



**HISTORICAL AND POLITICAL
THOUGHT IN THE SEVENTEENTH-
CENTURY DUTCH REPUBLIC**

The Case of Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn (1612-1653)

Jaap Nieuwstraten

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Historisch en politiek denken in de zeventiende-eeuwse Nederlandse Republiek
De casus van Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn (1612-1653)

Proefschrift

ter verkrijging van de graad van doctor aan de
Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam
op gezag van de rector magnificus

Prof.dr. H.G. Schmidt

en volgens besluit van het College voor Promoties.
De openbare verdediging zal plaatsvinden op
vrijdag 4 mei 2012 om 09.30 uur

door

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geboren te Haarlem



Promotiecommissie

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*Historical and Political Thought in the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic:
The Case of Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn (1612-1653)*

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Published by Jaap Nieuwstraten, Saenredamstraat 65, 2021 ZP Haarlem,
The Netherlands

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Preface

Like so many studies this study owes much to many people. Let me begin by thanking the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO) for funding the research programme *Conquest, Competition and Ideology: Inventing Governance in the Dutch Golden Age* of which this study formed a part. The staff members of the Erasmus School of History, Culture and Communication are to be thanked for all the help and advice that they gave to me all those years. I was also fortunate enough to spend a semester at Central Michigan University, where I had the pleasure of following a course on Roman history under the guidance of Gregory Smith. Thanks to the warm welcome and help of Timothy Hall and his staff this stay in the New World proved to be a wonderful experience and I am grateful for the new friends I met there.

Over the years I have greatly benefitted from the help and advice of Alexander Bick, Hans Blom, Adrie van der Laan, Henk Nellen, Koen Stapelbroek, Toon Van Hal, Jan Waszink, and Arthur Weststeijn. I also owe much to my colleagues and fellow Ph.D. students, both old and new, at the Erasmus School of History, Culture and Communication. Jan Hartman, Michel Reinders, and Ingmar Vroomen became friends. The discussions we had and their humor and support made life as a Ph.D student so much more enjoyable.

Thanks is also due to all those people, who, in one way or another, helped me with my translations of Latin texts and who introduced me to a linguistic world to which I was but a novice. In this context most praise should go to Adrie van der Laan and Jan Waszink, who saved me from many errors and greatly contributed to the improvement of my translations. It goes without saying that I alone am responsible for all remaining faults.

I would also like to express my gratitude to Howard Hotson, Henk Nellen, and Siep Stuurman, who were willing to take a place on the board of examiners responsible for the examination of my doctoral thesis.

I am particular indebted to my Ph.D. supervisor Robert von Friedeburg. He not only informed my ideas and gave me directions, but he also kept faith in my work when I had lost it. If this thesis has any merits, it is for an important part thanks to him.

I also want to thank all my family and friends for their interest and support. I am especially grateful to my parents and sister whose generous financial support enabled me to fully concentrate on my work and – also very important – to sometimes sit back and relax.

The greatest thanks, however, I owe to God, who guided me through difficult times and gave me strength to carry out a work that sometimes felt as a great burden.

This thesis is a work of man. As such, it is likely to contain all kinds of misinterpretations, inaccuracies, and errors. I hope, however, that despite all its possible flaws, this study will please all those who have helped and supported me throughout the years and that it will be of use to the general reader.

Haarlem
March 2012

Acknowledgement

Parts of this thesis have appeared before as Jaap Nieuwstraten, “Why the Wealthy should rule: Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn’s Defence of Holland’s Aristocratic Mercantile Regime”, in Jan Hartman, Jaap Nieuwstraten and Michel Reinders (eds.), *Public Offices, Personal Demands: Capability in Governance in the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing; Newcastle upon Tyne, 2009), pp. 126-49, and are here published with the permission of Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Abbreviations

KB	Koninklijke Bibliotheek, The Hague
Knuttel	Knuttel, W.P.C., <i>Catalogus van de pamflettenverzamelingberustende in de Koninklijke Bibliotheek, 1486-1853. Bewerkt, met aantekeningen en een register der schrijvers voorzien</i> , 9 vol. (Algemeene landsdrukkerij; The Hague, 1889-1920)
NNBW	<i>Nieuw Nederlandsch biografisch woordenboek</i>

Chapter 1

Introduction

The subject of this thesis is the historical and political thought of Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn (1612-1653), professor at Leiden University from 1633 until 1653. The primary goal of this thesis is to unearth Boxhorn's historical and political thought, or at least to discover and present their most central features. On the basis of the results of this investigation into Boxhorn's historical and political thought, an attempt will be made to make some more general observations about the nature and development of Dutch historical and political thought in the seventeenth century. That is the secondary goal of this thesis. The outcome of this thesis will show that Boxhorn was an important transitional figure between the 'traditional' humanist approach to history and politics, on the one hand, and the 'new' approach to history and politics of the later seventeenth century and Enlightenment, on the other.

