haar schadelyke gevolgen voorgesteld, inzonderheid met betrekking tot dit gemeenebest* (1793).
93. Betsy Hasebroek, *Twee vrouwen* (Haarlem 1840), especially 69-70 and 201-202.
94. Anonymous, 'Er zijn Armen te Parijs en elders' in *De Gids* 1850, 232-250.
95. This well-known description of politics is from David Easton, *The Political System* (New York 1953).
96. Multatuli, 'Een en ander over Pruisen en Nederland' [1867] in *Volledige Werken*, IV, 61.
97. Multatuli, 'Divagatiën over zeker soort van liberalismus' [1870] in *Volledige Werken*, V, 327-383, here 359.
98. Alex Schulman, 'Gothic Piles and Endless Forests: Wollstonecraft between Burke and Rousseau' in *Eighteenth Century Studies* 41 (Autumn 2007), 41-54 refers to Wendy Gunther-Canada, 'The Politics of Sense and Sensibility: Mary Wollstonecraft and Catherine Macaulay Graham on Edmund Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France*' in Hilda L. Smith (ed.), *Women Writers and the Early British Tradition* (New York 1968), 126-127.
99. The most important explanation for this slowness, particularly in comparison with England and the United States, is the lack of a sizeable middle class formed by an 'evangelical revival'. Moreover, there was no strong pro-slavery movement, which would have been able to drum up protest and indignation. It was also because the abolition of slavery had been expected since 1842; the rest of the time was needed for the implementation of this: Janse, *De afschaffers* (Amsterdam 2007), 126-127.

100. Van Goor, *De Nederlandse koloniën*, 244; cf. P.C. Emmer, *De Nederlandse slavenhandel 1500-1850* (Amsterdam 2000).
101. Seymour, *Abolition* (Cambridge 2009).
102. H.C. Millier, 'De inhuldiging en een wapenschild. Eene nabeschouwing' in *De Gids* 1849, 721-735.
103. Janse, *Afschaffers*, 51-127, 'humanitarian narrative' 101.
104. W.R. baron van Hoëvell, *Slaven en vrijen onder de Nederlandsche wet* (Zaltbommel 1854), 1-2.
105. Multatuli to Mrs. Bekking, 28 September 1859: Multatuli, *Volledige Werken*, x, 62; cf. J.J. Rochussen to J. van Lennep of 21 November 1859, in which he is described briefly as 'the Dutch Beecher Stowe': Multatuli, *Volledige Werken*, x, 130. One of the strongest arguments against the cultivation system was inspired by not so much by Multatuli, but through the reading of *L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution* (1856) by Tocqueville: P.J. Veth, 'Onze koloniale staatkunde' in *De Gids* 1865, 385-422.
106. Tristan Haan, *Multatuli's legioen van Insulinde* (Amsterdam 1995).
107. Janse, *Afschaffers*, 302.
108. Van Sas, *Metamorfose*, 459 ff.
109. Burke in 1774, quoted by F.D. Parsons, *Thomas Hare and Political Representation in Victorian Britain* (Basingstoke 2009), 49.
110. Already during the American War of Independence, John Adams argued that representation must be 'an exact portrait, in miniature, of the people'. See Pitkin, *Concept of Representation*, 60. The comparison with photography (which had just been developed into a manageable technique) first appears to have been made in England in the 1860s. See Pierre Rosanvallon, *Le peuple introuvable. Histoire de la représentation démocratique en France* (Paris 1998), 103.
111. John Stuart Mill, *Considerations on Representative Government* (London [1861] 1867), 59.
112. For the debate on the different voting systems: Parsons, *Thomas Hare*.
113. Parsons, *Thomas Hare*, 91-92.
114. Parsons, *Thomas Hare*, 174.
115. Lord Robert Cecil in 1864, quoted in Parsons, *Thomas Hare*, 94.
116. *Briefwisseling Thorbecke*, v, 531-532.
117. Turpijn, *Mannen van Gezag*, 86.
118. J. de Bosch Kemper, *Handleiding tot de kennis van het Nederlandsche staatsregt en staatsbestuur* (Amsterdam 1865), 427.
119. Turpijn, *Mannen van gezag*, 55-77.
120. Turpijn, *Mannen van gezag*, 70-72.
121. C. Busken Huet, 'Mr. Groen van Prinsterer' [1870] in *Litterarische Fantasien en Kritieken* (Haarlem 1873), III, 118-128, here 119.
122. Allard Pierson, 'Oudere Tijdgenooten', part III in *De Gids* 1883, 92-130, here 109 and 117.
123. J.T. Buys, 'Staatkundige beschouwingen' in *De Gids* 1850, 251-268, here 266.

124. J. Heemskerk, 'Het anti-revolutionaire staatsregt in Nederland', part I in *De Gids* 1853, 481-502, here 482.
125. J.T. Buys, 'Misverstand' in *De Gids* 1865, 84-111, here 94.
126. H. te Velde, *Stijlen van leiderschap* (Amsterdam 2002), 37-43.
127. J.R. Thorbecke, 'Narede' in idem, *Parlementaire Redevoeringen* (Arnhem 1907), VI, I-XX, here XII-XIII.
128. R. Fruin, 'Politieke moraliteit' [1864] in *Verspreide Geschriften*, X, 239-290, here 255.
129. Buys, 'Misverstand', 110.
130. Stefan Collini, 'The Idea of "Character" in Victorian Political Thought' in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 35 (1985), 29-50.
131. Henk te Velde, 'Van grondwet tot grondwet' in Remieg Aerts et al. (eds), *Land van kleine gebaren* (Amsterdam 2013), 109-194, especially 154.
132. Ron de Jong, *Van standspolitiek naar partijloyaliteit* (Hilversum 1999).
133. See Henry van Meerbeke's comic novel about elections, *Zóó wordt men lid van de Tweede Kamer* (Amsterdam [1869] 1870).
134. In London it had already been customary for the opposition to sit on the benches to the left of the speaker since 1733. The contrast between 'left' and 'right' as an indication of political views goes back to the French States General, where from 1789 the conservatives had sat to the right of the speaker. After 1848 this custom was adopted in Prussia, with, just as in Paris, a group in the middle that wished to be seen as neither of the right nor the left. In the Batavian Republic, members' places were determined by a lottery.
135. J.H. von Santen, 'Sinds wanneer zit men links en rechts in de Tweede Kamer. Een raadselachtig probleem' in *De Negentiende Eeuw* 26 (2002), 123-142.
136. Turpijn, *Mannen van gezag*, 130-131.
137. Groen van Prinsterer, *Ongeloof en Revolutie*, XI.
138. S. van Houten, *Vijfentwintig jaar in de Kamer (1869-1894)* (Haarlem 1903) I, 36-37.
139. J.T. Buys, 'Een casus positie' in *De Gids* 1874, 49-85, here 60-61.
140. Buys, 'Een casus positie', 83.

4. Following the American Example

1. Evolution was 'a change from an indefinite, incoherent homogeneity to a definite, coherent heterogeneity': Herbert Spencer, *First Principles* (London [1862] 1872), 360; 'the transformation is literally always towards greater complexity, or increased multiformity, or further heterogeneity', ibidem, 330.
2. Allard Pierson, *Adriaan de Mérial* (Arnhem 1866), I, 90.
3. J. Vree, *Kuyper in de kiem* (Hilversum 2006), 148.
4. A. Kuyper, *Eenvormigheid, de vloek van het moderne leven* (Amsterdam 1869), 26.
5. Kuyper, *Eenvormigheid*, 29.

6. Kuyper, *Eenvormigheid*, 30.
7. Kuyper, *Eenvormigheid*, 31.
8. Kuyper, *Eenvormigheid*, 36.
9. Jeroen Koch, *Abraham Kuyper* (Amsterdam 2006).
10. Kuyper, *Eenvormigheid*, 28.
11. This interpretation is based on Karl Mannheim, *Konservatismus* (Frankfurt am Main 1984) and Michael Freeden, *Ideologies and Political Theory* (Oxford 1996).
12. J.T. Buys, 'Avontuurlijke politiek' in *De Gids* 1868, 51-79, here 76-77.
13. 'Well would it be for England if Conservatives voted consistently for every thing conservative, and Liberals for every thing liberal. [...] The Conservatives, as being by the law of their existence the stupidest party, have much the greatest sins of this description to answer for...': Mill, *Considerations*, 56. Later he added to clarify this: 'I did not mean that Conservatives are generally stupid; I meant, that stupid persons are generally Conservative'. *Hansard 1803-2005*: HC Deb 31 May 1866 vol. 183 c 1591.
14. Adam Ferguson, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society* (Edinburgh [1767] 1966), 25.
15. Klaus von Beyme, 'Partei, Faktion' in *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* (Stuttgart 1978), IV, 677-733.
16. Burke: a 'party is a body of men united in promoting by their joint endeavours the national interest upon some particular principle in which they are all agreed'. Quoted by Richard Hofstadter, *The Idea of a Party System* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1969), 32.
17. Hofstadter, *Idea of a Party System*, 55.
18. 'La chose m'a paru plus plaisante que sérieuse': Tocqueville, *De la démocratie*, 624.
19. 'Aux États-Unis, on s'associe dans les buts de sécurité publique, de commerce et d'industrie, de morale et de religion. Il n'y a rien que la volonté humaine désespère d'atteindre par l'action libre de puissance collective des individus': Tocqueville, *De la démocratie*, 213.
20. 'La science de l'association est la science mère; le progrès de toutes les autres dépend des progrès de celle-là': Tocqueville, *De la démocratie*, 625.
21. Tocqueville, *De la démocratie*, 218.
22. Although Tocqueville did not see that it would actually happen the opposite way: political parties in the United States took control of a large number of diverse organizations and institutions in order to strengthen their power and authority. Civil society thereby did not control politics; on the contrary, the opposite was the case. Only in the second half of the nineteenth century, after numerous legal cases in the highest courts, would a shaky balance be achieved in the relationship between the political order on the one hand and organizations, associations and institutions in free society on the other. See Johann N. Neem, *Creating a Nation of Joiners* (Cambridge [Mass.] 2008).
23. This does not imply that no 'parties' could be distinguished in the National Assemblies at the end of the eighteenth century. See Oddens, *Pioniers in*

- schaduwbeeld*, 195 ff. According to later language use, however, here it concerned political 'currents [*richtingen*]' with a more or less institutionalized form of political cooperation between representatives. There were not yet any modern parties (with members, a governance structure and an office).
24. J.A.O. Eskes, *Repressie van politieke bewegingen in Nederland*; in addition Bos, *Souvereiniteit en religie*.
 25. This draws on Habermas, *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit*; see also Craig Calhoun (ed.), *Habermas and the Public Sphere* (Cambridge [Mass.] and London 1992). For a vision that puts Habermas' statements into perspective, see Harold Mah, 'Phantasies of the Public Sphere: Rethinking the Habermas of Historians' in *The Journal of Modern History* 72 [March 2000], 153-182. For the historical-political background: Christina von Hodenberg, 'Konkurrierende Konzepte von "Öffentlichkeit" in der Orientierungskrise der 60er Jahre' in Matthias Frese, Julia Paulus and Karl Teppe (eds), *Demokratisierung und gesellschaftlicher Aufbruch. Die sechziger Jahre als Wendezeit der Bundesrepublik* (Paderborn et al. 2005), 205-226.
 26. W.W. Mijnhardt and A.J. Wichers (eds), *Om het Algemeen volksgeluk* (Edam 1985), 359-361; cf. Bernard Kruithof, *Zonde en deugd in domineesland* (Groningen 1990).
 27. A. Kagchelland and M. Kagchelland, *Van dompers en Verlichten* (Delft 2009).
 28. An overview of non-ecclesiastical Protestant associations can be found in Van Eijnatten and Van Lieburg, *Nederlandse Religiegeschiedenis*, 297-299; in addition: Houkes, *Christelijke vaderlanders*.
 29. Ralph Waldo Emerson in 1844, quoted by John L. Thomas, 'Romantic Reform in America, 1815-1865', in *American Quarterly* 17 [Winter 1965], 656-681, here 651.
 30. J.I.A. Helsloot, *Vermaak tussen beschaving en kerstening* (Amsterdam 1995); Oscar Westers, *Welsprekende burgers* (Nijmegen 2003); Janse, *Afschaffers*.
 31. R. Laurence Moore, *Selling God* (New York and Oxford 1994).
 32. Janse, *Afschaffers*, 59-62.
 33. *Woordenboek der Nederlandsche Taal* on CD-ROM, entry on 'politics'; Hofdijk, *Ons voorgelacht*, VI, 245.
 34. Janse, *Afschaffers*, 194-196.
 35. Janse, *Afschaffers*, 258.
 36. A. Kuyper, *De "Nuts"-beweging* (Amsterdam 1869).
 37. A. Kuyper, *Het Calvinisme. Oorsprong en waarborg onzer Constitutioneele Vrijheden* (Amsterdam 1874), 5 and 44.
 38. Abraham Kuyper, *"Het Beroep op het Volksgeweten"* (Amsterdam 1869), 24.
 39. Kuyper, *Beroep*, 6.
 40. Kuyper, *Het Calvinisme. Oorsprong en waarborg*, 44.
 41. Abraham Kuyper, *Het Calvinisme. Zes Stone-lezingen*, (Soesterberg 2002), 113.
 42. Kuyper, *Het Calvinisme. Zes Stone-lezingen*, 116-117.
 43. Translator's note: from 1816 there was a Reformed Church (Hervormde Kerk), and its members were known as 'hervormden' (reformed). Kuyper

spoke for the orthodox members of this Church and would eventually split from the Hervormde Kerk to form the Gereformeerde Kerk (a name that also means 'Reformed Church', but that refers to the original name of the Church as it was founded during the Reformation). The members of this latter Church were called 'gereformeerden'.

44. *De Fakkel* 24 March 1854; see Peter van Rooden, *Religieuze regimes* (Amsterdam 1996), 169-199.
45. Pitrim Sorokin, *Contemporary Sociological Theories* (New York and London 1928).
46. A. Kuiper, *Souvereiniteit in eigen kring* (Amsterdam 1880), 12.
47. Kuiper, *Souvereiniteit*, 17.
48. Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, 186.
49. Quotation from the *New York Spectator* of 23 August 1831 in Tocqueville, *De la démocratie*, 359.
50. Unnamed newspaper, quoted in *Het Nieuws van den Dag* 2 January 1899; this opinion persists in reformed circles: John Bolt, *A Free Church, a Holy Nation* (Grand Rapids 2001).
51. A. Kuiper, *Varia Americana* (Amsterdam 1899), 131 ff.
52. Goffe Jensma, *Het rode tasje van Salverda* (Leeuwarden 1998), especially 115-130.
53. Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Capital 1848-1875* (London [1975] 2008), 70-87; Osterhammel, *Die Verwandlung der Welt*, 1012-1037.
54. Letter from Kuiper to Groen 17 June 1817 in *Briefwisseling Groen met Kuiper*, 144.
55. M. Ostrogorski, *Democracy and the Organization of Political Parties* (New York [1902] 1970), 1, 585.
56. J.C. Bluntschli, *De politieke partijen* (Amsterdam 1870), 3.
57. D.J. Mom Visch [review of Bluntschli] in *Vaderlandsche Letteroefeningen* 1870, 112-129, here 113.
58. Mom Visch, review, 119.
59. 'Das Politische hat ein spezifisch deutsches Pathos weltanschaulicher-philosophischer Tiefe, die deutsche Parteien sind Weltanschauungsparteien': Thomas Nipperdey, 'Über einige Grundzüge der deutschen Parteigeschichte' in Ernst-Wolfgang Böckenförde and Rainer Wahl (eds), *Moderne deutsche Verfassungsgeschichte (1815-1918)* (Cologne 1972), 237-257, here 237-238.
60. Nipperdey, 'Grundzüge', 237, cf. 255.
61. Letter from Groen to Kuiper of 10 January 1870 in *Briefwisseling Groen met Kuiper*, 113-115.
62. Robert Wuthnow, *Communities of Discourse* (Cambridge [Mass.] 1989).
63. Rienk Janssens, 'Antirevolutionaire organisatievorming 1871-1879' in George Harinck, Roel Kuiper and Peter Bak (eds), *De Antirevolutionaire Partij 1829-1980* (Hilversum 2001), 53-72, here 66; Rienk Janssens, *De opbouw van de antirevolutionaire partij, 1850-1888* (Hilversum 2001).
64. Van Klinken, *Actieve burgers*, 116.
65. A. Kuiper, *Ons Program* (Amsterdam [1879] 1892), 76 and 26.

66. A. Kuyper, *Liberalisten en joden* (Amsterdam 1878).
67. J.C.H. Blom and J.J. Cahen, 'Joodse Nederlanders, Nederlandse joden en joden in Nederland (1870-1940)' in J.C.H. Blom et al. (eds), *Geschiedenis van de joden in Nederland* (Amsterdam 1995), 247-310, especially 285.
68. Kuyper, *Ons Program*, 397-399.
69. Kuyper, *Ons Program*, 406-407.
70. J.R. Thorbecke, 'Over het hedendaagsch staatsburgerschap' [1844] in Thorbecke, *Historische schetsen*, 84-96, here 84 and 92.
71. Tocqueville, *De la démocratie*, 290.
72. 'In fact, the mass of the English people yield a deference rather to something else than to their rulers. They defer to what we may call the *theatrical show* of society. A certain state passes before them; a certain pomp of great men; a certain spectacle of beautiful women; a wonderful scene of wealth and enjoyment is displayed, and they are coerced by it': Walter Bagehot, *The English Constitution* (London [1867 and 1872] 1974), 236.
73. Bagehot, *English Constitution*, 53 and 236-237.
74. Bagehot, *English Constitution*, 8; cf. J.R. Pole, 'Walter Bagehot on Deference: An American Source?' in *American Nineteenth Century History* 2 (Summer 2001), 104-109.
75. Stefan Collini, Donald Winch and John Burrow, *That Noble Science of Politics* (Cambridge 1983), 180-181.
76. J.T. Buys, 'Onze Kieswet' in *De Gids* 1869, 345-371, here 346.
77. Kuyper, *Ons Program*, 3.
78. Van Klinken, *Actieve burgers*, 88.
79. J.J. Huizinga, *J.J. Heemskerk Azn.* (Harlingen 1973), 101-104.
80. S. van Houten in April 1871 in the House of Representatives: S. van Houten, *Vijfentwintig jaar in de Kamer (1869-1894)* (Haarlem 1903), 1, 159. Note that this was a reiteration of the argument that Thorbecke had already made in 1844.
81. B. Bymholt, *Geschiedenis der Arbeidersbeweging in Nederland* (Amsterdam [1894] 1976), 196-197 and 268-270.
82. W.H. Vliegen, *De dageraad der volksbevrijding* (Amsterdam 1902), 1, 127-143, here 142.
83. Van Klinken, *Actieve Burgers*, 87-98.
84. For a comparison between Gladstone and Kuyper: Te Velde, *Stijlen van leiderschap*, 55-103.
85. For the manner in which Kuyper invited the Catholics to collaborate (on the basis of 'shared basic principles') and at the same time kept them at a distance (because this was hindered by the 'blood of the martyrs', as well as the pretensions of 'an astute old man in Rome'), see A. Kuyper, *Maranatha* (Amsterdam 1891), 14 ff.
86. See the short explanation of the working of the constituency voting system on the site www.parlement.com, page on 'Negentiende-eeuws districtenselsel in Nederland' (the nineteenth-century constituency voting system in the Netherlands).

87. G. Brom, *Schaepman* (Haarlem 1936), 45.
88. Van Klinken, *Actieve Burgers*, 99-105, 136-137, 159-161.
89. Quoted in G. Taal, *Liberalen en Radicalen in Nederland 1872-1901* (The Hague 1980), 104-105, 108.
90. Van Klinken, *Actieve Burgers*, 543.
91. Buys, 'Onze Kieswet', 351 and 346.
92. Ron de Jong, *Van standspolitiek naar partijloyaliteit* (Hilversum 1999).
93. Kuypers, *Ons Program*, 129-132.
94. In detail: Taal, *Liberalen en Radicalen*, 82-102, 230-373, 415-434; for a summary, Van Klinken, *Actieve burgers*, 190-193, 265-273, 279-284.
95. Aletta Jacobs, *Herinneringen* (Nijmegen [1924] 1978), 92-99.
96. Tak van Poortvliet 9 August 1893, *Handelingen Tweede Kamer* 1893-1894, 1790.
97. Taal, *Liberalen en Radicalen*, 101, 417, 432.
98. Aug. Gittée, 'De nieuwe Kieswet en de naaste verkiezingen in België' in *De Gids* 1894, 508-530; cf. Els Witte, Jan Craeybeckx and Alain Meynen, *Politieke geschiedenis van België van 1830 tot heden* (Antwerp 2005), 127-147.
99. For a short overview see Ruud Koole, *Politieke partijen in Nederland* (Utrecht 1995).
100. Van Klinken, *Actieve burgers*, 153.
101. Van Klinken, *Actieve burgers*, 313.
102. Margaret Lavinia Anderson, 'Interdenominationalism, Clericalism, Pluralism: The *Zentrumsstreit* and the Dilemma of Catholicism in Wilhelmine Germany' in *Central European History* 21 (Dec. 1988), 350-378.
103. Theo Heemskerk 24 November 1909, *Handelingen Tweede Kamer* 1909-1910, 410.
104. W.H. de Beaufort, *Dagboeken en aantekeningen* (The Hague 1993), 3.
105. De Beaufort, *Dagboeken*, 1038.
106. De Beaufort, *Dagboeken*, 148.
107. De Beaufort, *Dagboeken*, 263.
108. J.H. de Valckenier Kips, 'Het faillissement van het parlementair stelsel' [1908], quoted by A.A. de Jonge, *Crisis en critiek der democratie* (Assen 1968), 34.
109. De Beaufort, *Dagboeken*, 426.
110. De Beaufort, *Dagboeken*, 479.
111. Theo Heemskerk 24 November 1909, *Handelingen Tweede Kamer* 1909-1910, 416.
112. Among others, see the analysis by W.H. de Beaufort, 'Een deputatenvergadering' in *De Gids* 1889, 552-560.
113. De Beaufort, *Dagboeken*, 1040.
114. Ramalho Ortigão, *Holland 1883* (Utrecht [1885] 1964), 191.
115. De Beaufort, *Dagboeken*, 175-176, 323, 466-467.
116. R. Fruin, 'De drie tijdvakken der Nederlandsche geschiedenis' in R. Fruin, *Verspreide Geschriften*, I, 22-48, here 29.
117. Fruin, *Verspreide Geschriften*, I, 29-30.
118. J.R. Thorbecke, 'Narede' [1869] in J.R. Thorbecke, *Parlementaire Redevoeringen*, 1865-1866 (Deventer 1870), VII, v-xx, here xvii.

119. Willem Otterspeer, “Onze schamele kleinte”. Fruin en de omvang van het vaderland’, in Herman Paul and Henk te Velde (eds), *Het Vaderlandse Verleden. Robert Fruin en de Nederlandse geschiedenis* (Amsterdam 2010), 108-130, especially 116.
120. Jhr.mr. W.Th.C. van Doorn, 23 November 1909 *Handelingen Tweede Kamer* 1909-1910, 390. In this debate, reference was also made to the case of the ‘Roman Catholic association of goat breeders’ as a symbol of the way in which the nation was disintegrating into different (religious) communities. The prime minister, Theo Heemskerk (Anti-revolutionary) reacted to this concern with the statement that neither the House of Representatives nor the government had anything to do with such issues, in view of the rights of the association: after all, that was the essence of ‘our national liberty’: *Handelingen Tweede Kamer* 1909-1910 [24 November 1909], 416-417.
121. Henk te Velde, *Gemeenschapszin en plichtsbesef* (The Hague 1992), 121-161; J.C.H. Blom, ‘Vernietigende kracht en nieuwe vergezichten. Het onderzoeksproject verzuiling op lokaal niveau geëvalueerd’ in J.C.H. Blom and J. Talsma (eds), *De verzuiling voorbij* (Amsterdam 2000), 203-236, especially 203-207.
122. Cees Fasseur, *Wilhelmina. De jonge koningin* (Amsterdam 1998), 165 and 345 ff.
123. De Beaufort, *Dagboeken*, 36 and 37.

5. Justice and Love

1. Jan Willem Stutje, *Ferdinand Domela Nieuwenhuis* (Antwerp and Amsterdam 2012).
2. Dennis Bos, *Waarachtige volksvrienden* (Amsterdam 2001), 270-271; Christianne Smit and Dennis Bos, ‘Volkspaleizen voor de Jordaan. “Hier wordt in betere dingen geloofd” in Ido de Haan, Wichert ten Have, James Kennedy and Peter Jan Knegtman (eds), *Het eenzame gelijk* (Amsterdam 2009), 173-189 and Dennis Bos, ‘Een eigen huis. Rode burchten in Amsterdam’ in: *Onvoltooid Verleden* no. 4 (October 1998).
3. An address to the House of Representatives against this royal decree came to nothing: ‘But why should one expect anything else from *this* House? The States-Capital, the most immoral body in this country – and that’s saying something in a country that is rich in such bodies! – has remained true to its roots; having originated from money, it only speaks for the interests of the rich’. Quoted in B. Bymholt, *Geschiedenis der Arbeidersbeweging* (Amsterdam [1894] 1976), 329. On this refusal, see J. Charité, *De Sociaaldemocratische Bond als orde- en gezagsprobleem voor de overheid (1880-1888)* (The Hague 1972), 48-53.
4. *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 15 October 1891.
5. Stutje, *Ferdinand Domela Nieuwenhuis*, 193-198; cf. the critique of Stutje’s analysis by Bert Altena in *Het Parool* 6 July 2012.
6. Bart Tromp, *Het sociaaldemocratisch programma* (Amsterdam 2002), 382.

7. Fia Dieteren and Ingrid Peterman, *Vrije vrouwen of werkmansvrouwen?* (Utrecht 1984).
8. *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 19 August 1891.
9. *Nieuws van den Dag*, 8 September 1891.
10. *Nieuws van den Dag*, 16 October 1891; cf. *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 15 October 1891; Homme Wedman, 'De Sociaal-Demokratische Bond en de vrouwenstrijd' in *Onvoltooid Verleden* no. 8 (March 2000) and idem, "Gij hebt uw pen in gal gedoopt". De Sociaal-Demokratische bond en de vrouwenstrijd' in *Onvoltooid Verleden* no. 17 (April 2003).
11. The irony of history did not end here: in 1971, the church was used for Roman Catholic worship for the last time; after being used as a carpet centre for some years, in 1981 it was bought by the Dutch Islamic Foundation Fatih Amsterdam and converted into a mosque.
12. The constitution was no longer a programme for the future, as it had been in 1798 and 1848, but an expression of compromises made (as in 1917), and it would subsequently play a minor role in political debate. See Karin van Leeuwen, *Uit het spoor van Thorbecke* (Amsterdam 2013).
13. P.J.M. Aalberse (Catholic) in *Handelingen Tweede Kamer* 8 December 1904, 487. What he referred to as 'principles' was no longer limited to preserving the past, but was also focused on the future, as Aalberse argued in the same address: 'How will we be able to agree on directing the helm, when we cannot agree on the port to which we are sailing?', idem, 484. The statement of the social democrat Troelstra, who called Kuyper 'the most ideological ideologue in our country', must also be read in this light: P.J. Troelstra, *Theorie en beweging* (Amsterdam 1902), 3.
14. The mutual dependence of ideology and party would thus often prove a problem in this circle. For example, in 1902 the leader of the Social Democratic Workers' Party (Sociaal Democratische Arbeiderspartij, SDAP) would emphatically assert that *first* there would be a socialist movement and only *then* would the theory be developed. The party was thus not simply the 'incarnation, the manifestation of ideas', but had its own meaning and momentum. One should guard against theory getting ahead of the movement's capability, as it were. After all, this would bring the risk that the party would merely become a 'new philosophical sect': Troelstra, *Theorie en Beweging*, 3.
15. The term 'ideology' was coined in 1796 by the French philosopher Destutt de Tracy and aimed to distinguish the 'science of ideas' from metaphysics. Napoleon would succeed when he characterized 'ideologues' as people who attempted to derive laws from abstract principles, rather than taking account of the 'knowledge from the human heart and the lessons of history'. See Emmet Kennedy, "Ideology" from Destutt de Tracy to Marx' in *Journal of the History of Ideas* 40 no. 3 (July-September 1979), 353-368. Marx and Engels would subsequently point out the fact that an ideology usually refers to the justification of material interests. As a result of this critique from both the conservative and the socialist sides, in everyday speech ideology largely

- became a term to describe a risky illusion, a systematic misrepresentation of reality: see Raymond Williams, *Keywords* (London [1976], 1983), 153-157. In this book, it is used in a neutral sense, as an attempt to bring cohesion and order to the interpretation of reality: see Michael Freeden, *Ideologies and Political Theory* (Oxford [1996] 2008).
16. This is based on the work by Freeden, *Ideologies and Political Theory*, here 24 and 82.
 17. Ernest Renan, *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?* (Leiden [1882] 1994).
 18. The term 'autonomous morality' is derived from Janneke van der Heide, *Darwin en de strijd om de beschaving in Nederland 1859-1909* (Amsterdam 2009), especially 137-139.
 19. Karl Marx, *Zur Judenfrage* [1843] in Marx Engels, *Werke* (Berlin 1976), I, 347-377, particularly 356: 'Sie [Religion] ist nicht mehr der Geist des Staats, wo der Mensch – wenn auch in beschränkter Weise, unter besonderer Form und in einer besonder Sphäre – sich als Gattungswesen verhält, in Gemeinschaft mit andern Menschen, sie ist zum Geist der *bürgerlichen Gesellschaft* geworden, der Sphäre des Egoismus, des *bellum omnium contra omnes* [Krieges aller gegen alle]. Sie ist nicht mehr das Wesen der *Gemeinschaft*, sondern das Wesen des *Unterschieds*. Sie ist zum Ausdruck der *Trennung* des Menschen von seinem *Gemeinwesen*, von sich und den andern Menschen geworden – was sie *ursprünglich* war.'
 20. 'The Jewish question', Marx went on – who originated from a family of rabbis on both his father's and his mother's side – is the expression of this development, because the Jews worship a secular God: money. In this sense, Christians have become Jews and Judaism has become 'the practical application of Christianity'. Maybe this Hegelian argument did not promote anti-Semitism in socialist circles, but neither would it restrain it. On 22 August 1889, the journal of the SDB, *Recht voor Allen*, described the Jew as the 'incarnation of capitalism'. Later Dutch socialists would move closer to the position that had been taken in Germany, in which anti-Semitism was described as 'der Sozialismus der dumme Kerle'; it was a phenomenon that indicated the decline of bourgeois society and should be seen as a preliminary stage of the transition to socialism. See F. Bernstein, *Der Antisemitismus als Gruppenerscheinung* (Berlin 1926), in which he also judged anti-Semitism in Holland to be mild (he wrote the book in Rotterdam); cf. F.L. Carsten, *Eduard Bernstein 1850-1932* (Munich 1993), 55-57.
 21. C. Bellaar Spruyt, 'Natuurkundige phantasieën' in *De Gids* 38 (1874), I, 401-440, here 423.
 22. A. Kuyper, *Evolutie* (Amsterdam 1899), 11.
 23. José Harris, *Private Lives, Public Spirit* (London 1994), 176.
 24. Matthew 22:37-39.
 25. G.R. Searle, *Morality and the Market in Victorian Britain* (Oxford 1998).
 26. Gertrude Himmelfarb, *The De-moralization of Society* (New York 1995); cf. Te Velde, *Gemeenschapzin en plichtsbesef*.

27. Thomas L. Haskell, 'Capitalism and the Origins of the Humanitarian Sensibility' in *The American Historical Review* vol. 90 (1985), 339-361 and 547-566. For a critique of Haskell and a nuanced account, see M.J.D. Roberts, *Making English Morals* (Cambridge 2004), especially 11.
28. 'Heightened sensitivity to pain gains social significance, when society moves from a system of stratified relations into functional relations, as in the transition from the feudal to the market society. It will be argued therefore that democracy and the market cause heightened sensitivity to pain': Natan Sznaider, 'Pain and Cruelty in Socio-Historical Perspective' in *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society* 10 (1996), 331-354, here 332.
29. This rise of a 'humanitarian sensibility' – according to Haskell, closely linked to the rise of industrial capitalism – is seen by the sociologist Joas as part of a process of sacralization: 'eines Prozess, in dem jedes einzelne menschliche Wesen mehr und mehr und in immer stärker motivierender Weise als heilig angesehen und in diese Verständnis im Recht institutionalisiert wurde.' Hans Joas, *Sakralität der Person* (Berlin 2011), 18 and 142-143. In this context, see also the remarks of Durkheim: 'Cette personne humaine, dont la définition est comme la pierre de touche d'après laquelle le bien se doit distinguer du mal, est considérée comme sacrée, au sens rituel du mot pour ainsi dire. Elle a quelque chose de cette majesté transcendante que les Églises de tous les temps prêtent à leurs Dieux': Émile Durkheim, 'L'individualisme et les intellectuels', in *Revue bleue*, 4th series, x (1898) 7-13, here 9.
30. With this new 'sensibility', the middle classes were able to distinguish themselves from both the aristocracy and the lower classes. This also explains why, supported by Protestantism, it could become a 'habit' and went on to be part of bourgeois decorum. See V.A.C. Gatrell, *The Hanging Tree* (Oxford 1994), 240.
31. Walter Bagehot, *Physics and Politics* (London [1872] 1908), 27.
32. William Samuelson and Richard Zeckhauser, 'Status Quo Bias in Decision Making' in *Journal of Risk and Uncertainty* 1 (1988), 7-59.
33. The founding of associations (as expressions of 'civic activism') went in waves; a first wave occurred during the transition from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century, a second in the period between 1860 and 1870 (contemporaries spoke of 'a mania for associations' or a 'euphoria of association'), and a third took place at the end of the nineteenth century (as 'the paroxysm of associational activity'). See Philip Nord, 'Introduction' in Nancy Bermeo and Philip Nord, *Civil Society before Democracy* (Lanham 2000), XIII-XXXIII. For an overview of the development in England: Roberts, *Making English Morals*.
34. B. Kruithof, *Zonde en deugd in domineesland* (Groningen 1990).
35. Herman Schaepman, quoted in Jos van Wely, *Schaepman* (Bussum 1954), 409.
36. Émile Durkheim, *Le socialisme. Sa définition, ses débuts, la doctrine Saint-Simonienne* (Paris 1971), 37. Abraham Kuyper also referred to this: 'It is not the political game that draws them; they are not after power for power's sake; but for power as a means to improve their lot. They call for bread, and more than bread. They are of the opinion that of "Liberty, Equality,

- Fraternity", *Freedom* is meted out too sparingly, *Equality* always postponed, and *Fraternity* is lacking altogether'. Kuyper, *Maranatha*, 16.
37. A. Vermaas, S.W. Verstegen and J.L. van Zanden, 'Income Inequality in the Nineteenth Century; Evidence for a Kutznets Curve?' in: L. Soltow and J.L. van Zanden, *Income and Wealth Inequality in the Netherlands 1500-1990* (Amsterdam 1998).
 38. Westers, *Welsprekende burgers*, 263.
 39. Bos, *Waarachtige volksvrienden*, 83.
 40. Br. Christofoor, 'Oud-Zouaven helpen Ariëns en Pastoors' in *Brabants Heem* 14 (1962), 62-66.
 41. On the programme and the difference between the Dutch and German versions: Tromp, *Het sociaal-democratisch programma*, 50 ff.
 42. *Protokoll des Vereinigungs-Kongresses der Sozialdemokraten Deutschlands, abgehalten zu Gotha vom 22 bis 27 Mai 1875* (Leipzig 1875), 78-79; Tromp, *Het sociaal-democratisch programma*, 381-382.
 43. In a letter to a family member in 1894, the brother of Domela Nieuwenhuis described him as 'an *enfant terrible* engaged in the revival of the so-called patriots' party of the end of the previous century': Bert Altena (ed.), *'en al beschouwen alle broeders mij als den verloren broeder'* (Amsterdam 1997), 434.
 44. Here it concerned H. Gerhard: F. Domela Nieuwenhuis, *Van christen tot anarchist* (Amsterdam 1910), 57-58.
 45. J.M. Welcker, 'Ferdinand Domela Nieuwenhuis en de revolutie' in *Belgisch Tijdschrift voor Nieuwste Geschiedenis* 3:4 (1972), 271-284; Marx to Nieuwenhuis 22-2-1881 in Marx Engels, *Werke* (Berlin 1976), volume 35, 159-161; cf. Stutje, *Ferdinand Domela Nieuwenhuis*, 89-91.
 46. The discussion on this issue is brought together in Bob Jessop and Charlie Malcolm-Brown (eds), *Karl Marx's Social and Political Thought* (London and New York 1990), volume 3. For Marx, the problem of the state stemmed from his basic principle, namely that capitalism had caused a division between the human as an individual and the human as part of a society; or, in other words, between civil and political life. Socialism would ultimately have to get rid of this division. See Leszek Kolakowski, 'The Myth of Human Self-Identity: Unity of Civil and Political Society in Socialist Thought' in Leszek Kolakowski and Stuart Hampshire (eds), *The Socialist Idea* (London 1974), 18-35.
 47. Bos, *Waarachtige volksvrienden*, 262 and 267.
 48. Michael Mann, 'Sources of Variation in Working-Class Movements in Twentieth-Century Europe' in *New Left Review* 1/212 (July-August 1995), 14-54.
 49. 'Der Staat ist es, welcher die Funktion hat, diese Entwicklung der Freiheit, diese Entwicklung des Menschengeschlechts zur Freiheit zu vollbringen': Ferdinand Lassalle, 'Das Arbeiter-Programm. Über den besonderen Zusammenhang der gegenwärtigen Geschichtsperiode mit der Idee des Arbeiterstandes, 12 April 1862' in Lassalle, *Gesammelte Reden und Schriften* (Berlin 1919), II, 147-202, here 195 ff.
 50. John M. Maguire, *Marx's Theory of Politics* (Cambridge 1978), 7.