Thanks to the reception of Niccolò Machiavelli (1469-1527), which had already begun in the sixteenth century, and the appearance of the works of Hugo Grotius (1583-1645) and Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679), the seventeenth century witnessed two important intellectual developments: the rise of modes of secular political thought and the rise of new ideas of natural law. These two developments were sometimes accompanied by a hostile attitude towards the received academic tradition. Hobbes, for example, explicitly campaigned against the 'Vain Philosophy' he believed was taught at the universities and which he wanted to see replaced with his own teachings as expressed in *Leviathan* (1651).¹ In the Dutch Republic Hobbes's attack on academic learning found an echo in the *Politike discoursen* (*Political Discourses*, 1662) of the Leiden cloth merchant Johan de la Court (1622-1660). In the introduction to the work Johan's brother Pieter de la Court (1618-1685) explained that Johan had started his own study of politics partly because of his dissatisfaction with the quality of the political works, written in Latin, 'by some German Professors, Doctors, Preachers and Schoolmasters'. In Johan's view these works, which

¹ Hobbes's attack on academic learning is most forcefully expressed in chapter 46 of his *Leviathan*, of which the title reads: 'Of Darknesse from Vain Philosophy, and Fabulous Traditions'. Hobbes thought that his *Leviathan* 'may be profitably printed, and more profitably taught in the Universities'. Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*. Edited by Richard Tuck (Cambridge University Press; Cambridge, 1st ed. 1996, 2002), pp. 458, 491.

formed a part of ‘the academic study of *Politica*’, were ‘pedantically coward, tasteless, scholastic, full of ignorance and of wrong, damaging and seditious opinions’.² However, Hobbes’s and De la Court’s attack on academic learning should not make us forget that both Hobbes and the brothers De la Court had enjoyed an academic education. Hobbes had studied some five years at Oxford and had also briefly resided at Cambridge.³ Johan and Pieter had both studied at Leiden University, where the former is said to have been a student of Boxhorn.⁴ Thus, with their attack on academic learning Hobbes and De la Court were attacking an important part of their own education, the influence of which, at least in the case of the brothers De la Court, made itself felt in their work.⁵

The traditional academic learning against which Hobbes directed his attack was the scholastic Aristotelian tradition that found its roots in the works of the great Greek philosopher Aristotle (384-322 BC) and their reception in the Middle Ages by the Italian theologian and philosopher Thomas Aquinas (1224/25-1274).⁶ Contrary to what the French philosopher René Descartes

² D.C., *Politike discoursen handelende in Ses onderscheide boeken, van Steeden, Landen, Oorlogen, Kerken, Regeeringen en Zeeden* (Johannes Ciprianus vande Gracht; Amsterdam, 1662), i-iii. English translation and *Politica* quotation taken from Martin van Gelderen, “The Low Countries”, in Howell A. Lloyd, Glenn Burgess and Simon Hodson (eds.), *European Political Thought, 1450-1700: Religion, Law and Philosophy* (Yale University Press; New Haven/London, 2007), p. 406.

³ Quentin Skinner, “Introduction: Hobbes’s life in Philosophy”, in idem, *Visions of Politics*, Vol. 3: *Hobbes and Civil Science* (Cambridge University Press; Cambridge, 1st ed. 2002, 2005), p. 3, and idem, “Hobbes and the *studia humanitatis*”, in idem, *Visions of Politics*, Vol. 3, pp. 39-40.

⁴ E.H. Kossmann, *Political Thought in the Dutch Republic: Three Studies* (Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen; Amsterdam, 2000), p. 42.

⁵ According to Martin van Gelderen, ‘De La Court’s break with the traditional study of politics was perhaps less sharp than Pieter claimed it to be. In structure and vocabulary, the main work of the brothers, *Political Balance*, still followed many of the conventions of the discipline which the brothers condemned so strongly’. Van Gelderen, “The Low Countries”, p. 406. It is not certain how long the brothers De la Court studied at Leiden University. Johan enrolled on October 5, 1641, but when he left Leiden University is unknown, at least to this author. Pieter matriculated twice at Leiden University. The first time was on October 17, 1631, the second time on November 10, 1643. Pieter was still at Leiden University in February 1648. Johan and Pieter were both born and raised at Leiden. The average time students from Leiden and environs stayed at Leiden University was almost six years. *Album studiosorum Academiae Lugduno Batavae MDLXXV-MDCCCLXXV: accedunt nomina curatorum et professorum per eadem secula* (Martinus Nijhoff; The Hague, 1875), pp. 239, 327, 345, and Willem Otterspeer, *Groepsportret met dame*, Vol. 1: *Het bolwerk van de vrijheid: de Leidse universiteit, 1575-1672* (Uitgeverij Bert Bakker; Amsterdam, 2000), pp. 264, 375.

⁶ Hobbes called the ‘Vain Philosophy’ that was taught at the universities ‘Aristotelity’ ‘since the Authority of Aristotle is onely current there’. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, p. 462. Hobbes had no high opinion of Aristotle. He told the English antiquarian John Aubrey (1626-1697) ‘that Aristotle was the worst teacher that ever was, the worst politician and ethic’. Quoted from Quentin Skinner, “Hobbes and the Classical Theory of Laughter”, in Tom Sorell and Luc Foisneau (eds.), *Leviathan after 350 Years* (Oxford University Press; Oxford, 2004), p. 139. Source: <http://fds.oup.com/www.oup.co.uk/pdf/0-19-926461-9.pdf> (Date: 27/06/2011). In *Leviathan* Hobbes tells his readers ‘that scarce any thing can be more absurdly said in naturall Philosophy, than that which now is called *Aristotles Metaphisiques*; nor more repugnant to Government, than much of that hee hath said in his *Politiques*; nor more ignorantly, than a great part of his *Ethiques*’. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, pp. 461-62.