51. Pierre Musso, *Saint-Simon* (La Tour d'Aigues 2010), 194. Musso reports that this expression was coined by one of Saint-Simon's followers, Enfantin, but does not indicate a source. The quote that is usually attributed to Saint-Simon actually comes from Friedrich Engels: 'Wenn hierin die Erkenntnis, daß die ökonomische Lage die Basis der politischen Einrichtungen ist, nur erst im Keime sich zeigt, so ist doch die Überführung der politischen Regierung über Menschen in eine Verwaltung von Dingen und eine Leitung von Produktionsprozessen, also die neuerdings mit so viel Lärm breitgetretene "Abschaffung des Staates" hier schon klar ausgesprochen', in Friedrich Engels, 'Die Entwicklung des Sozialismus von der Utopie zur Wissenschaft', in Karl Marx/Friedrich Engels, *Werke* (Berlin 1962), XIX, 189-201, here 195. The great problem with this expression is that it is difficult to see how 'things' can be administered without ruling 'people'. See Kolakowski, 'The Myth of Human Self-Identity', 29. On Saint-Simonism, among other theories: Ralf Bambach, *Der französische Frühsozialismus* (Opladen 1984). Here a credible case is made that Saint-Simon does leave parliament intact, but mainly as a passive institution that legitimizes decisions that have already been made by experts: Bambach, *Frühsozialismus*, 296-297 and 309. This movement met with little response in the Netherlands: W. Heyting, 'Saint-Simonisme in Nederland 1830-1840. G.Fr.J. van den Bergh en G.W. van der Voo' in *Bijdragen en Mededelingen betreffende de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden* 85 (1970), 315-336.
52. Edw. Bellamy, *In het jaar 2000* (Amsterdam [1890] 1906), XI. Not everyone was charmed by this utopia. A good friend of Van der Goes, Lodewijk van Deyssel, wrote: 'I have *never* read a book that I disliked so much as this little work'. What jarred on him, among other things, were the deep lack of understanding of everyday life and the all-encompassing discipline that characterized the society sketched out in the book. See Harry G.M. Prick, *Een vreemdeling op de wegen* (Amsterdam 2003), 100, 120-123, 133-143, here 122. Van Deyssel was right in his critique: in Bellamy's work, the nation had in fact become a gigantic enterprise; the population was transformed into an all-encompassing army of workers. Bellamy saw the organization of the army not as an analogy, but truly as a good example. See Stephen Coleman, 'The Economics of Utopia: Morris and Bellamy Contrasted': <http://www.morrisociety.org/publications/JWMS/sp89.8.2.Coleman.pdf>.
53. The second translation was made by 'Sylvia', the pseudonym that hid the identity of the 'red schoolmaster', Jan W. Gerhard. See Dennis Bos, 'De echte mannen van het vroege socialisme' in *Groniek* 36 (2002), 119-130.
54. A. Bebel, *De Vrouw en het Socialisme* (Amsterdam [1891] 1896), 336.
55. Quotes from the chapter 'De socialiseering der Maatschappij': Bebel, *De Vrouw*, 330-419.
56. Bebel, *Vrouw*, 467.
57. A. Kelly, *The Descent of Darwin* (Chapel Hill 1981).
58. 'Ich gestehe es offen, ich habe für das, was man gemeinhin unter "Endziel des Sozialismus" versteht, außerordentlich wenig Sinn und Interesse. Dieses

- Ziel, was immer es sei, ist mir gar nichts, die Bewegung alles.' Quoted in Carsten, *Eduard Bernstein*, 67.
59. Rosa Luxemburg was right when she pointed out that the consequence was that socialism was no longer 'objektiv notwendig'. Quoted in Heinrich August Winkler, *Der lange Weg nach Westen* (Munich 2000), 1, 291.
 60. The party secretary wrote to Bernstein about changing opinions: 'so etwas beschlieszt man nicht, so etwas sagt man nicht, so etwas tut man.' Quoted in Gerhard A. Ritter, 'Bernsteins Revisionismus und die Flügelbildung in der Sozialdemokratische Partei' in idem (ed.), *Deutsche Parteien vor 1918* (Cologne 1973), 342-357, here 347.
 61. What follows was inspired by Erich Matthias, 'Kautsky und der Kautsky-anismus. Die Funktion der Ideologie in der deutschen Sozialdemokratie vor dem ersten Weltkrieg' in *Marxismus-Studien* [Zweite Folge] 1957, 151-197.
 62. This argument is based on an analogy with what would happen in the sixties and inspired by Benet Davetian, *Civility* (Toronto 2009), especially 271 ff.
 63. The general idea was that a charismatic leader was essential in the first stage of political consciousness. See W. v.d. Vall, 'Leider en leiding. Een woord uit Noordholland Noord' in *Ir. J.W. Albarda* (Amsterdam 1938), 54-55; cf. Mary Kingsbury-Simkovitch, 'Friendship and Politics' in *Political Science Quarterly* 17 (1902), 189-205: 'First there is the seer, the preacher, the exhorter, the agitator if you will. In general, the function of this type is to see, preach, exhort, agitate, not to organize', here 200. One should remember that in a period with no extensive (and commercialized) amusement, the actions of political leaders – such as Kuyper, Schaepman, Nieuwenhuis and Troelstra – captured people's attention and in a way, they fulfilled the role that would later be fulfilled by pop stars: Marc Brodie, *The Politics of the Poor* (Oxford 2004), 119.
 64. Nieuwenhuis, *Van christen tot anarchist*, 270-354.
 65. P.W.A. Cort van der Linden, *Richting en beleid der liberale partij* (Groningen 1886), 88; cf. Johan den Hertog, *Cort van der Linden (1846-1935)* (Amsterdam 2007).
 66. P.W.A. Cort van der Linden, *De staathuishoudkunde als sociale wetenschap* (The Hague 1891), 27; cf. Van der Linden, *Richting en beleid*, 50 and 189.
 67. Cort van der Linden, 'Conservatief of progressief' in *De Gids* 57 (1893), 137-173, here 151-152 and 147-148.
 68. Daniel T. Rodgers, *The Work Ethic in Industrial America 1850-1920* (Chicago [1974] 1979), 32.
 69. James T. Kloppenberg, *Uncertain Victory* (Oxford 1986).
 70. Dirk Jan Wolffram, *Vrij van wat neerdrukt en beklemmt* (Amsterdam 2003); P. de Rooy, 'Bier, kunst en politiek: de Nieuwe Gids in Amsterdam' in *Jaarboek Amstelodamum* 81 (1989), 175-187. The common idiom was 'the language of statistics': statistics would give an insight into the 'character of the Dutch people', would reveal the full extent of the social problem and deliver 'knowledge of actual truths'. See Ronald van der Bie, *De macht van de statistiek* (Amsterdam 2009).

71. Daniel T. Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings* (Cambridge Mass. 1998), 29-30.
72. Marc Stearns, *Progressives, Pluralists, and the Problem of the State* (Oxford 2002), 56-57.
73. The (epistemological) rejection of an absolute truth or an established (political) goal was characteristic of this group. This implied uncertainty, for example, for Max Weber, who did not want to give in to anti-democratic cynicism and remained attached to a 'heroic pessimism'. The task was thus to find a balance between 'metaphysical hope and cultural despair, trying to connect their radical theory of knowledge to a politics of substantial but gradual reform by recovering the classical idea of virtue'. Kloppenberg, *Uncertain Victory*, 388 and 348.
74. For example, this was the opinion of Ibsen and Havelock Ellis. See Chris Nottingham, *The Pursuit of Serenity* (Amsterdam 1999), 173 ff.
75. Meine Henk Klijsma, *Om de democratie* (Amsterdam 2008), 76.
76. An important part of the SDAP's framework was strongly influenced by, or stemmed from, this progressive liberalism: Marc Adang, *Voor sociaal-democratie, smaakopvoeding en verheffend genot* (Amsterdam 2008), especially chapter one.
77. P.J. Troelstra, *Gedenkschriften*, II [*Groei*] (Amsterdam 1933), 124-125; although see the more sober tone of J. Saks' [a pseudonym for Pieter Wiedijk] recollections of this episode in J. Saks, *Kritische herinneringen* (Nijmegen [1929] 1977), 28 ff.
78. F.M. Wibaut, *Levensbouw* (Amsterdam 1936), 101.
79. K. Vorrink, *Een halve eeuw beginselstrijd* (Amsterdam 1945), 136.
80. Troelstra, *Gedenkschriften*, II [*Groei*], 157-158.
81. The memory of the SDB weighed heavily on the SDAP. Almost every 'leftist' critique – certainly if it was expressed in somewhat frank terms – was a reminder of the past, re-opened wounds that had hardly healed, and increased the feeling of rejection. This happened in 1909, for example, when an opposition group was expelled from the party (which then organized as the Social Democratic Party of the Netherlands, later to become the Communist Party of the Netherlands) and was repeated in 1932 (after which the Independent Socialist Party was founded). An important factor in this was that for a long time, the leadership of the SDAP was in the hands of a small, aging group that still had vivid memories of the SDB period. See H.F. Cohen, *Om de vernieuwing van het socialisme* (Leiden 1974), 231-233.
82. A number of years beforehand, this opinion had been formulated with clarity by Max Weber. In his view, the socialists were not yet ready to handle power, let alone seize it: 'es fehlen ihnen die großen Machtinstinkte einer zur politischen Führung berufenen Klasse.' With this, after the forced departure of Bismarck in 1890, the fate of the German nation was a more pressing problem than ever. Max Weber, 'Der Nationalstaat und die Volkswirtschaftspolitik' (1895) in Max Weber, *Gesammelte Werke* electronic edition *Schrfite zur Politik*.

83. Patricia van der Esch, *La Deuxième Internationale* (Paris 1957), 47; cf. the report on the congress in the *Leeuwarder Courant*, 22 August 1904.
84. R.J. Schotsman, *De parlementaire behandeling van het monetaire beleid in Nederland sinds 1863* (Amsterdam and The Hague), 20 ff.
85. Christianne Smit, *Omwille der billijkheid* (Amsterdam 2002).
86. Hans Knippenberg and Ben de Pater, *De eenwording van Nederland* (Nijmegen [1988] 1992), 162; cf. Vic Veldheer, *Kantelend bestuur* (Rijswijk 1994).
87. Wolffram, *Vrij van wat neerdrukt en beklemmt* and Stefan Couperus, *De machinerie van de stad* (Amsterdam 2009). See also G.W.B. Borrie, *F.M. Wibaut* (Amsterdam and Assen 1968) and idem, *Pieter Lodewijk Tak (1848-1907)* (Assen 1973).
88. Troelstra, *Gedenkschriften*, IV, 300-301.
89. Compare Brodie, *The Politics of the Poor*, 138-139.
90. J. Oudegeest, party chairman of the SDAP, at a meeting of the party executive on 7 May 1932, quoted in P. de Rooy, *Werklozenzorg en werkloosheidsbestrijding* (Amsterdam 1979), 91.
91. H. Roland Holst, *Kapitaal en arbeid in Nederland* (Nijmegen [1902] n.d.), 9.
92. Hendrik de Man, *Herinneringen* (Antwerp/Arnhem 1941), 44.
93. Quoted by Rudolf Vierhaus, 'Bürgerliche Hegemonie oder proletarische Emanzipation: der Beitrag der Bildung' in Jürgen Kocka (ed.), *Arbeiter und bürger im 19. Jahrhundert* (Munich 1986), 53-64, here 63.
94. Chris Nottingham, 'The Rise of the Insecure Professionals' in *International Review of Social History* 52 (2007), 445-475; cf. Ali de Regt, *Arbeidersgezinnen en beschavingsarbeid* (Meppel and Amsterdam 1984). In this context, on forcing back alcohol consumption among the working class: J.C. van der Stel, *Drinken, drank en dronkenschap* (Hilversum 1995). The core of the argument is that around 1900 workers lived in 'a world of personalities, not of principles'. New social interaction, not theory, determined the change in their behaviour: Kingsbury-Simkhovitch, 'Friendship and Politics'.
95. Annemarie V. Doornbos, *Maer denckt meer dan gij leest, En leest meer dan er staet* (Oisterwijk 2011), especially 325-408.
96. A.L.G. Bosboom-Toussaint, *Majoor Frans* (Amsterdam [1874] 1885), 328.
97. Bosboom-Toussaint to Potgieter in 1846: J. Bosboom Nz. (ed.), *Brieven van A.L.G. Bosboom-Toussaint aan E.J. Potgieter* (Rotterdam [1913] n.d.), 52; on the relationship with Reformed Protestantism: C. Tazelaar (ed.), *Onuitgegeven brieven van Mevr. Bosboom-Toussaint* (Zutphen [1934] n.d.), 12 (not a 'party woman'), 62-63 (ultimately not dedicating a book to Groen van Pinsterer) and 34 (Kuyper's 'thirst for power'). For her opinion on prominent women in the women's movement, see H. Reeser, *De huwelijksjaren van A.L.G. Bosboom-Toussaint 1851-1886* (Groningen 1985): she believed Mina Kruseman to be too hot-tempered and she was annoyed by the 'tyranny of weaknesses' in Elise van Calcar (in the words of her biographer), 405.
98. See the 'Album amicorum [friendship album]' that she received on the occasion of her 70th birthday in 1882, on the website of the Alkmaars Archief.

99. *De Tijdspiegel* 1878, 375; cf. Lisa Kuitert, 'Het debacle van een negentiende-eeuwse "vrouwenreeks". Bibliotheek van Nederlandsche Schrijfsters' in *Literatuur* 18 (2001), 150-159.
100. C. Busken Huet, *Litterarische Fantasien en Kritieken*, xvi (Haarlem n.d. [1883]), 144.
101. The same argument is made by Janet Radcliffe Richards, *The Sceptical Feminist* ([London 1980] Harmondsworth 1982); see the Bentham Lecture by Richards on YouTube.
102. John Stuart Mill, *Autobiography* (London [1873] 1879), 244.
103. John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor Mill, 'The Enfranchisement of Women' in *Westminster Review* 55 (1851), 289-311.
104. Himmelfarb, *De-moralization of Society*, 92-94.
105. Searle, *Morality and the Market*, 142.
106. This would unmistakably be the case towards the end of the nineteenth century, at least according to Lasch, *Haven in a Heartless World*.
107. Nancy F. Cott, *The Bonds of Womanhood* (New Haven 1977); Barbara Leslie Epstein, *The Politics of Domesticity* (Middletown 1981); Sarah A. Leavitt, *From Catherine Beecher to Martha Stewart* (Chapel Hill 2002).
108. H. Davidis, *De Huisvrouw* (Haarlem 1866), 1. See also A.J. Schuurman, 'Is huiselijkheid typisch Nederlands? Over huiselijkheid en modernisering' in *Bijdragen en Mededelingen Betreffende de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden* 107 (1992), 745-759 and Els Kloek, *Vrouw des huizes* (Amsterdam 2009).
109. P. de Rooy, 'Het zwaarste beroep. Succes en falen van het huishoudonderwijs in Nederland 1875-1940' in [*Amsterdams*] *Sociologisch Tijdschrift* 12 (October 1985), 207-248, here 234.
110. Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (London [1972] 2004), 83.
111. *Evolutie: veertiendaagsch blad voor de vrouw* 5 (1897), 12.
112. Searle, *Morality and the Market*, 160.
113. Many believe this was the reason for holding the first Women's Rights Convention in Seneca Falls in 1848, where a declaration was adopted that contained the well-known phrase: 'The history of mankind is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations on the part of man toward woman, having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over her.' This quote can be found at <http://ecssba.rutgers.edu/docs/seneca.html>.
114. Hanneke Hoekstra, *Het hart van de natie* (Amsterdam 2005), 117.
115. De Vries, *Mr. G. Groen van Prinsterer in zijne omgeving* (Leiden 1908), 45-46. The picture painted here echoes Genesis 2:18, in which woman is given to man as a 'helper'.
116. Petra De Vries, *Kuisheid voor mannen, vrijheid voor vrouwen* (Hilversum 1997); Annet Mooij, *Out of Otherness* (Amsterdam 1998); Martin Bossenbroek and Jan H. Kompagnie, *Het mysterie van de verdwenen bordelen* (Amsterdam 1998); Hoekstra, *Het hart der natie*.

117. Her father, Louis Drucker, who was from Frankfurt (Germany), had come to Amsterdam to live off private means. He started a relationship with Constantine Christine Lensing, with whom he had two daughters, including Wilhelmina. He subsequently had a relationship with a certain Thérèse Temme (who already had a son, George David), with whom he had another five children. He finally married her. On his death in 1884, the last five children were 'recognized'; Lensing's two daughters were 'illegitimate', however, and therefore did not share in an inheritance worth millions. Wilhelmina and her sister believed this to be scandalously unjust. To give vent to their opinion, in 1885 they wrote the novel *George David*, using a pseudonym. The novel disclosed the family history, hung on the sad fate of their half-brother, who had committed suicide. The novel was actually directed against a 'recognized' Drucker, Hendrik Lodewijk, a respected member of society, who had become a professor of Roman Law in Groningen aged 25. He bought up almost the entire first print-run of this novel. A second edition subsequently appeared in 1886, in which the authors rather unconvincingly countered the charge that they were using the book as blackmail. Two years later, H.L. Drucker changed tack and an understanding was reached on the inheritance, leaving Wilhelmina financially independent for the rest of her life. Myriam Everard, 'Wilhelmina Elisabeth Lensing' in *Biografisch Woordenboek van het Socialisme en de Arbeidersbeweging in Nederland*, IISG website; G. & E. Prezciez (pseudonym for the Temme/Drucker sisters), *David George* (Amsterdam 1885 and 1886), reprinted as *Wilhelmina Drucker en de Schandaalroman George David* (Amsterdam 1976).
118. The term 'pleziervleesch' is from Nellie van Kol (1893), quoted by Inge Polak, *Geloof mij vrij, mevrouw* (Amsterdam 1984), 21; cf. Gay, *Education of the Senses*, 210.
119. Fia Dieteren, 'Ferdinand Domela Nieuwenhuis en de vrouwen' in J. Frieswijk, J.J. Kalma and Y. Kuiper (eds), *Ferdinand Domela Nieuwenhuis* (Drachten and Leeuwarden 1988), 29-43.
120. Wilhelmina Drucker, 'De Vrije Vrouwenvereeniging' in *De vrouw, de vrouwenbeweging en het vrouwenvraagstuk*, II (Amsterdam 1914-1918), 136-149, quoted in Wantje Fritschy (ed.), *Fragmenten Vrouwengeschiedenis*, I (The Hague 1980), 115-130.
121. Although Edward Bellamy published a sequel to *Looking Backward* in 1897, entitled *Equality*, in which he wrote with much feeling that women were oppressed three-fold: by men, by property and by conventions. A Dutch edition appeared in the same year: *Gelijkheid* ('s-Gravenhage 1897).
122. *Het Nieuws van den Dag*, 14 April 1891.
123. *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 14 April 1896.
124. She said this in 1898, according to P.J. Troelstra, *Woorden voor Vrouwen* (Amsterdam 1898), 63.
125. Troelstra, *Woorden*, 65.
126. Frocks: *De Amsterdammer*, 26 April 1896.

127. Marianne Braun, 'Wilhelmina Druckers geschiedenissen van het gezag' in Myriam Everard and Ulla Janz (eds), *De minotaurus onzer zeden* (Amsterdam 2010), 128-146; cf. the interview with W. van Itallie-van Embden in *Nieuwe Rotterdamse Courant*, 16 February 1925, included in *Wilhelmina Drucker en de schandaalroman George David*, 115-120.
128. Although a number of women had traditionally had the right to vote in the governing bodies of district water boards (particularly as owners). In the discussion about the question of whether women would be given the right to vote for the Chambers of Labour, the Catholic J.W. van den Biesen noted on this point that Jacoba van Beieren (1401-1436) had been a member of a polder committee. 'But it should not be reasoned from this that women from the working class, who lack the faculty of cool reasoning – which is innate to man – should get the right to vote'. The Protestant J.E.N. Schimmelpenninck van der Oye added: 'It is often better for someone, particularly a weak person, to be protected than to protect themselves'. *Handelingen Eerste Kamer*, 29 April 1897, 360, 361. These opponents lost the argument.
129. *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 27 August 1898.
130. *Het Nieuws van den Dag*, 31 August 1898.
131. 'Der Umsturz des Mutterrechts war die weltgeschichtliche Niederlage des weiblichen Geschlechts. Der Mann ergriff das Steuer im Hause, die Frau wurde entwürdigt, geknechtet, Sklavin seiner Lust und bloßes Werkzeug der Kinderzeugung.' Friedrich Engels, 'Der Ursprung der Familie, des Privateigentums und des Staats' [1884] in Marx/ Engels, *Werke*, XXI (Berlin 1962), 36-84, here 61.
132. Troelstra, *Woorden voor Vrouwen*.
133. *Handelingen Tweede Kamer*, 7 November 1916, 398.
134. 'Nos femmes, et nos filles, sont élevées, gouvernées, par nos ennemis. Ennemis de l'esprit moderne, de la liberté, de l'avenir'. J. Michelet, *Le prêtre, la femme et la famille* (Paris [1845] 1862), 2.
135. *Handelingen Tweede Kamer*, 4 May 1899, 995; *Handelingen Tweede Kamer*, 7 November 1916, 397; Troelstra, *Gedenkschriften*, IV, 49.
136. Patricia Hilden, *Women, Work, and Politics* (Oxford 1993) and Ritter, 'Bernsteins Revisionismus', 348. In France, too, the relations would be extremely difficult. See Charles Sowerwine, *Les femmes et le socialisme* (Paris 1978).
137. Ulrika Jansz, *Denken over sekse in de eerste feministische golf* (Amsterdam 1990). Internationally, among (many) others: Karen Offe, 'Defining Feminism: A Comparative Historical Approach' in *Signs* 14 (Autumn 1988), 119-157; Nancy F. Cott, 'What's in a Name? The Limits of "Social Feminism"; or, Expanding the Vocabulary of Women's History' in *The Journal of American History* 76 (1989), 809-829; Seth Koven and Sonya Michel, 'Womanly Duties: Maternalist Politics and the Origins of Welfare States in France, Germany, Great Britain, and the United States, 1880-1920' in *American Historical Review* 95 (1990), 1076-1108; Margaret R. Hunt, *Women in Eighteenth Century Europe* (Harlow 2010).
138. Charlotte Perkins Stetson-Gilman, *De economische toestand der vrouw* (Haarlem 1900), 136.

139. Stetson-Gilman, *De economische toestand*, 118.
140. Among other things, the father of Cécile de Jong van Beek en Donk was a member of the Statistics Association and a key initiator of the Committee to Discuss the Social Question (Comité ter Bespreking van de Sociale Quaestie, 1870). She herself established a union to fight the gruesome fashion of using birds' feathers on hats.
141. Cécile Goekoop-de Jong van Beek en Donk, *Hilda van Suylenburg* (Amsterdam [1897] 1898), 192.
142. Goekoop-de Jong van Beek en Donk, *Hilda van Suylenburg*, 454; cf. Marianne Braun, 'Vrouwenleven' in Jan Bank and Maarten van Buuren, *1900 Hoogtij van burgerlijke cultuur* (The Hague 2000), 503-521 and Tessel Pollmann, introduction to the 1984 edition of *Hilda van Suylenburg*, 3-16.
143. Mineke Bosch, *Een onwrikbaar geloof in rechtvaardigheid* (Amsterdam 2005), 591 ff.
144. 'We hope to drive a wedge in party politics, by bringing a group of independent women to parliament. Independent women in the sense that they will be free from parties and party combinations, that they will not be bound to the routine orders of party administrations; and that, on all questions that touch on the general interest of the people, they will take account of nothing in the world other than those interests alone. And that we, to the extent that it is still possible in a system of proportional voting, shall elect *people* and not parties'. Catherine van Tussenbroek, *Het bestaansrecht der Algemeene Nederlandsche Vrouwen-Organisatie* (n.p. 1919), 15.
145. Monique Leijenaar and Hella van de Velde, 'Belangenbehartiging door vrouwen: vrouwenpartijen' in *Acta Politica* 24 (1989), 3-29.
146. J.C. Schokking, *De vrouw in de Nederlandse politiek* (Assen 1958), 207 and 214. See also Siân Reynolds, 'Lateness, Amnesia and Unfinished Business: Gender and Democracy in Twentieth-Century Europe' in *European History Quarterly* 31 (2002), 85-109.
147. According to a survey, in the 1950s, 42 per cent of men and 61 per cent of women were not interested in politics, and 52 per cent of families never discussed politics: Schokking, *De vrouw*, 36 and 42.
148. To give just three examples:
 - In 1892, the first Meeting for Persons with an Interest in the Nursing of the Sick was held. It built on initiatives by Anna Reynvaan (1844-1920) to make significant improvements in care for the sick. In 1893 the Dutch Nursing Union was founded to promote professionalization by means of standardized training and exams.
 - In 1891 the Amsterdam School of Domestic Science was set up. Four years later, it moved to substantial premises. The courses provided were intended to train girls to be efficient and responsible housekeepers, domestic servants and educators in domestic science. An attempt was thereby made to professionalize housekeeping. While this did not succeed as such, at any rate it could be stated that many

girls from working-class families had the opportunity to 'come out' to some extent there.

- Perhaps the most important initiative was the advancement of social work that occurred in this period. This was mainly due to the untiring efforts of Helene Mercier (1839-1910). Not only was she involved in the founding of the first 'volkshuis [house of the people]' in a working-class neighbourhood in Amsterdam in 1892 (more or less comparable with Toynbee Hall in London), but she was also one of the founders of the first professional training programme for social work, the Training Institute for Social Work, later the School for Social Work, in 1899.
- 149. Rodgers, *The Work Ethic*, 182-209; Siep Stuurman, *Wacht op onze daden* (Amsterdam 1992), 209-248.
- 150. Jan Romein, *Op het breukvlak van twee eeuwen* (Leiden and Amsterdam 1967), I, 316-346.
- 151. Harris, *Private lives*, 216 and 195; cf. Stefan Dudink, *Deugdzaam liberalisme* (Amsterdam 1997), 181 ff.
- 152. The confessionals would also admit women to 'public life', although preferably not to politics. An emphatic call was made for the aid of specific female qualities, essentially the maternal role, in the fight against the rapid encroachment of modern life. See, for example, Kuyper, *Ons Program*, to which a number of articles were added entitled, 'Antirevolutionair óók in uw huisgezin [Also antirevolutionary in your family]', 411 ff. This was imitated by the Catholics; see, for example, *Officieel verslag van den zeventen diocesanen katholiekendag in het bisdom Haarlem, gehouden te Alkmaar 2 september 1918*, in which Kuyper was quoted with approval (page 43). With this, family life in particular became part of the political culture in a wider sense.
- 153. Quoted by Jasper Loots, *Voor het volk* (Amsterdam 2004), 142.
- 154. Prime Minister Cort van der Linden was thereby referring explicitly to the work of Ostrogorski. See Loots, *Voor het volk*, 124-126 and Den Hertog, *Cort van der Linden*, 299-303.
- 155. Loots, *Voor het volk*, 134.

6. The Nation is Divided into Parties

1. *Wat de "A.V.R.O." voor haar luistervinken waard was* (Amsterdam 1930), 34.
2. *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 7 September 1930.
3. *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 15 September 1930.
4. Louwes was the chairman of the Groningen Agricultural Society, a member of the Royal Dutch Agricultural Committee and a member of the House of Representatives for the Liberal State Party, the 'Freedom League'. Quoted by J.H. de Ru, *Landbouw en maatschappij* (Deventer 1980), 85.
5. Six issues were published between 1914 and 1922.

6. Clara Wichmann, 'De moraal in de maatschappij der toekomst', in J.P. Lotsy (ed.), *De toekomst der maatschappij* (Amsterdam 1917), 259-298, here 272.
7. Eddie van Roon, *Lotgevallen* (n.p. 2013).
8. Dudink, *Deugdzaam liberalisme*, 77 ff.
9. Among other things, one can also point to the reduction of alcohol consumption (the Licensing Act of 1881) and the intensification of child protection (Child Protection Laws of 1901). Bert Wartena, *H. Goeman Borgesius* (Amsterdam 2003).
10. Max Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft* (Tübingen [1922] 1975), 124.
11. Arno Mayer, *The Persistence of the Old Regime* (London 1981); on the Netherlands: Marcel Hoogenboom, *Standenstrijd en zekerheid in Nederland* (Amsterdam 2004).
12. Guus Veenendaal, *Spoorwegen in Nederland van 1834 tot nu* (Amsterdam 2008); cf. Knippenberg and De Pater, *De eenwording van Nederland*.
13. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London [1983] 1991), 25 ff.
14. W.H. Vliegen, 22 December 1921, *Handelingen Eerste Kamer* 1921-1922, 163.
15. W.H. Vliegen, 22 December 1921, *Handelingen Eerste Kamer* 1921-1922, 163.
16. Patrick van Schie, *Vrijheidsstreven in verdrukking* (Amsterdam 2005), 263-264.
17. Koen Vossen, *Vrij vissen in het Vondelpark* (Amsterdam 2003).
18. See the overview 'Kleine partijen op religieuze grondslag' (1900-2000) in Van Eijnatten and Van Lieburg, *Nederlandse Religiegeschiedenis*, 306-307.
19. The Rev. C.A. Lingbeek of the Reformed (Orthodox) State Party, *Handelingen Tweede Kamer* 22 November 1933, 556.
20. See P.J. Oud, *Het jongste verleden* (Assen 1968), v (1933-1937), 165-167 and Vossen, *Vrij vissen in het Vondelpark*, 203-204.
21. The Rev. C.A. Lingbeek, *Handelingen Tweede Kamer* 22 November 1933, 556.
22. Based on K.F. Proost, 'De Radio' in K.F. Proost and Jan Romein (eds), *Geschiedelijk Nederland 1920-1940* (Amsterdam and Antwerp 1948), 47-73; J. de Boer, *Omroep en Publiek in Nederland tot 1940* (Leiden 1946) and Huub Wijffjes, *VARA* (Amsterdam 2009).
23. Five per cent was kept free for the VPRO, the small group of free-thinking Protestants.
24. G.A. Boon (Freedom League), *Handelingen Tweede Kamer* 27 May 1930, 2210 and 2232.
25. W.H. Vliegen (SDAP), *Handelingen Tweede Kamer* 28 May 1930, 2245.
26. J.R. Slotemaker de Bruïne (CHU), *Handelingen Tweede Kamer* 28 May 1930, 2236.
27. F.G.C.J.M. Teulings (RKSP), *Handelingen Tweede Kamer* 28 May 1930, 2242.
28. P.J. Oud (VDB), *Handelingen Tweede Kamer* 28 May 1930, 2253.
29. J.R. Slotemaker de Bruïne (CHU), *Handelingen Tweede Kamer* 28 May 1930, 2235.
30. R. Kranenburg (VDB), *Handelingen Eerste Kamer* 12 March 1930, 343.
31. J. Oudegeest (SDAP), *Handelingen Eerste Kamer* 12 March 1930, 346.
32. Leen d'Haenens and Frieda Saeys (eds), *Western Broadcast Models* (Berlin and New York 2007).

33. De Boer, *Omroep en publiek*, 94.

34.

	No. of members of broadcasting corporations, 1930	Distribution of seats in HoR in 1930	(total 100)
AVRO	c. 141,000	Anti-Revolutionary Party	12
KRO	c. 102,000	Christian Historical Union	11
NCRV	c. 90,000	Roman Catholic State Party	30
VARA	c. 70,000	Social Democratic Workers' Party	24
VPRO	c. 26,000	Total	77

Sources: De Boer, *Omroep en Publiek*, 115; www.parlement.com

35. W.P.J Pompe, *Bevrijding* (Amsterdam 1945), 111.

36. De Rooy, *Werklozenzorg en werkloosheidsbestrijding 1917-1940*, 185 ff.

37. See Maarten van der Linde, *Het visioen van Eijkman* (Hilversum 2003), 234-235.

38. J. Talsma, 'Verantwoording' in Blom and Talsma (eds), *De verzuiling voorbij*, IX-XI and 237 (note 1).

39. J. van den Tempel, *Handelingen Tweede Kamer* 30 November 1939, 628.

40. The term probably originates from a poem by P.A. de Génestet, 'Het schotje [the divider]' of 1850, in which he deemed it 'absurd and unfair' that in the Agnietenkapel, the lecture hall of the Athaenuem Illustre in Amsterdam, the bench of the theology professors should be partitioned by a divider, with professors from the Reformed Church on the one side, and the professors from the smaller denominations (such as Lutherans, Remonstrants and Mennonites) on the other:

'O Divider, miserable remnant / Of fratricidal struggle, of fratricidal hate!
Of long-dead feuds / Persecution of the conscience.'

41. Quoted in L. de Jong, *Het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden in de Tweede Wereldoorlog* ('s-Gravenhage 1969-1991), IV, 505.

42. A.A. de Jonge, *Crisis en critiek der democratie* (Assen 1968).

43. John Keane, *The Life and Death of Democracy* (London 2009), 567 ff. See also Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent* (London 1998).

44. J.A. Bornewasser, *Katholieke Volkspartij 1945-1980* (Nijmegen 1995), I, 21.

45. P.J.M. Aalberse, *Dagboeken 1902-1947* (The Hague 2006), 19.

46. Hoogenboom, *Standenstrijd en zekerheid*, 208 ff; De Rooy, *Werklozenzorg en werkloosheidsbestrijding*, 140.

47. Quoted in Robin te Slaa and Edwin Klijn, *De NSB* (Amsterdam 2009), 126.

48. Te Slaa and Klijn, *De NSB*, 23; cf. 657-658 for a summary of the research into the electorate.

49. N.P. Paschier and H.H. van der Wusten, 'Het electoraal succes van de NSB in 1935; enige achtergronden van verschillen tussen de gemeenten' in P.W.

- Klein and G.J. Borger (eds), *De jaren dertig* (Amsterdam 1979), 262-273; cf. Ron de Jong, Henk van der Kolk and Gerrit Voerman, *Verkiezingen op de kaart 1848-2010* (Utrecht 2011), 88-89.
50. Koos Vorrink in 1932, quoted by Van der Linde, *Het visioen van Eijkman*, 227.
 51. Wichert ten Have, *De Nederlandse Unie* (Amsterdam 1999), especially 72-74.
 52. Harold James, *The End of Globalization* (Cambridge Mass. 2001), 12.
 53. James, *The End of Globalization*, 13.
 54. Osterhammel, *Die Verwandlung der Welt* (Munich 2009), 118-126 and 730-735; cf. Paul Bairoch and Richard Kozul-Wright, 'Globalization Myths: Some Historical Reflections on Integration, Industrialization and Growth in the World Economy', *UNCTAD Discussion Paper* no.113 (March 1996) and John Boli and George M. Thomas (eds), *Constructing World Culture* (Stanford 1999).
 55. E. Heldring, 'Juist Nederland niet' in *De Gids* 77 (1913), 48-61, here 54. See also Ernst Heldring, *Herinneringen en dagboek* (Utrecht 1970), 178-180.
 56. Van Zanden and Van Riel, *Nederland 1780-1914*, 362-376; Jan Bieleman, *Geschiedenis van de landbouw in Nederland 1500-1950* (Meppel/Amsterdam 1992), 207 ff.
 57. Hans-Jürgen Puhle, *Politische Agrarbewegungen in kapitalistischen Industriegesellschaften* (Göttingen 1975); Leen van Molle, *Ieder voor allen* (Leuven 1990).
 58. P. Hollenberg, *Gerlacus van den Elsen ord.praem.* ('s-Hertogenbosch 1956), 44, cf. 65.
 59. J.D.J. Aengenent, *Leerboek der sociologie* (Leiden 1909), 126-136.
 60. See also Piet van Cruyningen, *Boeren aan de macht?* (Hilversum 2010) and M.G.M. Smits, *Boeren met beleid* (Nijmegen 1996).
 61. *Handelingen Tweede Kamer* 18 March 1918, 2012 ff.
 62. Vossen, *Vrij vissen in het Vondelpark*, 113-138.
 63. *Het Volk*, 19 September 1919; *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 22 January 1920.
 64. *Handelingen Tweede Kamer* 12 November 1919, 291.
 65. H.J. Lovink (CHU), *Handelingen Tweede Kamer* 1 March 1923, 1704.
 66. His death led to great unrest at the national and international levels; see, for example, the dissertation by J.A. de Koning, *Rathenau's denkbbeelden over onze samenleving* (Arnhem 1930).
 67. There was another detailed debate on summertime in parliament in 1935, without bringing a change to the existing regulation. The German occupation led to the inclusion of the Netherlands in the Central European time zone.
 68. Election results as percentages of votes cast:

Plattelandsbond/NBTM					
1917:	0.6	1925:	1.4	1933:	1.3
1922:	1.6	1929:	1	1937:	0.1

1917:	0.6	1925:	1.4	1933:	1.3
1922:	1.6	1929:	1	1937:	0.1

69. See Table 13 in De Ru, *Landbouw en maatschappij*, 355; see also Table III.5 in Bieleman, *Geschiedenis van de landbouw*, 227 and Table 6.3 in J.L. van