(1596-1650), who just like Hobbes opposed the academic Aristotelian tradition, conceptualised scholasticism to be, namely 'a central core of beliefs', this scholastic Aristotelian tradition was not a single uniform body, but rather consisted of a 'complex plurality of Aristotelianisms' as research of the last few decades has pointed out.⁷ Nor was this scholastic Aristotelian tradition a static whole in which changes did not occur. For example, the beginning of the seventeenth century saw the rise of 'political Aristotelianism', a new Aristotelian school of thought whose representatives treated politics as a secular science, independent from theology. Among those representatives were Henning Arnisaeus (1575-1636) and Hermann Conring (1606-1681), both professors at the University of Helmstedt, which was one of the three universities that 'stood at the centre of political studies' in Germany.⁸

Besides the rise of political Aristotelianism another important development that took place in the seventeenth century was a change in the relationship between the study of politics and the study of history. In the old humanist view history was seen as the handmaiden of politics, supplying the latter with historical examples of proper conduct and political action. In the course of the seventeenth century politics transformed into a more empirical, historical study in which account was taken of time and place. Historical investigations into the specific interests of rulers or nations – the national *ratio status* – grew in importance. At the same time the study of the past became more scientific and empirical, with attention for sources and historical causation that was not only explained in terms of providence or the whims of Fortuna. In addition to this, the seventeenth century also witnessed the relative independence of politics and religion.

The general developments and observations given above form the general background to this study. If we want to get a proper understanding of Boxhorn's historical and political thought and to connect them with these general developments and observations a series of steps need to be taken. First, a more indepth investigation of early modern historical and political thought is necessary. This will be provided for in chapter 2. The results of this investigation will give us a broad intellectual context against which we can compare Boxhorn's historical and political thought.

⁷ For an overview article, see Michael Edwards, "Aristotelianism, Descartes, and Hobbes", in *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 50, No. 2 (2007), pp. 449-64, with quotes on p. 458.

⁸ For a recent discussion of political Aristotelianism, see Robert von Friedeburg and Michael J. Seidler, "The Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation", in Lloyd, Burgess and Hodson (eds.), *European Political Thought*, pp. 156-66, with quote on p. 160. I will discuss political Aristotelianism and its characteristics more extensively in chapter 2.

Second, we need to get to know the man behind the name. Who was Boxhorn? Where did he come from? Who were his family and friends? Where did he live? Where did he study, with whom, and, especially important for our investigation, what did his teachers taught students like Boxhorn about history and politics? The answers to these questions can be found in chapter 3 that holds a biography of Boxhorn's life in which special attention is paid to his educational background.

Third, after we have acquired a broad overview of Boxhorn's life, we need to go deeper and investigate his scholarly activities more attentively. Of special interest is to find out how Boxhorn looked at the events and themes that played an important role during his lifetime. We begin in chapter 4 by looking at the period from the early 1630s to 1648. Two major themes are discussed in this chapter: Boxhorn's defence of Dutch maritime activities, and his view of the Dutch war with the king of Spain and its conclusion with the peace of Münster in 1648. Why did Boxhorn deem Dutch maritime activities important and how did Boxhorn perceive the war with the king of Spain are important questions we will try to answer in this chapter. In chapter 5 we concentrate on the period after the peace of Münster. In this chapter we take a close look at how Boxhorn reacted to the execution of king Charles I of England (1600-1649), what he thought about the English Commonwealth, and how he thought about the nature and structure of the Dutch Republic.

Fourth, in 1647 a scholarly dispute erupted at Leiden University over Descartes's ideas, the publication and reception of which constituted one of the most important intellectual events that occurred during Boxhorn's lifetime. What Boxhorn's position in this scholarly dispute was is a question that will be answered in chapter 6. In this chapter we will also look at Boxhorn's linguistic work and how it is connected to the 'first Cartesian war'.

Fifth, chapters 7 to 9 form the intellectual core of this study. In these chapters we attempt to get a thorough understanding of Boxhorn's historical and political thought. Questions relating to Boxhorn's historical thought are discussed first. How did Boxhorn thought about history and how did he himself conduct history? These are the two central questions we need to answer if we want to understand Boxhorn's historical thought properly and to which chapter 7 provides the answers.

The discussion of Boxhorn's political thought is divided over two chapters. Chapter 8 contains a thorough investigation of the *Institutiones politicae* (*Political Instructions*, 1656) and deals with the more theoretical aspects of Boxhorn's political thought. How did Boxhorn define politics, what was his view of man, and which form of government did he prefer are some of the questions that are treated in this chapter. Then we focus on Boxhorn's practical political

advice. We do this in chapter 9 by analysing the *Disquisitiones politicae* (*Political Inquiries*, 1650), one of Boxhorn's most popular works. The most important question of this chapter is what the central features of Boxhorn's practical political advice were. The chapter ends with connecting Boxhorn's empirical and historical approach to politics with his relativistic view on human reason and metaphysical theories and, from there, with his positive view on scientific innovations.

Finally, at the end of this introduction a short remark on methodology. The method followed in this thesis can be best described as contextualism in a broad sense. In this thesis attention is not only paid to the intellectual context of Boxhorn's historical and political thought, but also to their 'non-intellectual' context. The former deals with questions like: what were Boxhorn's sources, how did he use them, and how do his ideas relate to those of his predecessors, contemporaries, and later authors? The latter concentrates on questions like: when did Boxhorn write work A or B, how do the ideas that Boxhorn expressed in work A or B relate to his personal situation at that specific moment in time when he wrote work A or B, and how to that in the Dutch Republic? By combining these two contextual approaches, this thesis will hopefully provide the reader with a broad overview of Boxhorn's historical and political thought in which both the intellectual context and the 'non-intellectual' context of Boxhorn's historical and political thought are sufficiently taken into account. It is up to the reader if I have succeeded in this attempt.