- Zanden and R.T. Griffiths, *Economische geschiedenis van Nederland in de 20e eeuw* (Utrecht 1989), 133.
70. De Ru, *Landbouw en maatschappij*, 100-105 and 345-349; cf. Te Slaa and Klijn, *De NSB*, 383-393 and passim.
 71. De Ru, *Landbouw en maatschappij*, 198.
 72. H.D. Louwes, quoted in H.M.L. Geurts, *Herman Derk Louwes (1893-1960)* (Groningen/Wageningen 2002), 141.
 73. Smits, *Boeren met beleid*, 99. On the about-turn of the liberals from free trade to protectionist measures: Van Schie, *Vrijheidsstreven in verdrukking*, 305-319.
 74. Van Zanden and Griffiths, *Economische geschiedenis*, 73; F.A.G. Keesing, *De conjuncturele ontwikkeling van Nederland en de evolutie van de economische politiek 1918-1939* (Nijmegen [1947] 1978), 172.
 75. 'La bourgeoisie actuelle n'est plus sûre de son droit. Elle n'est d'ailleurs sûre de rien et ne sait rien défendre.' Gustave le Bon, *Psychologie du socialisme* (Paris [1896] 1910), 457.
 76. A. Kuyper, *Ons instinctieve leven* (Amsterdam 1910), 14.
 77. Kuyper, *Ons instinctieve leven*, 34.
 78. H. Stuart Hughes, *Consciousness and society* (New York 1958).
 79. Te Velde, *Gemeenschapszin en plichtsbef*, 199.
 80. Te Velde, *Gemeenschapszin*, 218 ff.; Rudolf Dekker, Hendrik Henrichs and Gertjan Johannes, 'De vergeefse stormloop tegen zedenverwilderung en katekwaad' in *NRC Handelsblad*, 16 June 1984.
 81. *De Kampioen* 31 no. 26 (26 June 1914) and *Neerlandia* 18 (1914), available from the website www.dbnl.org.
 82. P.H. Ritter, 'Tucht en volkswelzijn' in *Ons Volk en de Tucht* ('s-Gravenhage 1922), 97-113.
 83. Hans Knippenberg, *De Religieuze Kaart van Nederland* (Assen/Maastricht 1992), 227-228 and Appendix 1.23 (page 276).
 84. J.P. Kruyt, *De onkerkelijkheid in Nederland* (Groningen/Batavia 1933).
 85. On 30 October 1933, Menno ter Braak wrote to E. du Perron: 'At the moment I'm also reading *The Revolt of the Masses* by Ortega y Gasset. It's very much worth reading; I can really recommend it to you! Very Nietzschean, but actually *opposed* to Spengler'. Du Perron was less enthusiastic, although he liked Ortega y Gasset's aversion to the mass mentality: 'Apart from that, I find his line of argument pedantic, his jokes often damned silly, and his "soul" somewhat that of bore'. Menno ter Braak and E. du Perron, *Briefwisseling 1930-1940* (Amsterdam 1964), II, 209 and 246.
 86. José Ortega y Gasset, *De opstand der horden* (The Hague [1932] 1962), 19, 32 and 114. This reminds one of Bill Clinton's comment in response to Sarah Palin's performance: 'We may be entering a sort of period in politics that's sort of fact free': website ABC News 21 September 2010.
 87. Huizinga, 'Nederland's Geestesmerk' [1934] in idem, *Verzameld Werk* (Haarlem 1950), VII, 279-312, and 'In de schaduwen van morgen' [1935] in idem, *Verzameld Werk*, VII, 313-428, here 286 and 392 respectively. For a negative

- assessment of Huizinga as a public intellectual ('banalities'): J. de Kadt, 'De deftigheid in het gedrang. Over wezen en waarde der Huizinga's' in J. de Kadt, *Een keuze uit zijn verspreide geschriften* (Amsterdam 1991), 83-106.
88. Huizinga, *Verzameld Werk*, volume VII, 299-312.
 89. H.W. Tilanus in 1933, quoted in Marcel ten Hooven and Ron de Jong, *Geschiedenis van de Christelijk-Historische Unie 1908-1980* (Amsterdam 2008), 169.
 90. Bernard Rulof, *Een leger van priesters voor een heilige zaak* (Amsterdam 2007), 227-228.
 91. Graham Wallas, *Human Nature in Politics* (London [1908] 1920).
 92. Hendrik de Man, *De psychologie van het socialisme* (Arnhem 1927), 114 and 307.
 93. Rulof, *Een leger van priesters*, 314.
 94. Rulof, *Een leger van priesters*, 249.
 95. Rulof, *Een leger van priesters*, 263.
 96. Here one should recall that unemployment often meant long engagements before marriage. For a novella on this problem, see Jef Last, *Liefde in de portieken* (The Hague 1932).
 97. A good example of this was the remark in the *A.V.R.O. Radiobode* of 24 May 1940: 'On the afternoon of Wednesday 15 May, which – if one pays attention to the date – was ten years after the announcement of the decision on broadcasting time!, a German occupying force presented itself at our studio in Hilversum'. Quoted by Dick Verkijk, *Radio Hilversum 1940-1945* (Amsterdam 1974), 65. See also Hans van den Heuvel, *Nationaal of verzuimd* (Baarn 1976), 63 ff.
 98. Jan Bank, *Opkomst en ondergang van de Nederlandse Volksbeweging (NVB)* (Deventer 1978); Madelon de Keizer, *De gijzelaars van Sint Michielgestel* (Alphen aan de Rijn 1979); Saskia Jansens, Geraldien von Frijtag Drabbe Künzel and J.C.H. Blom, *Een ruwe hand in het water* (Amsterdam 1993).
 99. Max Weber, 'Wissenschaft als Beruf' in idem, *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Wissenschaftslehre* (Tübingen 1988), 612; cf. Patrick Dassen, *De onttovering van de wereld* (Amsterdam 1999).
 100. De Keizer, *De gijzelaars*, 109.
 101. This led to great disappointment in some places (on the part of Queen Wilhelmina, among others). See Jac. S. Hoek, *Politieke geschiedenis van Nederland* (Leiden 1970).
 102. Nele Beyens, *Overgangspolitiek* (Amsterdam 2009).
 103. J. de Kadt, 'Grondslagen der democratie' [1941], in J. de Kadt, *Verkeerde Voorkeur* (Amsterdam 1948), 376-394, here 390.
 104. The symbol of this development *par excellence* was the report, *Social Insurance and Allied Services – Report by Sir William Beveridge* (1942). The goal, according to Beveridge, was 'not merely to abolish physical want, but to give a new sense of purpose to democracy, to promote national solidarity and to define the goals of war': José Harris, *William Beveridge* (Oxford 1977), 419.
 105. Romein, 'De vereenzaming van de mens. Proeve ener theorie van geestelijke crisis' [1946] in Jan Romein, *Historische lijnen en patronen* (Amsterdam 1971), 215-244, here 241-243.

106. *Maatschappelijke verwildering der jeugd* (The Hague 1952), 17-18.
107. Ido de Haan and Jan Willem Duyvendak (eds), *In het hart van de verzorgingsstaat* (Zutphen 2002); Harry Oosterhuis and Marijke Gijswijt-Hofstra, *Verward van geest en ander ongerief* (Houten 2008); cf. Leonie de Goei, *De psychohygiënisten* (Nijmegen 2001). Concerning the churches: in 1954 it was determined by Royal Decree that the separation of church and state by no means prevented the municipalities from subsidizing the building of churches.
108. Gerrit van Vegchel, *De metamorfose van Emmen* (Amsterdam/Meppel 1995).
109. Jaap den Hollander, 'Over koude en warme politiek. Distantie bij Plessner en Luhmann' in Dick Pels and Henk te Velde (eds), *Politieke stijl* (Amsterdam 2000), 107-127.
110. Gerard Mulder and Paul Koedijk, *H.M. van Randwijk* (Amsterdam 1988).
111. H.M. van Randwijk, 'Bevrijdingsfeest!' in *De Gids* 118 (1955), 315-321, here 317 and 318-319. 'Lift-ban': there was a ban on soldiers taking lifts that was sometimes enforced in a heavy-handed way. This even prompted questions in parliament in the spring of 1954. See Annex no. 6 to the *Handelingen Tweede Kamer* 1954-1955, 11.
112. Tietje de Vries, *Complexe consensus* (Hilversum 1996), 135 ff.
113. Daniel Bell, *The End of Ideology* (New York 1960), 400. This title was coined in 1951 by the historian H. Stuart Hughes: De Vries, *Complexe consensus*, 67 ff.; Giles Scott-Smith, 'The Congress for Cultural Freedom, the End of Ideology and the 1955 Milan Conference: "Defining the Parameters of discourse"' in *Journal of Contemporary History* 37 (July 2002), 437-455.
114. H. Stuart Hughes, 'Mass Culture and Social Criticism' in *Daedalus* 89 (Spring 1960), 388-393.
115. Henriëtte Roland Holst-Van der Schalk, *Een overgang tot het socialisme* (Amsterdam 1945), 51. In this vision lie the roots of something that Saint-Simon had not foreseen, namely the current 'industrial religion': 'Cette religion est l'administration managériale des hommes et le gouvernement financier des choses'. Musso, *Saint-Simon*, 205.
116. De Vries, *Complexe consensus*, 224 ff.
117. De Vries, *Complexe consensus*, 169.
118. David Riesman, *The Lonely Crowd* (New Haven/London [1950] 1976), 171. The term 'audience democracy' would be popularized some decades later by Bernard Manin, *The Principles of Representative Government* (Cambridge 1997) and Jos de Beus, *Een primaat van politiek* (Amsterdam 2001).
119. J. Perry, P.J. Knegtmans, D.F.J. Bosscher, F. Becker and P. Kalma (eds), *Honderd jaar sociaal-democratie in Nederland 1894-1994* (Amsterdam 1994), 181.
120. De Vries, *Complexe consensus*, 222.
121. Maarten van den Bos, *Verlangen naar vernieuwing* (Amsterdam 2012), 148-149.
122. G.H.L. Zeegers, *Een ernstige beslissing* (Amsterdam 1945), 57; cf. Th. J. Platenburg, *Nationaal landbouwbeleid* ('s-Gravenhage 1947), published by the Dutch Catholic Farmers' and Gardeners' Union (*KNBTB*) and with an introduction by the Director-General of Agriculture (and later Minister of

- Defence) C. Staf, in which a whole section was dedicated to the 'remaining population [...] for whom it is no longer possible to find any employment in the agrarian sector', 323-386. See Hans Smits, *Landjepik* (n.p. 2012).
123. The figures of the time 'are not good in any respect': Hein A.M. Klemann, *Nederland 1938-1948* (Amsterdam 2002), 24. It was almost blindly assumed that 'the East Indies had been lost and a disaster born': H. Baudet, 'Nederland en de rang van Denemarken' in *Bijdragen en Mededelingen betreffende de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden* 90 (1975), 430-443. See also H. Baudet and M. Fennema, *Het Nederlands belang bij Indië* (Utrecht 1983).
 124. J.R.M. van den Brink, *Zoeken naar een 'heilstaat'* (Amsterdam/Brussels 1984), 356.
 125. Ph. van Praag, *Het bevolkingsvraagstuk in Nederland* (Deventer 1976); cf. Theo Engelen, *Van 2 naar 16 miljoen mensen* (Amsterdam 2009).
 126. Van den Brink, *Zoeken naar een 'heilstaat'*, 441 ff.; cf. Walter H. Salzmann, *Herstel, wederopbouw en Europese samenwerking* (The Hague 1999) and Meindert Fennema and John Rhijnsburger, *Dr. Hans Max Hirschfeld* (Amsterdam 2007).
 127. Maarten van Bottenburg, *'Aan den Arbeid!'* (Amsterdam 1995).
 128. Johan van Merriënboer, *Mansholt* (Amsterdam 2006), 122.
 129. Jelle Zijlstra, *Per slot van rekening* (Amsterdam 1992), 107.
 130. Merriënboer, *Mansholt*, 172.
 131. E.J. Krajenbrink, *Het Landbouwschap* (n.p. 2005).
 132. Krajenbrink, *Het Landbouwschap*, 233 and 235.
 133. CBS Statline.
 134. Q.J. Munters, *De stille revolutie op het agrarische platteland* (Assen/Maastricht 1989), 90-91.
 135. In 1996 Geert Mak wrote *Hoe God verdween uit Jorwerd*; Frank Westerman followed three years later with *De graanrepubliek*; and in 2002 Sietse van der Hoek published his report, *Het platteland. Over de laatste boeren in Nederland*. At the international level, Ronald Blythe drew attention with *Akenfield: Portrait of an English Village* (1969), followed by Craig Taylor's *Return to Akenfield* (2006); in addition, among others, John Berger, who went to live high in the French Alps and published a trilogy on life there between 1979 and 1990: *Pig Earth, Once in Europe* and *Lilac and Flag*.
 136. He attempted it in the CHU and the Dutch Opposition Union. See Koen Vossen, 'De andere jaren zestig. De opkomst van de Boerenpartij (1963-1967)' in *Jaarboek Documentatiecentrum Nederlandse Politieke Partijen* 2004, 245-266.
 137. Gordon Wright, *Rural Revolution in France* (Stanford 1964) and Romain Souillac, *Le mouvement Poujade* (Paris 2007).
 138. Kiran Klaus Patel, *Europäisierung wider Willen* (Munich 2009).
 139. Vossen, 'De andere jaren zestig', 252.
 140. Souillac, *Le mouvement Poujade*, 157.
 141. *Handelingen Tweede Kamer* 9 February 1965, 1109.
 142. *Handelingen Tweede Kamer* 30 March 1966, 1659.

143. Th.W. Adorno et al., *The Authoritarian Personality* (New York 1950); cf. Jan Baars and Peer Scheepers, 'Theoretical and Methodological Foundations of the Authoritarian Personality' in *Journal of the Behavioral Sciences* 29 (1993), 345-353. For the most interesting use of the F-scale in the Netherlands in this period, see A. Lange, *De autoritaire persoonlijkheid en zijn godsdienstige wereld* (Assen 1971).
144. A.T.J. Nooij, *De Boerenpartij* (Meppel 1969), 217.
145. Nooij, *Boerenpartij*, 45.
146. *Handelingen Tweede Kamer* 12 October 1966; for the vote on the motion: 193-194.
147. See, for example, B. van Dienst (ed.), *Koekoek kan ons nog meer vertellen* (Amsterdam 1966). A more serious account can be found in Nooij, *Boerenpartij*.
148. This was only brought to an end in 1984, when the minister announced a manure policy without holding preliminary consultations with the organizations, putting a brake on the unbridled growth of intensive cattle farming. This was the beginning of the end: the Board was formally dismantled 15 years later. Frits Bloemendaal, *Het mestmoeras* (The Hague 1995); Daniël Broersma, *Het Groene Front voorbij* (Groningen and Wageningen 2010).
149. Charles S. Maier, *In Search of Stability* (Cambridge 1987), 226. To give one example, in England, Ernest Bevin declared in 1937: 'The trade union movement has become an integral part of the state.' Quoted in Willie Thompson, *The Long Death of British Labourism* (London 1993), 24.
150. Maier, *In Search of Stability*, 259.
151. Herman de Liagre Böhl, Jan Nekkers and Laurens Slot (eds), *Nederland industrialiseert!* (Nijmegen 1981); cf. Van den Brink, *Zoeken naar een 'heilstaat'*, 437-440.
152. Merriënboer, *Mansholt*, 182.
153. J. Bosmans, 'Kanttekeningen bij de politieke en parlementaire ontwikkeling van Nederland, 1952-1973' in H.W. von der Dunk et al. (eds), *Wederopbouw, Welvaart en Onrust* (Houten 1986), 37-61, here 53; R.S. Zwart, 'Gods wil in Nederland' (Kampen 1996), 81-82.
154. Maier, *In Search of Stability*.
155. J.C.H. Blom, 'Jaren van tucht en ascese. Enige beschouwingen over de stemming in Herrijzend Nederland (1945-1950)' in P.W. Klein and G.N. van der Plaats (eds), *Herrijzend Nederland* ('s-Gravenhage 1981), 125-158.
156. Romein, *Beschouwingen over het Nederlandse volkskarakter* of 1942. But his great doubt is typical ('Why should I not admit that here I am indeed speaking of things that I myself do not understand?'), and he thus limited himself mainly to a number of methodological considerations on the research into this intangible phenomenon.
157. Peter van Dam, *Staat van verzuiling* (Amsterdam 2011).
158. Van den Bos, *Verlangen naar vernieuwing*, 58.

159. The date can be concluded from the historical survey of the debate in J.C.H. Blom, 'Vernietigende kracht en nieuwe vergezichten' in Blom and Talsma (eds), *De verzuiling voorbij*, 203-236.
160. J.P. Kruijt and W. Goddijn, 'Verzuiling en ontzuiling als sociologisch proces' in A.N.J. den Hollander et al. (eds), *Drift en Koers* (Assen [1961] 1968), 227-263.
161. A. Lijphart, *Verzuiling, pacificatie en kentering in de Nederlandse politiek* (Haarlem [1968] 1992), 28.
162. Lijphart, *Verzuiling*, 35.
163. With the Pacification, under the leadership of Cort van der Linden as an 'honest broker', a number of far-reaching differences of opinion were settled by means of a compromise: general suffrage was introduced, while at the same time public and private confessional education were financed in equal measure by the government.
164. Lijphart, *Verzuiling*, 106; for a summary of the criticism of this concept, see: Tamirace Fakhoury-Mühlbacher, 'A Review and Critique of Consociational Democracy' in Theodor Hanf (ed.), *Power Sharing: Concepts and Cases* (Byblos 2008), 9-16.
165. See the interview with Arend Lijphart in Gerardo L. Munck and Richard Snyder, *Passion, Craft, and Method in Comparative Politics* (Baltimore 2007), 234-272.
166. Bosmans, 'Kanttekeningen', 44-47.
167. Joop M. Roebroek and Mirjam Hertogh, *'De beschavende invloed des tijds'* ('s-Gravenhage 1998); Piet de Rooy, 'Great Men and a Single Woman. Politics and Social Security in the Netherlands' in Ad Knotter, Bert Altena and Dirk Damsma (eds), *Labour, Social Policy, and the Welfare State* (Amsterdam 1997), 143-154.
168. Jan Romein, 'Het verguisde beeld. Over het onderzoek naar de oorzaken van onze Opstand' in idem, *Historische lijnen en patronen*, 147-162, here 148 and 160.
169. Blom, 'Vernietigende kracht en nieuwe vergezichten', 236.
170. P. de Rooy, 'Zes studies over verzuiling' in *Bijdragen en Mededelingen betreffende de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden* 110 (1995), 380-392.
171. J. Huizinga, 'De wetenschap der geschiedenis' [1937] in *Verzameld Werk*, VII, 104-172, here 142.
172. Jos M.M. Leenders, *'Zijn dit nu handelwijzen van een herder...!'* (Nijmegen 2008), 1013.
173. Van Rooden, *Religieuze regimes*.
174. L.J. Rogier, *Herdenken en herzien* (Bilthoven 1974), 10.
175. To be sure, the SDAP was excluded from government until 1939, but this by no means implies that the social democrats were thereby completely isolated: they were taken seriously in the corporate discussions in the Supreme Council of Labour (founded by the Catholic politician Aalberse in 1920), were treated favourably in the allocation of radio broadcasting time in 1930, were considered important bearers of part of the services for unemployed

- youth and were recognized as the representatives of a few large cities, including The Hague and Amsterdam.
176. To the extent that there was such a pillar (which means stretching the image beyond meaningful limits), this was a bureaucratic construction, as became clear in the debate about the division of radio broadcasting time and social services for unemployed youth.
 177. This suggests an equivalence; an essential difference, however, was that it was possible to have a government coalition without the social democrats, but not without the Catholics. Between 1918 and 1994 the Catholics participated in the government without interruption.
 178. Huub Wijffes, *Journalistiek in Nederland 1850-2000* (Amsterdam 2004), 149.
 179. De Haan and Duyvendak (eds), *In het hart van de verzorgingsstaat*; Oosterhuis and Gijswijt-Hofstra, *Verward van geest en ander ongerief*. This approach (providing financing without control), for example, has long been typical in the area of child protection: P. de Rooy, 'De beschutte kooi. Gezins- en gestichtsverpleging, 1870-1940' in B. Kruithof, T. Mous and Ph. Veerman (eds), *Internaat of pleeggezin* (Utrecht and Amsterdam 1981), 92-110 and J.H. Dekker, *Jeugdzorg in Nederland 1945-2010* [Appendix 1 of the report of the Samson Commission on the sexual abuse of children put into care by government] (The Hague 2012). Large parts of the social security system were also financed with hardly any control in this pillarized-corporate manner. See *Rapport van de commissie Uitvoeringsorganen sociale verzekeringen* [Buurmeijer Commission] in *Handelingen Tweede Kamer* 1992/1993, 22730, nos. 7-8 and Gijs Herderscheë, *De geldpomp* (Amsterdam 2010).
 180. J.A.A. van Doorn, 'De verzorgingsmaatschappij in de praktijk' [1978] in idem, *Nederlandse democratie. Historische en sociologische waarnemingen* (Amsterdam 2009), 139-161, here 150.
 181. In this context, Van Doorn pointed to the early example of Bernstein: the original goal of socialism had lost its meaning, but the movement (as an organization) was everything to him. J.A.A. van Doorn, 'Verzuiling: een eigentijds systeem van sociale controle', [1956] in idem, *Nederlandse democratie*, 117-126, here 123-124.