Chapter 2

Intellectual context

Early modern historical thought

This study is concerned with two fields of research: the history of historical thought and the history of political thought. In early modern Europe the ‘historical’ and the ‘political’ were closely interconnected. Often works of history were politically motivated or had a political goal. For example, in his history of the Dutch Revolt, the *Annales et historiae* (*Annals and Histories*, 1657), the Dutch scholar and politician Hugo Grotius tried to show ‘what he thought was the true character of the Dutch Revolt’ in order ‘to exert a conciliatory influence on the quarrels’ that were troubling the Dutch Republic at the time that Grotius was writing the first version of the *Annales et historiae*.¹ On the other hand, early modern works that we now classify as ‘political’ often used material drawn from history. Notorious examples of these kinds of works are *Il principe* (*The Prince*, 1532) and the *Discorsi sopra la prima deca di Tito Livio* (*Discourses on the First Ten Books of Titus Livius*, 1531) of Niccolò Machiavelli, the ‘sly dog’ from Florence.²

An important argument of this thesis is that Boxhorn’s political thought cannot properly be understood without a good understanding of his historical thought. To get a good understanding of Boxhorn’s historical thought we have to look, among others, at how Boxhorn thought about the past, how he looked at the relationship between the past, the present and the future, and why he thought that knowledge of the past was of importance for those living

¹ Grotius wrote a first version of the *Annales et historiae* between 1601 and 1612. During this period the so-called Truce controversies erupted in the Dutch Republic. Grotius wrote the work by order of the States of Holland, who did not proceed to publication, when Grotius had finished his first version of the *Annales et historiae* in 1612. The *Annales et historiae* remained unpublished until 1657. For a short discussion of the Truce controversies, see chapter 3. For a discussion of the *Annales et historiae*, see Jan Waszink, “Tacitisme in Holland: de *Annales et Historiae de rebus Belgicis* van Hugo de Groot”, in *De zeventiende eeuw*, Vol. 20, No. 2 (2004), pp. 240-63, and idem, “The Ideal of the Statesman-Historian: The Case of Hugo Grotius”, in Jan Hartman, Jaap Nieuwstraten and Michel Reinders (eds.), *Public Offices, Personal Demands: Capability in Governance in the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing; Newcastle upon Tyne, 2009), pp. 101-23, with quote on p. 113.

² In one of his letters the Dutch historian Pieter Corneliszoon Hooft (1581-1647) writes about Machiavelli’s work as ‘this sly dog’s work’. See E.O.G. Haitsma Mulier, “A Controversial Republican: Dutch Views on Machiavelli in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries”, in Gisela Block, Quentin Skinner and Maurizio Viroli (eds.), *Machiavelli and Republicanism* (Cambridge University Press; Cambridge, 1990), p. 248.

in the present. Besides these more theoretical aspects of Boxhorn's historical thought, I will also look at how Boxhorn wrote about the past by discussing some of his historical works. By taking into account both theory and practice, it is possible to get a more complete picture of Boxhorn's historical thought, than if we would focus on only one of them.

To place Boxhorn's historical thought and his historical works into perspective it is necessary to provide some general information about how people in early modern Europe thought about the past, how they thought about the study of the past, and how they wrote about the past. Since these matters differed from time and place, we have to look at some of the general developments that occurred in European historical thought and historiography during the early modern period. Within this overview, special attention will be paid to the Dutch Republic and Dutch scholars, since the Dutch context constitutes the most immediate context with which we can compare Boxhorn's historical thought.

One of the hallmarks of Renaissance humanism was the idea that history is 'the teacher of our lives' (*historia magistra vitae*). This idea, borrowed from the Roman orator and statesman Marcus Tullius Cicero (106-43 BC), implied that the past, or at least certain matters from the past, had an educational value for present generations.³ It also turned the historian, the one who investigated the past and transmitted it to others, into a teacher. But what could be learned from the past? What did history teach in the eyes of those living in the early modern period? For a man like Gerard Vossius (1577-1649), professor at Leiden University and later at the Athenaeum Illustre in Amsterdam, history revealed God's providence.⁴ It also showed 'the true feeling about God' and 'what we should believe about Christ and his church'.⁵ In addition to this,

³ Cicero, *De oratore libri tres*. With Introduction and Notes by Augustus S. Wilkins (Hakkert; Amsterdam, 1st ed. 1892, 1962), II.9.36, p. 245. 'Historia vero testis temporum, lux veritatis, vita memoriae, magistra vitae, nuntia vetustatis ...' For the English translation, I have followed Cicero, *On the Ideal Orator (De Oratore)*. Translated, with Introduction, Notes, Appendixes, Glossary and Indexes by James M. May and Jacob Wisse (Oxford University Press; Oxford, 2001), p. 133.

⁴ See the introduction of Cor Rademaker in Gerard Vossius, *Geschiedenis als wetenschap*. Uitgegeven, ingeleid en van aantekeningen voorzien door Cor Rademaker. *Geschiedenis van de wijsbegeerte*, Vol. 9 (Ambo; Baarn, 1990), pp. 31-35.