7. Fundamental Changes in Mentality

1. G.M.J. Veldkamp, *Herinneringen 1952-1967* ('s-Gravenhage 1993), 38.
2. It then proved that she had quite an unfortunate place, close to a table leg on which she constantly laddered her stockings; the table leg was subsequently covered with plastic. Jan Willem Brouwer and Peter van der Heiden (eds), *Het kabinet Drees IV en het kabinet Beel II, 1956-1959* (The Hague 2004), 43.
3. *Leeuwarder Courant*, 20 October 1956; the writer 'Saskia' referred to the pamphlet of 1795 by P.B.v.W., in which a plea was made for female participation in the government of the country.

4. Gerard Mostert, *Marga Klompé* (Amsterdam 2011), 254.
5. *Polygoon Hollands Nieuws* (dated 10 December 1956, but possibly 13 October 1956), website of the Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision.
6. Loes van der Valk, *Van pauperzorg tot bestaanszekerheid* (Amsterdam 1986), 188 ff.
7. Brouwer and Van der Heiden (eds), *Het kabinet Drees IV*, 32.
8. Marga Klompé 2 April 1963, *Handelingen Tweede Kamer* 1962-1963, 3956.
9. On 2 April 1963 the MP D. Heroma-Meilink (PvDA) opened the debate on this law with a historical discussion that began with the Poor Law of 1800: *Handelingen Tweede Kamer* 1962-1963, 3911 ff.
10. J. Zwanikken (KVP) 2 April 1963, *Handelingen Tweede Kamer* 1962-1963, 3930.
11. *Leeuwarder Courant*, 15 November 1956. With this, Louwes was making an approving reference to the opinions of J. Smid, the intellectual leader of Agriculture and Society between the wars.
12. 12 December 1957, *Handelingen Tweede Kamer* 1957-1958, 3472.
13. Van Merriënboer, *Mansholt*, 238.
14. Ann-Christina L. Knudsen, *Farmers on Welfare* (Ithaca and London 2009).
15. A. Szász, *Monetaire diplomatie* (Leiden/Antwerp 1988); J. Zijlstra, *De les van veertig jaar en nog iets* (Alphen aan den Rijn/Brussels 1989).
16. Veldkamp, *Herinneringen*, 102; cf. Van der Valk, *Van pauperzorg tot bestaanszekerheid* and Mirjam Hertogh, 'Geene wet, maar de Heer' ('s-Gravenhage 1998).
17. [CBS] *Negentig jaren statistiek in tijdreeksen 1899-1989* ('s-Gravenhage 1989), 208, column 43.
18. See also Jan Luiten van Zanden, *Een klein land in de 20^e eeuw. Economische geschiedenis van Nederland 1914-1995* (Utrecht 1977), 84, which provides an overview of the social transfers (as a percentage of GDP) of a number of countries in the period between 1910 and 1990. These show that in the Netherlands, spending on these transfers doubled between 1960 and 1970.
19. J.J. Woltjer, *Recent verleden* (Amsterdam 1992), 260-265 and 320-322.
20. Van Zanden, *Een klein land*, 191. Figures: CBS statline.
21. The i/a ratio: *Sociale Nota 2000* [publication by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment], 82-83. Public expenditure amounted to 53 per cent of GDP in 1975; see Roebroek and Hertogh, 'De beschavende invloed des tijds', 348 ff., especially graphs 4 and 5.
22. Quoted by F. Messing, 'Het economisch leven in Nederland 1945-1980' in Boogman et al. (eds), *Geschiedenis van het moderne Nederland*, 517-561, here 527.
23. Cees Banning, 'Feest: 50 jaar boven onze stand geleefd. Hoe Nederland jarenlang honderden miljarden aan aardgasbaten verjubelde, en nog aldoor verjubelt' in *NRC Handelsblad* 13/14 June 2009.
24. In 1977 the WRR published the report *Maken wij er werk van? Verkenningen omtrent de verhouding tussen actieven en niet-actieven*, in which it was asserted (exaggeratedly summarized) that it was normal to work. The titles of a number of books alone make it clear how the tone rapidly became more sombre: J.J.A. van Doorn and C.J.M. Schuyt (eds), *De stagnerende*

- verzorgingsstaat [*The stagnating welfare state*] (Meppel/Amsterdam 1978); Ph. A. Idenburg, *De nadagen van de verzorgingsstaat. Kansen en perspectieven voor morgen* [*The decline of the welfare state. Opportunities and prospects for the future*] (Amsterdam 1983); Flip de Kam and Frans Nypels, *Afscheid van het paradijs* [*Farewell to paradise*] (Amsterdam 1984).
25. David R. Cameron, 'The Expansion of the Public Economy: A Comparative Analysis' in *The American Political Science Review* 74:4 (Dec. 1978), 1243-1261.
 26. See the exhaustive study by Jacques van Gerwen and Marco H.D. van Leeuwen, *Zoeken naar zekerheid* [four volumes] (The Hague/Amsterdam 2000).
 27. What was presented as the 'battle for social security' was in fact a process that enjoyed the support of all the key ideological currents (the General Social Security Act and the Act on Disability Insurance were carried unanimously). To the extent that there was a battle, it was about the authority of the agencies that were responsible for providing benefits. See Roebroek and Hertogh, *De beschavende invloed des tijds*.
 28. CBS, 'Nederland steeds meer verweven met de wereldhandel' in *Webmagazine* 29 June 2009.
 29. Tocqueville, *De la démocratie en Amérique*, 837.
 30. B. van Stolk and C. Wouters, 'De gemoedsrust van de verzorgingsstaat' in *Maandblad Geestelijke Volksgezondheid*, 37 (1982), 599-613 and B. van Stolk and C. Wouters, *Vrouwen in tweestrijd* (Deventer 1983).
 31. It is also important to bear in mind that the prices on the world market were relatively stable between 1940 and 1970: Knudsen, *Farmers on Welfare*, 50.
 32. Guido Thiemeyer, 'The Failure of the Green Pool and the Success of the CAP. Long Term Structures in European Agricultural Integration in the 1950s and 1960s' in Kirian Klaus Patel (ed.), *Fertile Ground for Europe?* (Baden 2009), 47-59, here 54 and 57; Kirian Klaus Patel, 'Europeanization à contre-coeur. West Germany and Agricultural Integration, 1945-1975' in Patel et al. (eds), *Fertile Ground*, 139-160.
 33. Knudsen, *Farmers on Welfare*, especially 64. Abram de Swaan, *Zorg en de staat* (Amsterdam 1989).
 34. Kirian Klaus Patel, 'Europeanization à contre-coeur. West Germany and Agricultural Integration, 1945-1975', here 153.
 35. A. van den Brink, *Structuur in beweging* (Wageningen 1990), 24 [Table 2.3].
 36. Erwin H. Karel, *Boeren tussen markt en maatschappij* (Groningen/Wageningen 2013), especially 31-56 and 'Visienota Voedsel en Groen [Vision memorandum on Food and Green Issues]', in *Handelingen Tweede Kamer* 1999-2000, 27 232, no. 2.
 37. Alan S. Milward, *The Reconstruction of Western Europe 1945-1951* (London 1984) and *The European Rescue of the Nation-State* (London [1992] 2000).
 38. In 1945 this was the opinion of Hans Hirschfeld, the Dutch architect of the European Recovery programme. It was developed in 1949 by one of his staff, Max Kohnstamm, in a substantial Memorandum: Fennema and Rhijns-

- burger, *Dr. Hans Max Hirschfeld*, 160, and Mathieu Seegers, *Reis naar het continent* (Amsterdam 2013), 62-63.
39. The deeper causes of both world wars were sought in the nationalism that had been promoted by the nation state. 'The great enemy of today is the sovereign state' was the assessment of Bronislaw Malinowski in this respect, in 'War – Past, Present, and Future', quoted by James J. Sheehan, 'The Problem of Sovereignty in European History' in *American Historical Review* 111, 1 [February 2006], 1-15, here 12.
 40. M. van der Goes van Naters (PVDA), 18 March 1948 *Handelingen Tweede Kamer 1947-1948*, 1565; cf. Annemarie van Heerikhuizen, *Pioniers van een Verenigd Europa* (Amsterdam 1998). See also *Europa. Vijftig jaar publieke opinie en marktintegratie in de Europese Unie* [Socio-Cultural Planning Agency & Central Planning Agency] (The Hague 2007), 13-18, which refers to a referendum (1952) held in two cities that were representative of the national electorate. In this, the question was asked: 'Do you want a United Europe, under a European Government and with a Democratic Representation, defined in a European Constitution?' A great majority responded in the affirmative.
 41. Dirk U. Stikker, *Memoires* (Rotterdam/'s-Gravenhage 1966), 158-159. Stikker was minister in the period between 1948 and 1951.
 42. Minister of Foreign Affairs Luns (KVP), quoted by Seegers, *Reis naar het continent*, 133.
 43. See *De Feiten*, a brochure produced by the European Community's Public Information Service in 1960.
 44. A. Vondeling, *Nasmaak en voorproef* (Amsterdam 1968), 16.
 45. Jan van Deth and Jan C.P.M. Vis, *Regeren in Nederland* (Assen 2006), 141; Axel Schildt, *Moderne Zeiten* (Hamburg 1995), 315. The political scientist H. Daalder opened his lecture of 1964, 'Leadership and passivity in Dutch politics', with a quote from a British ambassador of 1860, in which he remarked in amazement that the Dutch had no interest in 'public affairs'. Daalder went on: 'Little appears to have changed in this situation in one hundred years'. H. Daalder, *Van oude en nieuwe regenten* (Amsterdam 1995), 11-39, here 11.
 46. J.A.A. van Doorn, 'Corporatisme en technocratie – een verwaarloosde polariteit in de Nederlandse politiek' [1981] in Van Doorn, *Nederlandse democratie*, 199-222.
 47. G. van der Leeuw, the first post-war Minister of Education, in accordance with the German psychiatrist and philosopher Karl Jaspers, had written the following in 1935: 'Our period of mass production and mass reproduction, of traffic, radio, newspaper and cinema, has made the wonderful thing that the world had been until today into something commonplace, that has almost lost all its pleasures – "Nichts ist fern, geheim, wunderbar". [...] Fashion, the language of the newspapers, morals – everything is uniform, right up to the outermost corners of the world, which indeed has no outermost corners left'. G. van der Leeuw, 'De betekenissen van Karl Jaspers' in *De Gids* 99 [1935], 307-322, here 315. The historian Huizinga had already predicted in the same year: 'The upcom-

- ing scholarly buzzword in civilized circles will undoubtedly be “existential”. I see it happening everywhere already. It will undoubtedly end up in wider public circles. [...] The word will lead to a more serious relinquishing of the spirit, a creed of not caring for knowledge or truth’. J. Huizinga, ‘In de schaduwen van morgen’ [1935] in *Verzameld Werk* VII, 313-428, here 361.
48. C.A. van Peursen, *Riskante filosofie* (Amsterdam 1955), 141.
 49. Otto Friedrich Bollnow, *Nieuwe geborgenheid* (Utrecht 1958), 13.
 50. Jaap Bos, *M.J. Langeveld* (Amsterdam 2011), 8; for its history in print, 216.
 51. M.J. Langeveld, *Beknopte Theoretische Paedagogiek* (Groningen/Batavia 1946), 63.
 52. It was Rousseau who took us astray down the path of authenticity, according to Maarten Doorman, *Rousseau en ik* (Amsterdam 2012).
 53. Marga Klompé (KVP) in *Handelingen Tweede Kamer* 5 November 1953, 3067.
 54. Bollnow, *Nieuwe geborgenheid*, was translated by the spouse of Langeveld, T.J. Langeveld-Bakker. See also J.C.H. Blom, ‘Een harmonieus gezin en individuele ontplooiing’ [1993] in idem, *Burgerlijk en beheerst* (Amsterdam 1996), 223-247.
 55. Van den Bos, *Verlangen naar vernieuwing* (Amsterdam 2012); cf. Piet de Rooy, *Openbaring en openbaarheid* (Amsterdam 2009).
 56. Godfried Bomans and Michel van der Plas, *In de kou* (Baarn 1969); Marga Kerklaan, *Van huis uit* (Baarn 1994); Jos Palm, *Moederkerk* (Amsterdam and Antwerp 2012).
 57. Van Eijnatten and Van Lieburg, *Nederlandse religiegeschiedenis*, 357 ff.
 58. J.Th.J. van den Berg and H.A.A. Molleman, *Crisis in de Nederlandse politiek* (Alphen aan den Rijn 1974), 145 ff.
 59. J.M.L.Th. Cals (KVP), 27 April 1965, *Handelingen Tweede Kamer* 1964-1965, 1305-1318, here 1309.
 60. At that time, Marga Klompé was a member of the KVP faction and supported the motion, although she was a personal friend of Cals.
 61. Ed van Westerloo in Van Westerloo, ‘Ik zag een traan op zijn gezicht. Televisieverslaggever in Den Haag’ in *Jaarboek Mediageschiedenis* 3 [1991], 287-294, here 292. There is an extensive literature on ‘Schmelzer’s night’ (named after the parliamentary chairman of the KVP, Norman Schmelzer). The autobiographical and biographical contributions of a number of key players: Vondeling, *Nasmaak en voorproef*; Robbert Ammerlaan, *Het verschijnsel Schmelzer* (Leiden 1973); H.A.C.M. Notenboom, *De val van het kabinet-Cals* (’s-Gravenhage 1991); Paul van der Steen, *Cals* (Amsterdam 2004). In addition: Peter van der Heiden and Alexander van Kessel (eds), *Parlementaire geschiedenis van Nederland na 1945*, VIII, *Rondom de Nacht van Schmelzer* (Amsterdam 2010).
 62. B.W. Biesheuvel, quoted in Wilfred Scholten, *Mooie Barend* (Amsterdam 2012), 231. As Minister of Agriculture (1963-1967), this politician was deeply involved in the negotiations on the European Common Agricultural Policy.

63. Vondeling, *Nasmaak en voorproef*, 17. See also his classical complaint that the 'average voter' does not actually have a rational opinion, but depends primarily on his emotions, 113.
64. Josef Mooser, 'Abschied von der "Proletarität". Sozialstruktur und Lage der Arbeiterschaft in der Bundesrepublik in historischer Perspektive' in Werner Conze and M. Rainer Lepsius (eds), *Sozialgeschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Stuttgart 1983), 143-186 and Geoff Eley, *Forging Democracy* (Oxford 2000), especially 397.
65. In order to provide some counterweight to this, from 1979 onwards a *Jaarboek voor het democratisch socialisme* was published.
66. Tony Judt, *The Memory Chalet* (London 2010), 123.
67. Tony Judt, *Postwar. A History of Europe since 1945* (London 2005), 448. A comparable analysis can be found in Arthur Marwick, *The Sixties* (Oxford and New York 1998).
68. What follows is largely based on the analysis of Steven Pincus, 1688.
69. Pincus, 1688, 39.
70. Herbert Marcuse, *One Dimensional Man* (London 1964), 11.
71. This interpretation builds on the analysis of James C. Kennedy, *Nieuw Babylon* (Amsterdam/Meppel 1995), in particular his insight that in the Netherlands, there was such great acceptance of 'modernization' as an inevitable process.
72. Doug Rossinow, *The Politics of Authenticity* (New York 1998); Luuk van Middeelaar, *Politicide* (Amsterdam 1999). This appears to be in direct conflict with the pleas of the New Left movement for 'participatory democracy', but on this point the analysis of Miller is convincing: 'Participatory democracy was a catchword. It became a cliché. It masked a theoretical muddle. It was a stick of conceptual dynamite. It pointed toward daring personal experiments and modest social reforms. It implied a political revolution. These are a lot of tensions for one term to contain.' James Miller, *'Democracy is in the Streets'* (New York 1987), 141-154, here 152.
73. Roel van Duyn, *Het witte gevaar* (Amsterdam 1967), 53 and 64.
74. Hans Righart, *De eindeloze jaren zestig* (Amsterdam 1995) sees the cultural revolution as the result of a crisis in a 'pre-war generation', which subsequently came into conflict with a 'protest generation' that wanted to make use of the new prosperity.
75. Karl Mannheim, 'Das Problem der Generation' in *Kölner Vierteljahrshefte für Soziologie* VII [1928], 157-185 and 309-330.
76. This theory is reminiscent of the theory of 'class': there has never been agreement on criteria for determining an 'objective class' in the social sciences or within socialism; in the daily practice of the class struggle, the notion of subjective class, that is to say, class consciousness, was used more. This parallel is not coincidental. After the First World War, the concept of a 'generation' offered intellectuals some cause for optimism after the failure of the working class, which had lined up to fight against each other in national armies and had failed to embrace the revolution after the war. The new generation would

- not allow itself to be seduced by materialistic mass society, but would heal society, inspired by ideals. The concept of a generation was not only parallel to the idea of class, it was even an alternative to it, embodied by the youth movement. See Robert Wohl, *The Generation of 1914* (Cambridge [Mass.] 1979), 73–84.
77. The classic account of the youth movement: Ger Harmsen, *Blauwe en rode jeugd* (Assen 1961); Helmut Schelsky, *Die skeptische Generation* (Düsseldorf/Cologne 1957); the sympathetic reception of regenerated idealism in the Netherlands: Kennedy, *Nieuw Babylon*, 127 ff.
 78. Judith Rich Harris, *The Nurture Assumption* (New York [1998] 2009).
 79. J.S. van Hessen, *Samen jong zijn* (Assen 1965); M.C. Timmerman, *Jeugd in perspectief* (Groningen 2010).
 80. Wohl, *Generation*, 73. Internationalization: Richard Ivan Jobs, 'Youth Movements: Travel, Protest, and Europe in 1968' in *American Historical Review* 114 [2009], 376–404, which simultaneously reveals how superficial the phenomenon was: the international journeys that were made are largely reminiscent of a revival of the Grand Tour.
 81. Piet de Rooy, 'The Youth Establishment in the Netherlands in the Twentieth Century' in Bob Moore and Henk van Nierop (eds), *Twentieth-century Mass Society in Britain and the Netherlands* (Oxford and New York 2006), 163–174.
 82. Van Duyn, *Het witte gevaar*, 20.
 83. Niek Pas, *Imaazje!* (Amsterdam 2003).
 84. *Slotrapport van de commissie van onderzoek Amsterdam* [the Enschede Commission] ('s-Gravenhage 1967), Appendix 127, 5 and 6.
 85. See Michael Kidron and Ronald Segal, *De toestand van de wereld* (Amsterdam 1981), Map 64.
 86. Rob Hagendijk, *Het studentenleven* (Amsterdam 1980).
 87. The manifesto is printed in Ger Harmsen and Bob Reinalda, *Voor de bevrijding van de arbeid* (Nijmegen 1975), 379.
 88. David Cauter, *The Fellow-Travelers* (New Haven and London [1973] 1988); A. Aarsbergen, *Verre paradijzen* (Utrecht 1988) and Maarten Kuitenbrouwer, *De ontdekking van de Derde Wereld* (The Hague 1994). Tony Judt, *Ill Fares the Land* (London 2010), 85–91, idem, *The Memory Chalet*, 119–126. On the ideological overheating: E.P. Thompson, *The Poverty of Theory and Other Essays* (London 1978) and Ger Harmsen, 'Tegen arbeiderisme en sociologisme' [1971] in idem, *Nederlands Kommunisme* (Nijmegen 1982), 263–301. Own identity: Frank Koster, *Studenten van proletariaat tot praatgroep* (Nijmegen 1979).
 89. R. Kroes, *New Left, Nieuw Links, New Left* (Alphen aan den Rijn/Brussels 1975), especially 51–52; cf. the remark that New Left was created in the cauteen of the VARA broadcasting corporation: Wijffes, *VARA*, 302 ff. Translator's note: 'Tien over Rood' is pun on the name of a Dutch billiards game.
 90. The very mediocre level of intellectual thought in the party, certainly compared with an earlier phase in the history of social democracy, led to the inconsistent party programme of 1977. See Tromp, *Het sociaaldemocratisch programma*, 285–329.

91. Philip van Praag Jr., *Strategie en illusie* (Amsterdam 1991). In this sense it was also an important contribution to the merger between the three confessional parties (the KVP, the ARP and the CHU) as the CDA, which began in 1973 and was completed in 1980.
92. P. de Rooy, 'Het zout in de pap' in G. Voerman et al., *De vrijzinnig-democratische* (Amsterdam 1991), 54-73; with less relativization: Meine Henk Klijnsma, *Om de democratie* (Amsterdam 2008).
93. Menno van der Land, *Tussen ideaal en illusie* (The Hague 2003), 34.
94. H.A.F.M. van Mierlo, quoted in Van der Land, *Tussen ideaal en illusie*, 51, cf. 32 and 90.
95. Van de Land, *Tussen ideaal en illusie*, 37, 439 and 24.
96. Joke Kool-Smit, 'Het onbehagen bij de vrouw' in *De Gids* 130 [1967], 267-281; cf. Marja Vuijsje, *Joke Smit* (Amsterdam/Antwerp 2008). Smit had been an early reader of Simone de Beauvoir, *Le deuxième sexe* (1949); furthermore, she was on the whole in agreement with Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* of 1963.
97. Kool-Smit, 'Het onbehagen', 272.
98. See Corrie van Eijl, *Het werkzame verschil* (Hilversum 1994), 374 and J.L. Meyer, *Sociale Atlas van de vrouw* [Socio-Cultural Planning Agency] (Rijswijk 1977), chapter 11.
99. Anneke Ribberink, *Leidsvrouwen en zaakwaarneemsters* (Hilversum 1998), mainly 70 ff.
100. Joke Smit quoted in Vuijsje, *Joke Smit*, 190; Eva Rensman, *De pil in Nederland* (Amsterdam 2006).
101. It was and remained 'a *tour de force* to get the two centrifugal forces together': Mieke Aerts, 'Introduction', in Michèle Barrett, *Links en de vrouwenbeweging* (Weesp 1984), 7-19, here 11.
102. Hella van de Velde, *Vrouwen van de partij* (Leiden 1994), 375. Monique Leijenaar and Hella van de Velde, 'Belangenbehartiging door vrouwen: vrouwenpartijen' in *Acta Politica* 25 [1989], 3-29.
103. Michael Freeden, *Ideologies and Political Theory*, 488-525; cf. Diana Coole, 'Threads and Plaits or an Unfinished Project? Feminism(s) through the Twentieth Century' in Michael Freeden (ed.), *Reassessing Political Ideologies* (Abingdon 2001), 154-174. The key improvements in the position of women came about through the introduction of the General Social Security Act (whereby women could obtain a benefit after divorce) and the Wassenaar Agreement (whereby part-time working could be significantly expanded). Neither measure was taken specifically with this goal, and nor did these come about under the strong influence of the women's movement.
104. Jacqueline Cramer, *De groene golf* (Utrecht 1989).
105. Under the responsibility of L.B.J. Stuyt (KVP). See H.T. Siraa, A.J. van der Valk and W.L. Wissink, *Het ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer (1965-1995)* (The Hague 1995).
106. Government policy statement by the Biesheuvel Cabinet, 3 August 1971, *Handelingen Tweede Kamer 1970-1971*, 140.

107. This prompted predictable criticisms: the figures didn't add up, the situation was not as serious as the authors suggested, and other issues were more important. In short, what was this, other than 'Malthus with a computer'? Quoted in Robert E. Goodin, *Green Political Theory* (Cambridge 1992), 1. In 1979 a report by the OECD was published, *Interfutures. Facing the Future: Mastering the Probable and Managing the Unpredictable*, in which the gravity of the problem was emphasized, although it put more faith in the possibilities of national and international policy. Three decades later, it was shown that the actual developments agreed relatively well with the 'standard run scenario': Graham Turner, 'A Comparison of The Limits to Growth with Thirty Years of Reality' [CSIRO Working Paper] June 2008; with thanks to Steven de Rooij for drawing my attention to this publication.
108. Dennis Meadows, *Grenzen aan de groei* (Utrecht 1972), 13.
109. *Handelingen Tweede Kamer* 1971-1972, 12 October 1971: Den Uyl, 195, Van Mierlo, 200-201.
110. *Tussentijds bestek* (The Hague 1973).
111. Merriënboer, *Mansholt*, 361-373 and 390-406. Despite his conversion, Mansholt remained a politician of grand gestures. He therefore saw little in the often-advocated doctrine of 'small-scale living'. In a discussion with Herbert Marcuse in Paris, he said: 'I feel very much attracted to a Robinson Crusoe-style life, but I don't believe it would be possible for more than 300 million human beings.' Herbert Marcuse, *The New Left and the 1960s* (London/New York 2005), 173-177, here 176.
112. Jaap Frouws, *Mest en macht* (Wageningen 1994).
113. Joep de Hart, *Landelijk verenigd* (The Hague 2005), 71.
114. Jan Willem Duyvendak, 'Een beweging zonder natuurlijke vijand? Over de strategische dilemma's van de milieubeweging' in *Milieu als mensenwerk* (Groningen 1996), 144-169.
115. On the futility (and undesirability) of a 'green polder model': Jan Vis, 'De illusie van de groene variant' in Wijnand Duyvendak, Ingrid Horstik and Bertram Zagma (eds), *Het groene poldermodel, consensus en conflict in de milieu-politiek* (Amsterdam 1999), 135-141.
116. Joachim Raschke, *Die Grünen* (Cologne 1993), 55.
117. Freedon, *Ideologies and Political Theory*, 530.
118. Michael Korthals, *Duurzaamheid en democratie* (Amsterdam/Meppel 1994).
119. In 1993 Die Grünen merged with their previous East-German counterpart as Bündnis 90/Die Grünen.
120. Raschke, *Die Grünen*, 77-78.
121. Paul Lucardie, Wijbrandt van Schuur and Gerrit Voerman, *Verloren illusie, geslaagde fusie?* (Leiden 1999), 92-93, 110, 129-132, 170-171.
122. Anet Bleich, *Joop den Uyl* (Amsterdam 2008).
123. Ilja van den Broek, *Heimwee naar de politiek* (Amsterdam 2002).
124. J.M. den Uyl, *Handelingen Tweede Kamer*, 28 May 1973, 1563-1573, here 1565.

125. Government policy statement, 28 May 1973, *Handelingen Tweede Kamer* 1972-1973, 1566.
126. The key data for each cabinet on financial and socio-economic policy can be found on the website www.parlement.com; falling income inequality: J.P. de Kleijn and H. van der Stadt, 'Ontwikkelingen in de inkomensverdeling sinds 1970' in *Economisch Statistische Berichten* 9 October 1985, 1004-1009; education: *Sociaal en Cultureel Rapport 1998* [25 years of social change] (Rijswijk 1998), 559 ff.
127. Kees van Kersbergen, 'De cultuur van gelijkheid' in Jan Ramakers, Gerrit Voerman and Rutger Zwart (eds), *Illusies van Den Uyl?* (Amsterdam 1998), 79-88.
128. The PVDA had even formed a 'surveillance committee' to monitor whether cabinet policy was progressive enough: Bleich, *Joop den Uyl*, 355.
129. It is striking that the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Max van der Stoep (PVDA), who developed an extremely successful policy in the area of human rights, had to contend with a great amount of opposition in his own circle.
130. Max Weber, 'Politik als Beruf' [1919] in *Gesammelte Werke* [*Kleine Schriften und Vorträge*], electronic edition PS 395-450.
131. Van den Broek, *Heimwee*, 97.
132. Van den Broek, *Heimwee*, 169; cf. Te Velde, *Stijlen van leiderschap*, 191 ff.
133. Frank van Vree, *De metamorfose van een dagblad* (Amsterdam 1996); Mariëtte Wolf, *Het geheim van De Telegraaf* (Amsterdam 2009), 450 ff.; Wijffes, *VARA*, 302 ff.
134. For example: Tony van der Meulen, 'Ik word gedreven door idealisme en eerezucht' in *Nieuwsblad van het Noorden* 21 December 1974.
135. Frans Kok, 'We zijn aardig bezig vast te lopen' in *Nieuwsblad van het Noorden* 22 December 1979.
136. M.C. Brands, *Karrensproren onder het asfalt* (Amsterdam 2013), 103 ff. See also Luuk van Middelaar, *De passage naar Europa* (Groningen 2009).
137. Van Bottenburg, *Aan den arbeid!*, 192 ff.
138. J. Visser and A. Hemerijck, *A Dutch Miracle* (Amsterdam 1997).
139. To put it another way: spending on social security in 1950 was approximately 5% of GDP, in 1983 it had grown to 20%, and in 2003 it was brought back to 12%: Frits Bos, *De Nederlandse collectieve uitgaven in historisch perspectief*, CPB Document 109 [February 2006].
140. *Sociaal en Cultureel Rapport 1998*, 125 and 151-152.
141. Andr  Sz sz, *De euro* (Amsterdam 2001). With thanks to Sz sz, who gave detailed feedback on an earlier version of this passage.
142. Mathieu Seegers, *Reis naar het continent* (Amsterdam 2013); Anjo G. Harryvan and Jan van der Harst (eds), *Verloren consensus* (Amsterdam 2013).
143. Gerrit Voerman and Nelleke van de Walle, *Met het oog op Europa* (Amsterdam 2009).
144. Leading politicians and intellectuals were generally of the opinion that international politics was too difficult for the voters (it was a hopeless task to explain it) and that such policies also benefitted from a certain degree

of secrecy ('There is no need to shout the plans from the rooftops'); see the discussion on foreign policy in 1968-1969 in J.J. Schokking (ed.), *Nederland, Europa en de wereld* (Meppel 1970), especially 150. These discussions did not mention the fact that it was often hardly known how much latitude Dutch politics had, and which options offered the best chance of success. A striking example of this latter point was the heavy-handed rejection of Dutch proposals for a European political union on 30 September 1991: Bob van den Bos, *Mirakel en Debacle* (Assen 2008).

145. Jacques Thomassen, Kees Aarts and Henk van der Kolk (eds), *Politieke veranderingen in Nederland 1971-1998* (The Hague 2000), 206 and 209.
146. The figures were collected and published on the website of the Documentation Centre for Dutch Political Parties: www.dnpp.ub.rug.nl/dnpp/. In 1971, the decision was made to subsidize the scientific offices of political parties that were represented in parliament. See the debate of 29 September and 19 October 1971 in *Handelingen Tweede Kamer 1971-1972*, 173 ff. and 372 ff. With this, a path was taken that led to the Political Parties Subsidies Act of 1999, which provided for the direct subsidizing of political parties (including election campaigns).

8. That's Not Politics!

1. Hans Wansink, *De erfenis van Fortuyn* (Amsterdam 2004).
2. Available on YouTube; see also www.pimfortuyn.com.
3. Piet de Rooy and Henk te Velde, *Met Kok over veranderend Nederland* (Amsterdam 2005), 90.
4. *NRC Handelsblad*, 29 October 2011.
5. This refers to the song '1948' by Kees van Kooten and Wim de Bie, available on YouTube; it is also the title of a television series that ran from 1994 to 2009.
6. Pim Fortuyn, *De verweesde samenleving* (Uithoorn/Rotterdam 2002), 200.
7. Pim Fortuyn, *De Babyboomers* (Utrecht 1998), 280.
8. Pim Fortuyn, *De puinhopen van acht jaar paars* (Uithoorn/Rotterdam 2002).
9. Fortuyn, who was usually very sparing in his crediting of sources, refers here to Charles Murray, 'in his brilliant book *Losing Ground*' [1984]: Pim Fortuyn, *Aan het volk van Nederland* (Amsterdam/Antwerp 1992), 95. In this, Murray turned on 'the apostles of structural poverty', whose analyses had legitimized the idea that it was not the fault of the poor that they were poor.
10. Pim Fortuyn, *De islamisering van onze cultuur* ([Utrecht 1997] Uithoorn 2001). The subtitle of *De verweesde samenleving* was 'A religious-sociological treatise'.
11. Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (London [1996] 2002).
12. Fortuyn, *Puinhopen*, 89. This refers – perhaps unconsciously – to the sensational 'rivers of blood' speech against immigration by John Enoch Powell, a classicist and member of the English House of Commons, given on 20 April

1968. With a reference to Virgil, he said: 'As I look ahead, I am filled with foreboding; like the Roman, I seem to see "the River Tiber foaming with much blood"'. He was subsequently expelled from the Conservative shadow cabinet by Edward Heath, and received 100,000 messages of support.
13. Fortuyn, *Puinhopen*, 162.
 14. Alexandre Dorna, *Le populisme* (Paris 1999).
 15. Michael Freeden, 'Ideology and Political Theory' in *Journal of Political Ideologies* 11 (2006), 3-22, here 19.
 16. Here I draw on Paul Taggart, *Populism* (Buckingham 2000) and Cas Mudde, 'The Populist Zeitgeist' in *Government and Opposition* 39 (2004), 542-563.
 17. Carl Schmitt, *Der Begriff des Politischen* (Berlin [1928] 1932), 26. See also Chantal Mouffe, *Over het politieke* (Kampen 2008).
 18. Ben Stanley, 'The Thin Ideology of Populism' in *Journal of Political Ideologies* 13 (2008), 95-110. One of the few examples of a more or less elaborate ideology: Martin Bosma, *De schijn-élite van de valse munters* (Amsterdam 2010).
 19. Mudde, 'The Populist Zeitgeist', 557.
 20. Margaret Canovan, *The People* (Cambridge 2005), 128.
 21. Fortuyn, *Aan het volk van Nederland*, 203.
 22. Between 1934 and 2001, statements by MPs that were deemed by the speaker to be 'inadmissible' were removed from the *Handelingen*; see Peter Bootsma and Carla Hoetink, *Over lijken* (Amsterdam 2006).
 23. Davetian, *Civility*, 362 and passim.
 24. This was asserted by the Belgian author David van Reybroeck, *Pleidooi voor populisme* (Amsterdam 2008) and developed scientifically by the specialists in public administration M. Bovens and A.C. Willie, *Diploma Democracy* (Utrecht/Leiden 2009) [Dutch version: *Diplomademocratie* (Amsterdam 2011)]. For strong critique of this latter study, see: Merlijn Oudenampsen, 'De politiek van populisme-onderzoek. Een kritiek op Diplomademocratie en de verklaring van populisme uit kiezersgedrag' in Justus Uitermark et al. (eds), *'Power to the People!'* (The Hague 2012), 17-48.
 25. See Paul Dekker and Josje den Ridder, 'De publieke opinie' in *De sociale staat van Nederland 2011* [Socio-Cultural Planning Agency] (The Hague 2011), 55-76, especially Table 3.3.
 26. Mark Elchardus and Bram Spruyt, 'Populisme en de zorg over de samenleving' in Justus Uitermark et al. (eds), *'Power to the People!'*, 119-138.
 27. In this respect, see the views of Søren Kierkegaard in 1841: *Ironie* (Amsterdam 2011).
 28. Giseline Kuipers, 'De fiets van Hare Majesteit. Over nationale habitus en sociologische vergelijking' in *Sociologie* 6 (2010), 3-26.
 29. Van den Berg, *De toegang tot het Binnenhof*, 185.
 30. Henk Vos (PVDA), MP between 1982 and 1998, in *NRC Handelsblad*, 9 April 1998.
 31. R.A. Koole, 'De transformatie van Nederlandse politieke partijen' in *Jaarboek 1988 Documentatiecentrum Nederlandse Politieke Partijen*, 198-224; see the Chronicle in later yearbooks.