⁵ Vossius, *Geschiedenis als wetenschap*, pp. 65-66, 68. 'Maar deze twee zaken, de norm voor geloof en leven en wat er in de kerk gebeurt of gebeuren moet, dat meende Hijzelf op schrift te moeten stellen. En beide dingen hebben niet alleen dezelfde Auteur, maar ze komen ook hierin overeen, dat ons geloof en onze godsvrucht alleen hierdoor worden opgevoed en volwassen worden. Ten eerste immers als niet de ware mening over God uit de geschiedenis geput werd, zou God zelf niet door Mozes het begin van de wereld en de geschiedenis van zoveel eeuwen uiteen hebben willen zetten, maar met voorbijgaan hiervan het voldoende gevonden hebben het volk van Israël de Wet voor te houden ... Wat wij moeten geloven over Christus en zijn kerk, dat openbaart ons de geschiedenis. Want wat had het voor zin dat de geschiedenis van het leven en de dood van onze Zaligmaker werd vastgelegd door evangelisten en

Vossius also believed that ‘moral principles’ could be deduced from matters past.⁶ Here we come across a view, widespread in early modern Europe, of history as a teacher of moral philosophy or ethics, of what people should do or not do in this or that situation according to the prevailing moral standards.

The use of history as a teacher of proper behaviour was strongly supported by a static view on time and human nature; it was believed that there were no real differences between the past and the present. Examples drawn from ancient history could therefore be applied to early modern situations. This static view is visible in the *Discorsi* of Machiavelli and in the *Ricordi* (*Maxims and Reflections*, 1576) of his Florentine compatriot Francesco Guicciardini (1483-1540).⁷ However, in opposition to Machiavelli, that same Guicciardini also held that ‘every historical event was unique, and that each maxim must be modified by present circumstances before it was applied’.⁸ Guicciardini was

apostelen, tenzij om nooit in der eeuwigheid in vergetelheid te laten raken wat wij van Christus moeten geloven. Waarom was het daarna nodig dat door hen de geschiedenis van wat er na de hemelvaart was gebeurd werd doorgegeven, tenzij om ons niet onkundig te laten van het begin van de christelijke kerk?’ Idem, *De historiae utilitate oratio, habita in Illustri Senatus Populij; Amstelodamensis Gymnasio, cum publicam Historiarum & Politices professionem ordiretur, anno MDCXXXII. VI. Id. Ianuarii* (Henricus Laurentius; Amsterdam, 1632), pp. 14, 16. ‘At duo haec, fidei vitaeque normam, et in Ecclesiâ gesta vel gerenda, referre ipsi in eo quoque conveniunt, quòd illis solis educetur, atque adolescat fides et pietas nostra. Primò enim nisi ex historia verus de Deo sensus hauriretur; non Deus ipse per Mosem mundi natales, et tot seculorum exponere historiam voluisset: sed, praeteritis his, legem Israëlitico populo proponere, satis habuisset ... Ingentem, auditores, historiae fructum vidimus in divina providentia. Sed non hic se ejus utilitas ac necessitas sistit. Etenim quid de Christo, quid de Ecclesia ejus credere debeamus, pandit nobis historia. Nam quid attinebat ab Euangelistis, et Apostolis, historiam de vita et morte Servatoris nostri consignari, nisi ne ullis unquam seculis in oblivionem veniret, quid de Christo sentire debeamus? Quid necesse postea erat, tradi ab illis historiam eorum, quae post adscensum in caelos evenissent: quam ne Christianae incunabula Ecclesiae nesciremus?’

⁶ Nicholas Wickenden, *G.J. Vossius and the Humanist Concept of History* (Van Gorcum, Assen, 1993), p. 77.

⁷ For Machiavelli, see the *Discorsi*, I.39.1-2. ‘Anyone who considers present and ancient matters readily understands that the same desires and feelings exists in all cities and all peoples and they always have. So it is easy for anyone who carefully examines past matters to foresee those in the future of any republic and to apply to them the remedies that were used by the ancients or, if they are not to be found, to devise new ones because the events are similar.’ Ibidem, III.43.1-2. ‘Wise men are wont to say, and not by chance or without reason, that anyone who wants to see what is to be should consider what has been: for every thing in the world at every time has its own analogue in ancient times. This happens because, since these things are done by men, who have and always did have the same passions, they must of necessity produce the same result.’ Both quotations quoted from *The Sweetness of Power: Machiavelli’s Discourses & Guicciardini’s Considerations*. Translated by James B. Atkinson and David Sices (Northern Illinois University Press; DeKalb, 2002), pp. 112, 370. For Guicciardini, see Francesco Guicciardini, *Maxims and Reflections (Ricordi)*. Translated by Mario Domandi. Introduction by Nicolai Rubinstein (University of Pennsylvania Press; Philadelphia, 1st ed. 1972, 1992), B.114, p. 123. ‘Past events shed light on the future. For the world has always been the same, and everything that is and will be, once was; and the same things recur, but with different names and colors. And for that reason, not everyone recognizes them – only those who are wise, and observe and consider them diligently.’ For this particular similarity between Machiavelli and Guicciardini, see Donald R. Kelley, ‘Humanism and History’, in idem, *The Writing of History and the Study of Law* (Variorum; Aldershot, 1997), p. 252, who also quotes Guicciardini’s *Ricordi*. In this thesis all references to, and quotations from, Machiavelli’s *Discorsi* refer to, and are quoted from, *The Sweetness of Power*.

⁸ J.H.M. Salmon, ‘Stoicism and Roman Example: Seneca and Tacitus in Jacobean England’, in *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 50, No. 2 (1989), p. 211. Machiavelli, for example, believed that ‘in order

aware that the time he lived in differed from antiquity and that the knowledge of the ancients, who were generally held in high esteem by humanists and early modern scholars, had not always been correct.⁹

In early modern Europe history was regarded as a literary genre.¹⁰ The ideal was to write a narrative in the eloquent and fluent style of the Roman historian Titus Livius (59/64 BC-17). From the later sixteenth century onwards the Roman historian Publius Cornelius Tacitus (c.55-c.120) and his difficult varied style became popular, also amongst Dutch scholars. Daniel Heinsius (1580-1655), who was professor of history at Leiden University, and Grotius, but also the Dutch poet and historian Pieter Corneliszoon Hooft (1581-1647), all sang Tacitus's praises and tried to imitate his style.¹¹

In imitation of the classics, early modern writers of narrative history divided their works into books, followed a chronological order, and inserted their texts with invented speeches.¹² The topics they dealt with were 'political': the affairs of kings and queens; the doings of popes, emperors, and independent city-states; revolts and wars, negotiations and battles.¹³ In the Dutch Republic the attention went out to the Dutch Revolt and the resulting war with the king of Spain, church history, and the question 'whether the stadholders had benefitted or harmed the Dutch Republic'.¹⁴ An important goal

for a religion or a republic to endure, it has to be taken back frequently toward its origins' (*Discorsi*, III.1, p. 259), a theory that is closely connected to another principle Machiavelli adhered to, namely 'that men who are born in a country conform more or less to the same nature for all time' (*Discorsi*, III.43, p. 370). For the difference between Machiavelli's and Guicciardini's approach to history and politics, see the introduction by James Atkinson and David Sices in *The Sweetness of Power*, esp. xx, xxx-xxxii.

⁹ In his *Storia d'Italia* (*History of Italy*, 1561) Guicciardini observed that the 'new invention' of gunpowder artillery 'rendered ridiculous all former weapons of attack which had been used by the ancients ...'. He also noticed that the voyages of the Portuguese and the Spaniards, which had led to a sea route around Africa to Asia and to the discovery of America, 'have made it clear that the ancients were deceived in many ways regarding a knowledge of the earth ...'. Francesco Guicciardini, *The History of Italy*. Translated, edited, with Notes and an Introduction by Sidney Alexander (Princeton University Press; Princeton, 1st ed. 1969, 1984), I, p. 50, and VI, pp. 177-82, with quotes on p. 50 and p. 182 respectively. See also John Burrow, *A History of Histories: Epics, Chronicles and Inquiries from Herodotus and Thucydides to the Twentieth Century* (Penguin Books/Allen Lane; London, 2007), p. 294, who quotes the same passages.

¹⁰ Burrow, *A History of Histories*, p. 300. 'History was a literary genre in which truth took second place to rhetorical effectiveness in the provision of inspiring examples of good and great conduct.'

¹¹ See, amongst others, E.O.G. Haitsma Mulier, "Grotius, Hooft and the Writing of History in the Dutch Republic", in A.C. Duke and C.A. Tamse (eds.), *Britain and the Netherlands*, Vol. 8: *Clio's Mirror: Historiography in Britain and the Netherlands* (Walburg Pers; Zutphen, 1984), pp. 55-72; Lesley Gilbert, "Hooft as Historian and Political Thinker", in *Dutch Crossing*, No. 49 (1993), pp. 130-45; Jan Waszink, "Hugo Grotius' 'Annales et historiae de rebus Belgicis' from the evidence in his correspondence, 1604-1644", in *Lias*, Vol. 31, No. 2 (2004), pp. 249-67; idem, "The Ideal of the Statesman-Historian: The Case of Hugo Grotius", pp. 101-23. For Heinsius, see chapter 3.

¹² Felix Gilbert, *Machiavelli and Guicciardini: Politics and History in Sixteenth-Century Florence* (W.W. Norton and Company; New York/London, 1st ed. 1965, 1984), pp. 208, 211.

¹³ For the 'exclusively political focus' of humanist narrative historiography, see Burrow, *A History of Histories*, p. 300, and Gilbert, *Machiavelli and Guicciardini*, p. 209.

¹⁴ For these last two topics, see E.O.G. Haitsma Mulier, "A Repertory of Dutch Early Modern His-

of these kinds of political narrative histories was to give moral and political instruction to the reader. Another goal was to legitimise or delegitimise a certain historical event or a certain contemporary situation on historical grounds.

What position did history occupy among the arts and sciences? Aristotle, that great authority from antiquity, considered history to be less important than poetry. He believed that poetry was 'a more philosophical and more serious thing than history', since 'poetry tends to speak of universals', i.e. of 'things that may happen', while history speaks 'of particulars', i.e. of 'things that have happened'.¹⁵ Aristotle's view did not go uncontested. Already in the fifteenth century the Italian humanist Lorenzo Valla (1407-1457) disagreed with the great Stagirite. Valla held that 'history is more robust than poetry ... because it is more truthful. It is oriented not toward abstraction but toward concrete truth ... teaching by example'.¹⁶

Another humanist, Justus Lipsius (1547-1606), believed that historical examples had a greater value 'than the general precepts of the philosophers'. The past contained material from which 'universal lessons' could be drawn.¹⁷ With this feeling, Lipsius, who was professor of history and law at Leiden University between 1578 and 1591, placed history on the same level, if not a higher one, as philosophy.