32. J.W. Oerlemans, 'Eén-partijstaat Nederland' in *NRC Handelsblad*, 14 February 1990.
33. De Rooy and Te Velde, *Met Kok*, 198 ff.; Remieg Aerts, *Het aanzien van de politiek* (Amsterdam 2009); Henk te Velde, *Van regentenmentaliteit tot populisme* (Amsterdam 2010), 29 ff.
34. On this group (mainly in the United States), see A.N.J. den Hollander, *Het démasqué in de samenleving* (Amsterdam 1976).
35. The Socio-Cultural Planning Agency would devote the 2002 *Socio-Cultural Report* to this: *De kwaliteit van de quartaire sector* [The quality of the public sector] (The Hague 2002).
36. J.A.A. van Doorn, 'Krijgt Nederland een rassenvraagstuk?' [1972] in idem, *Nederlandse democratie*, 66-76, here 66.
37. Jan Rath et al. (eds), *Nederland en zijn islam* (Amsterdam 1996), esp. 4.
38. J.G.H. Janmaat of the Centre Party (after a split, the Centre Democrats from 1984).
39. Joop van Holsteyn and Cas Mudde (eds), *Extreem-rechts in Nederland* (The Hague 1998); on the rise of these parties, see Jaap van Donselaar, *Fout na de oorlog* (Amsterdam 1991); for an international comparison, see Frank Elbers and Meindert Fennema (eds), *Racistische partijen in West-Europa* (Leiden 1993).
40. Kees Slager, *Het geheim van Oss* (Amsterdam and Antwerp 2001), 360-365; Rudie Kagie, *De socialisten* (Amsterdam 2004), 169-174.
41. F. Bolkestein in *de Volkskrant*, 12 September 1991; see Stephan Sanders, 'Het gelijk van Bolkestein' in *Vrij Nederland*, 19 May 2001.
42. Paul Scheffer, 'Het multiculturele drama' in *NRC Handelsblad*, 29 January 2000; see also idem, 'De prijs van de vermijding' in *NRC Handelsblad*, 26 May 2001 and idem, *Het land van aankomst* (Amsterdam 2007).
43. *Handelingen Tweede Kamer* 1999-2000, debate of 18 and 20 April 2000, quotes by J. de Hoop Scheffer (CDA), 4714 and R. van Boxtel (D66), 4738. Jan Marijnissen (SP) proposed the parliamentary inquiry; he made another such proposal on 19 September 2002. After this, in December 2002 the decision was made to establish a Temporary Commission under the leadership of S.A. Blok (VVD), who had to investigate the policy of the last 30 years. On 19 January 2004 a final report was published that was immediately dismissed as being too subtle.
44. J.A.A. van Doorn, 'De multiculturele samenleving heeft haar onschuld verloren' in *Trouw* 16 November 2001.
45. Ian Buruma, *Murder in Amsterdam* (London 2006). In addition, there was the influence of terrorist attacks in Madrid (11 March 2004) and London (7 July 2005).
46. The PVV was presented by Wilders' right-hand-man as 'the first modern party [...] in practice: a network party, an Internet party, a virtual party'. Bosma, *De schijnelite van de valse munters*, 213-215. In addition, Koen Vossen, *Rondom Wilders. Portret van de PVV* (Amsterdam 2013).
47. Keane, *The Life and Death of Democracy*, 748-750.

48. J. Tinbergen, *De les van dertig jaar* (Amsterdam et al. 1946), especially 156.
49. Robert Skidelsky (ed.), *The End of the Keynesian Era* (London 1977).
50. The steadily growing insights into the limits of Keynesianism are described, for example, by Jan Pen, 'Economie: wat wij niet weten' in idem, *Vandaag staat niet alleen* (Amsterdam 2013), 87-101.
51. F.A. Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom* (London 1944), 123.
52. Hayek, *Road*, 14, 104 and 95: 'This is really the crux of the matter. Economic control is not merely control of a sector of human life which can be separated from the rest; it is the control of the means for all our ends.'
53. Angus Burgin, *The Great Persuasion* (Cambridge [Mass.] and London 2012) and Daniel Stedman Jones, *Masters of the Universe* (Princeton and Oxford 2012).
54. What follows draws on Philip Mirovski, 'Postface: Defining Neoliberalism' in Philip Mirovski and Dieter Plehove, *The Road from Mont Pélerin* (Cambridge [Mass.] and London 2009), 417-455.
55. This deviated significantly from the great hero of the neo-liberals, Adam Smith, who in *The Wealth of Nations* (1776) had indicated that the market does not do a number of essential things, such as care for the poor (for example, due to an economic decline). This could not be accepted and the state then had to intervene, given, as he had already argued in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759), that the profit motive was important for the individual, but that 'humanity, justice, generosity, and public spirit, are the qualities most useful to others'. The market and capital fulfilled a very useful role in an economic area, but required strong institutions to keep a curb on fraud and avarice, and to dictate and preserve values. See Amartya Sen, 'Capitalism Beyond the Crisis' in *The New York Review of Books* 29 March 2009.
56. The idea of the 'Washington consensus' was coined in 1989 by the English economist Williamson; see John Williamson, 'The Strange History of the Washington Consensus' in *Journal of Post Keynesian Economics* 27:2 (Winter 2004/2005), 195-206.
57. Wolfgang H. Reinicke, 'Global Public Policy' in *Foreign Affairs* 76:6 (November/December 1997), 127-138; quote: Dani Rodrik, *The Globalization Paradox* (New York/London 2011), 189.
58. Colin Hay, *Why We Hate Politics* (Cambridge 2007), 159. For a number of Dutch examples: Jouke de Vries and Paul Bordewijk (eds), *Rijdende treinen en gepasseerde stations* (Amsterdam 2009).
59. James K. Galbraith, 'A Perfect Crime: Inequality in the Age of Globalization' in *Daedalus* 131:1 (Winter 2002), 11-25; Joseph E. Stiglitz, *The Price of Inequality* (London [2012] 2013). A recent study has made a reasonable case that, measured over the period between 1990 and 2011, countries that were strongly integrated with the world economy profited from this significantly in the form of rising GDP. Growing inequality of income distribution within a country could not be linked to this, possibly because the Gini index that was used for this is not an infallible tool: *Globalisierungsreport 2014. Wer profitiert am stärksten von der Globalisierung?* Bertelsmann Stiftung, Glütersloh 2014.

60. Benjamin M. Friedman, *The Moral Consequences of Economic Growth* (New York 2005); Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett, *The Spirit Level* (London 2009); see also www.equalitytrust.org.uk/resources/authors-responses/questions-about-spirit-levels-analysis. In addition, Tomi Ovaska and Ryo Takashima, 'Does a Rising Tide Lift All the Boats? Explaining the National Inequality of Happiness' in *Journal of Economic Issues* 44 (2010), 205-223 and Chan-ung Park and S.V. Subramanian, 'Voluntary Association Membership and Social Cleavages: A Micro-Macro link in Generalized Trust' in *Social Forces* 90 (2012), 1183-1205, especially 1199.
61. Luc Boltanski and Eve Chiapello, *The New Spirit of Capitalism* (London 2005).
62. Inderit S. Gill and Martin Raiser, *Golden Growth* (Washington 2012).
63. F. Hayek, 'The Economic Conditions of Interstate Federalism' in idem, *Individualism and Economic Order* (Chicago 1948), 255-272, here 264; see also Ian Hall and Or Rosenboim, 'Barbara Wootton, Friedrich Hayek and the Debate on Democratic Federalism in the 1940s' in *The International History Review* 2014, 1-25.
64. James, *Making the European Monetary Union*. For the Dutch vision: Szász, *De euro*.
65. Buiter in *Nieuwsblad van het Noorden*, 18 February 1992.
66. Jacques Delors, *Mémoires* (Paris 2004), 406. It was the echo of the analysis by Tocqueville, *De la démocratie*, 835.
67. In April 2005 the power cable to the house of the European Commissioner Frits Bolkestein in Northern France was cut in protest at his remark that he was pleased that Polish plumbers would come to the region, given that it was impossible to get hold of an electrician or a plumber.
68. Belke, *Doomsday for the Euro Area* (Gütersloh 2013) and Belke and Verheyen, 'Doomsday for the Euro Area' in *International Journal of Financial Studies* 1 (2012), 1-15.
69. For examples from France: Riès, *L'Europe malade de démocratie* (Paris 2008).
70. Wolfgang Streeck, *Gekaufte Zeit* (Berlin 2013) is exemplary of this.
71. This problem of the 'Finalität der europäischen Integration' was urgently addressed by Joschka Fischer in his Humboldt lecture in May 2000; cf. Jan Rood, 'Naar een Europa van kerntaken? Opmerkingen bij Frits Bolkesteins "De grenzen van Europa"' in *Internationale Spectator* 59 (2005), 235-240.
72. Heisbourg, *La fin du rêve européen* (Paris 2013).
73. 'Schnabel in the *Sociaal en Cultureel Rapport 2004*, 49. See also the *Sociaal en Cultureel Rapport 2002*, which analysed standards in the public sector.
74. The data are from the CBS report *Welvaart in Nederland* (Heerlen 2012). See also Annette van den Berg and Joop Hartog, 'Honderd jaar ongelijkheid. Inkomensverschillen sinds het einde van de negentiende eeuw,' in Ronald van der Bie and Pit Dehing (eds), *Nationaal goed* (Voorburg/Heerlen 1999), 109-124.

75. The phrase 'structural decay' (in Dutch: *betonrot*, lit. decay of concrete) stood out at the conference of the PVDA in March 2001; the term 'decline' refers to the debate in the United States and the United Kingdom about the tendency to extrapolate transitional phases into structural decline, if not anticipated ruin: Dowd, 'Declinism' and Aughey, 'From Declinism to Endism: Exploring the Ideology of British Breaking-up'. In the US a similar argument became very common in the 1970s; see Walter Dean Burnham, 'Revitalization and Decay: Looking Toward the Third Century of American Electoral Politics', in *The Journal of Politics* 38 (1976), 146-172, esp. 167-168.
76. See the report by the Kuiper Commission, *Verbindend verbroken? Onderzoek naar de parlementaire besluitvorming over de privatisering en verzelfstandiging van overheidsdiensten* 2012.
77. Herderscheë, *De geldpomp*.
78. This concerns the parliamentary inquiry into the Rijn Schelde Verolme group (1982-1983), led by Kees van Dijk (CDA), and into the implementing agencies for social security (1992-1993), led by Flip Buurmeijer (PVDA).
79. Vic Veldheer, 'Openbaar bestuur' in *Sociaal en Cultureel Rapport* 2002, 177-219.
80. To a great degree these involved greed and imprudence stimulated by various banks, from the scandal surrounding the initial public offering of World On Line (2000) to the participation in derivatives trading by semi-governmental bodies, such as housing corporations and educational and health institutions (2012).
81. Van Doorn, 'Overvraging van beleid – over oorzaken en gevolgen van groeiende bestuurlijke onmacht' [1980] in idem, *Nederlandse democratie*, 192.
82. Willem Trommel and Romke Van der Veen, *De Herverdeelde Samenleving* (Amsterdam 1999). A summary can be found in the *Sociaal en Cultureel Rapport 1998* and *Sociale nota 2000*. For a comparative international overview: Palier (ed.), *A Long Goodbye to Bismarck?*
83. Xander van Uffelen, *Het grote graaien* (Amsterdam 2008). In the summer of 1997 the Prime Minister Wim Kok (PVDA) turned on the 'vulgar profiteers' and their 'exhibitionist self-enrichment'; in 2001 Lodewijk de Waal, the chair of the Dutch Trade Union Congress (FNV), suggested that a 'kleptocrat tax' be introduced.
84. Wiemer Salverda, 'Inkomen, herverdeling en huishoudvorming 1977-2011: 35 jaar ongelijkheidsgroei in Nederland', in *TPEdigitaal* 7 (2012), 66-94.
85. Dekker and Den Ridder, *Stemming onbestemd*.
86. CBS, 'Nederland steeds meer verweven met de wereldhandel' in *Webmagazine* 29 June 2009.
87. G. Gerritse, 25 February 1982. See Ronald Kroeze and Sjoerd Keulen, 'Managerpolitiek. Waarom historici oog voor management moeten hebben', in *BMGN – Low Countries Historical Review* 127 (2012), 97-112, especially 102-103.
88. Wim Kok, *We laten niemand los* (Amsterdam 1995), 10. See also De Rooy and Te Velde, *Met Kok*.

89. Anthony Giddens, *The Third Way* (Cambridge 1998).
90. Paul Schnabel, 'Van traditioneel progressief naar modern conservatief' in Dekker and Den Ridder, *Stemming onbestemd*, 17-25.
91. Jan Marijnissen, *Tegenstemmen* (Amsterdam and Antwerp 1996). Tony Benn greeted the English version, *Enough! A Socialist Bites Back*, with great enthusiasm.
92. *NRC Handelsblad*, 1 May 2001. See also the website www.stopdeuitverkoop.nl.
93. This 'mobility' of the electorate, especially in the 1990s, was a European phenomenon, but it was extreme in the Netherlands and only surpassed in Italy. See Peter Mair, 'Electoral Volatility and the Dutch Party System: A Comparative Perspective' in *Acta Politica* 43 (2008), 235-253.
94. The term 'shifting sand [*stuifzand*]' is from Kees Schuyt, quoted in Van Doorn, *Nederlandse democratie*, 477.
95. Harryvan and Van der Harst, *Verloren consensus*, 164.
96. Fortuyn, *Puinlopen*, 177-181.
97. Source: www.parlement.com.
98. Mark Rutte (VVD) in June 2012 (with headlines in the newspapers such as 'Rutte: now not the time for European visions'), repeated in May 2013 due to the suggestions of the French President Hollande that a European initiative be taken in the areas of youth unemployment and tax fraud.
99. *Jaarverslag Raad van State* 2012, 15. *NRC Handelsblad*, 8 and 9 April 2013 ran the headline: 'The Netherlands brought down to earth. Donner announces the end of the welfare state'.
100. Television address on 1 December 1973: Bleich, *Joop den Uyl*, 294; the term 'doom-mongering' was coined by Kees van Kooten and Wim de Bie in their television programme on 2 May 1980.
101. 'The idea is that individualization will be the most important irreversible socio-cultural force in the coming period': *Sociaal en Cultureel Rapport* 2004, 53-56. See also Schnabel, *Individualisering en sociale integratie* (Nijmegen 1999). Internationally: Ulich Beck and Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim, *Individualization* (London 2002). See also: Jet Bussemaker, *Betwiste zelfstandigheid* (Amsterdam 1993). In 1840 Tocqueville had already predicted that 'democracy' would lead to individualism: Tocqueville, *De la démocratie en Amérique*, 612-615. According to the English politician Disraeli, among others, individualism was less the consequence of democracy, however, than of capitalism: Disraeli, *Sybil: or The Two Nations*, 66. The analysis of individualism by Georg Simmel is still interesting: Georg Simmel, 'Soziologie. Untersuchungen über die formen der Vergesellschaftung' [1908], chapter 11.
102. De Rooy, 'Grote veranderingen in een klein land' in De Rooy and Te Velde, *Met Kok*, esp. 198-208.
103. Thus what is called 'individualism' is usually mainly privatization: 'Privatization means essentially the withdrawal of an understanding or a practice from the public space of consensual or negotiable choice to the microcosm of individual choice, passing perhaps by way of the restricted number of

- friends and kin with whom one has “private relations”. George Armstrong Kelly, ‘Faith, Freedom, and Disenchantment: Politics and the American Religious Consciousness’ in *Daedalus* 111 (Winter 1982), 127-148, here 139.
104. Doeke Wijgers Hellema, *Kroniek van een Friese boer, 1821-1856* (Franeker 1978), 157.

9. A Tiny Spot

1. Quoted in Koch, *Willem I*, 247.
2. Montesquieu, *Over de geest der wetten* (Amsterdam [1748] 2006), 167. This passage was copied into a notebook by the later King William III during his education: Van der Meulen, *Koning Willem III*, 48.
3. Tocqueville, *De la démocratie en Amérique*, 7: ‘Vouloir arrêter la démocratie paraîtrait alors lutter contre Dieu même, et il ne resterait aux nations qu’à s’accommoder à l’état social que leur impose la Providence.’
4. Thorbecke, ‘Narede’, VIII.
5. Walzer, ‘Liberalism and the Art of Separation’.
6. Lasch, *Haven in a Heartless World*, 169.
7. Bagehot, *The English Constitution*, 8.
8. A boycott of the census of 1971 was of great symbolic importance: Maurice Blessing, ‘Het verzet tegen de Volkstelling van 1971’ in *Historisch Nieuwsblad* 14:5 (October 2005), 40-44; see also C.J.M. Schuyt, *Recht, orde en burgerlijke ongehoorzaamheid* (Leiden 1972). Den Uyl had to explain to some of his social democratic followers in 1970 that ‘legal rules are written to protect the weak’ and that it is thus generally wise to comply with the law, just as anti-parliamentarianism is based on the misconception that ‘the best of all worlds is created when every group looks after itself’. Den Uyl, ‘De smalle marges van democratische politiek’ in idem, *Inzicht en uitzicht* (Amsterdam 1982), 161-182, particularly 164-167.
9. The Cals-Donner Government Commission was established in 1967 and published a final report in 1971. The final outcome of the discussion brought about no ‘political regeneration’. The ability to think in constitutional terms appears to have disappeared after 1917. There is also no longer any interest in this: the studies prompted by ‘150 years of the Constitution’ in 1998 (that is to say, the constitution of 1848) fell on barren ground, for example. Perhaps playing a role in this is the fact that the legal system does not have the authority to test laws for compatibility with the constitution, although parliament is debating a member’s bill to alter this. With this, the constitution has come to be of very limited importance in the political debate.
10. Characterizations of the confusion, for example, in Hans Righart, *Het einde van Nederland?* (Amsterdam 1992) and Kleinpaste, *Nederland als vervlogen droom* (Amsterdam 2013).

11. Data from John Llewellyn, presented to the European Strategy Forum on 5 July 2013; with thanks to Caroline de Gruyter, who drew my attention to this research.
12. Salverda, 'Inkomen, herverdeling en huishoudvorming'.
13. Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations* (Harmondsworth [1776] 1970), 184.
14. Peter Giesen, *De weg van de meeste weerstand* (Amsterdam 2013).
15. Robert Putnam, *Bowling Alone* (New York 2000), 367-401.
16. Van Sas, *Metamorfose*, 59-61 and 589-591.
17. This led to the rise of populism, as expounded by Dorna, *Le populisme*.
18. Jonathan Holslag, *De kracht van het paradijs* (Antwerp 2014).
19. These problems had already been indicated prior to the present crisis – see Brands, *Karrenspreken*, esp. 139-183 – and they have not diminished since.
20. Simon Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age* (London 1987). The theme is developed in Prak and Van Zanden, *Nederland en het poldermodel*; but see the criticism – especially regarding the lack of attention to discontinuity – in *BMGN – Low Countries Historical Review* 129 (2014), 88-133.
21. Tocqueville, *De la démocratie en Amérique*, 178.
22. Kossmann, 'Hollandse middelmaat: de Gids 1837-1987'.
23. The Queen Regnant Emma in a proclamation on 30 August 1898, printed in the *Leeuwarder Courant* 3 September 1898, among others.
24. This proclamation was printed in the *Algemeen Handelsblad* 10 May 1940, among others.

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