One of the scholars of the early modern period who went the furthest in exalting history was Vossius. In his *De historiae utilitate oratio* (*Oration on the Usefulness of History*, 1632) Vossius claimed that 'no study, no science can be found that is more important than history', since it 'lays the foundations' of 'the science of civic prudence' and 'the study of piety or religion', which, on their turn, 'tower far above all the other sciences'.¹⁸ Yet, although Vossius

toriography: Some Considerations on Intentions and Content", in *Storia della Storiografia*, No. 20 (1991), pp. 120, 123, with quote on the latter.

¹⁵ Aristotle, *Poetics I with the "Tractatus Coislinianus": A Hypothetical Reconstruction of Poetics II: The Fragments of the "On Poets"*. Translated with Notes by Richard Janko (Hackett Publishing Company; Indianapolis/Cambridge; 1987), 51b1 [I:9], p. 12.

¹⁶ Quoted from Kelley, "Humanism and History", p. 242.

¹⁷ Mark Morford, "Tacitean Prudentia and the Doctrines of Justus Lipsius", in T.J. Luce and A.J. Woodman (eds.), *Tacitus and the Tacitean Tradition* (Princeton University Press; Princeton, 1993), p. 136.

¹⁸ Vossius, *Geschiedenis als wetenschap*, p. 70. 'Ongetwijfeld bent u het er vanzelfsprekend mee eens dat er in het privé-leven niets beters is dan op de juiste wijze over God te denken, en in het openbare leven niets verheveners dan als Gods plaatsbekleder op aarde leiding te geven. Daar volgt uit dat dan ook twee wetenschappen ver boven de andere uitsteken, enerzijds de bestudering van vroomheid of godsdienst die leert wat passend is te geloven van God en Christus en hun beiden de vereiste eer te bewijzen, en anderzijds de wetenschap van de bestuurskunde, die de staat richt op het welzijn van de burgers, zowel het tijdelijke als het hemelse welzijn. Welnu, zoals wij gezien hebben, legt de geschiedenis de fundamenten van de ene en van de andere, zodat zonder haar geen van beide tot ontluiking kan komen. De geschiedenis voert dus tot vroomheid, zodat wij ware christenen zijn, wat het beste is. De geschiedenis brengt de bestuurskunde voort, zodat wij in Gods plaats aan anderen leiding kunnen geven, wat het grootste is. Zo kan er geen enkele studie, geen enkele wetenschap, gevonden worden, die belangrijker is dan de geschiedenis.' Idem, *De historiae utilitate oratio*, p. 18. 'Procul dubio enim faciliè

exalted history to great heights, he did not consider it to be a science.¹⁹ Other early modern scholars, however, did. Among them was the Italian Francesco Patrizi (1529-1597). He saw history as ‘an autonomous, if a rather eclectic science’,²⁰ which was concerned with telling the truth.²¹ Patrizi had critique on treating history as a literary genre. He believed that writing history in ‘the traditional, rhetorical form’ led to falsehoods.²² For Patrizi, ‘the historian could provide his readers useful information’, but for this to happen, the historian had to combine ‘narrative with the sorts of analytical history practised by antiquarians’.²³

According to early modern standards, there was a division between ‘the genre of historiography’ (*historia*) that tried to imitate the literary style of the classics and had strong didactical leanings, on the one hand, and ‘the genre of antiquarianism’ (*antiquitates*), on the other.²⁴ The task of the antiquarian was to track down, study, and open up to others both written and unwritten sources.²⁵ A characteristic of early modern antiquarians was that they were interested in the origins of all kinds of matters, e.g. peoples, languages

hoc omnes concesseritis, privatim nihil esse melius, quàm rectè de Deo sentire; publicè nihil augustius, quàm, Numinis loco, in terris praesidere. Vnde sequitur, duas quoque omnium facilè principes scientias esse; pietatis sive religionis unam, quae congrua de Deo Christoque credere, & rectum utriusque cultum docet: prudentiae civilis alteram, quae Rempublicam dirigat ad civium bonum, tum terrenum, tum caeleste. Atqui, ut vidimus, & hujus, & illius, sic fundamenta ponit historia, ut sine eâ exurgere neutra possit. Historia igitur ad pietatem ducit, ut veri simus Christiani, quo nihil melius: historia civilem prudentiam gignit, ut Dei loco praeesse aliis possimus, quo non aliud majus. Adeò ut stadium nullum, nulla scientia, praestantior historiâ reperiri possit.’

¹⁹ Ibidem, p. 81. ‘Zo hebben we dus vastgesteld dat, hoewel de geschiedenis geen echte kundigheid is en ook geen wetenschap, ja, zelfs geen discipline, de geschiedkunde wel degelijk een kundigheid is, omdat ze over universele zaken handelt, iets wat niet gezegd kan worden van de geschiedenis. De geschiedkunde toch houdt zich bezig met afzonderlijke dingen en wel met het doel daaruit universele voorschriften te trekken en toe te lichten. Dat het in de ruime betekenis van het woord, een discipline en een wetenschap is, heeft niemand ontkend, want het gaat om leren kennen en weten.’ Gerard Vossius, *Ars historica. Sive, De Historiae, & Historices naturâ, Historiaeque scribendae praeceptis, commentatio. Ad Illustratissimum Virum, Joannem Berckium. Editio haec secunda dimidia fere parte propria manu auctoris est locupletata* (Johannes Maire; Leiden, 1653), p. 8. ‘Sic igitur statuimus: etsi historia propriè nec ars sit, nec scientia, atque adeò nec disciplina: tamen historicen esse artem: quippe quae circa universalia versetur: quod de historia dici non potest: ut quae occupetur circa singularia; idque eo fine, ut universalia praecepta inde colligantur, atque illustrentur. Laxè verò disciplinam ac scientiam esse, nemo negaverit, cùm discatur, & sciatur.’

²⁰ Kelley, “Humanism and History”, p. 256. Other early modern scholars who saw history as a science were Jean Bodin (1530-1596) and Henri Lancelot-Voisin de La Popelinière (1541-1608). With these two Frenchmen ‘history achieved not only recognition as a science but a position “above all sciences” as the source of all human disciplines ...’. Ibidem, p. 257.

²¹ Anthony Grafton, *What was History?: The Art of History in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge University Press; Cambridge, 2007), p. 39.

²² Ibidem.

²³ Ibidem, pp. 132-33.

²⁴ Sandra Langerreis, *Geschiedenis als ambacht: oudheidkunde in de Gouden Eeuw: Arnoldus Buchelius en Petrus Scriverius* (Uitgeverij Verloren; Hilversum, 2001), p. 41. See also Burrow, *A History of Histories*, pp. 309-10.

²⁵ Ibidem, pp. 25-26.

and customs, and attached great value to 'reliable documentation'.²⁶ In the seventeenth century the scholarly approach of antiquarians was still highly philological in character. It consisted of applying the critical techniques that the humanists used to detect anachronisms in texts in order to discover the true meaning of each individual text and its authenticity. These philological investigations were often completed with data supplied by other 'sciences': chronology, sigillography, and numismatics.²⁷

Although the task of the early modern antiquarian seems innocent enough, this does not mean that all those who performed it were impartial scholars, who were only interested in the truth and nothing but the truth. Like narrative historians, antiquarians could be, and often were, politically motivated.²⁸ We will see an example of this in the person of Petrus Scriverius (1576-1660), an important early modern Dutch antiquarian and a patron of Boxborn.²⁹

A contemporary of Scriverius was Arnoldus Buchelius (1565-1641), a Dutch antiquarian from Utrecht. Buchelius had an understanding that there was a distinction between different times, i.e. 'that each time has its own institutions, customs, and habits'.³⁰ It is also possible to detect in his work 'a trace' of an 'understanding of causality', i.e. that there is a 'causal connection between historical phenomena of completely different nature'.³¹ Such an understanding is perhaps even more visible in the *Jani Anglorum Facies Altera (Reverse or Back-face of the English Janus, 1610)*, an antiquarian study of the English scholar John Selden (1584-1654) that Boxborn used to refute the legitimacy of the non-monarchical regime that controlled England after the execution of king Charles I in 1649.³²

After the middle of the seventeenth century the number of antiquarian studies increased in the Netherlands. This increase was not an isolated phenomenon. In general, it can be said that in the second half of the seventeenth century the study of the past acquired a more important role. The beginning

²⁶ Graham Parry, *The Trophies of Time: English Antiquarians of the Seventeenth Century* (Oxford University Press; Oxford, 1st ed. 1995, 2007), pp. 9-10, with quote on p. 10.

²⁷ Burrow, *A History of Histories*, pp. 304-5, and Haitsma Mulier, "A Repertory of Dutch Early Modern Historiography", p. 118.

²⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 299.

²⁹ See chapter 3.

³⁰ Herman Kampinga, *De opvattingen over onze oudere vaderlandsche geschiedenis: bij de Hollandsche historici der xvii en xviii eeuw*. Vermeerderd met een register van personen door Dr. E.O.G. Haitsma Mulier (HES; Utrecht, 1st ed. 1917, 1980), pp. 197, 199-200, with quote on p. 197.

³¹ *Ibidem*, pp. 36-37, with quotes on p. 36.

³² Paul Christianson, *Discourse on History, Law, and Governance in the Public Career of John Selden (1610-1635)* (University of Toronto Press; Toronto, 1996), p. 30. 'Selden showed how changes in one aspect of a society, such as religion, led to numerous adjustments elsewhere; for example, how the introduction of Christianity seriously reconstructed Saxon society by bringing in a new set of literate royal advisers.' For Boxborn's use of Selden's *Jani Anglorum*, see chapter 5.

of the growing importance of the past as an object of study can be traced to the German polymath Hermann Conring. In his *De origine juris Germanici* (*On the Origin of Germanic Law*, 1643), Conring – who had studied at Leiden where Vossius and Heinsius had been two of ‘his most important teachers’ – went looking for the history of the genesis and development of Germanic law.³³ He also wanted to find out ‘how Roman law had come to Germany and why it was effective there’.³⁴ A new element of Conring’s work was that he ‘histori-sised’ his question; a contemporary problem could only be solved if the historical process was understood.³⁵ In addition, Conring followed the principle that sources have to prove historical events.³⁶ His merits lie mainly in the field of the development of the historical auxiliary sciences.

A correspondent of Conring was the German philosopher and court historian Samuel Pufendorf (1632-1694).³⁷ During his life Pufendorf wrote several histories. He also wrote a book in which he discussed the interests of the states of Europe, the *Einleitung zu der Historie der vornehmsten Reiche und Staaten so itziger Zeit in Europa sich befinden* (*Introduction to the History of the Current Principal Kingdoms and States of Europe*, 1682).³⁸ With this book Pufendorf followed in the footsteps of Petrus Valckenier (1641-1712), the Dutch lawyer-diplomat, who in his *t Verwerd Europa* (*Europe Raped*, 1675) had given political-historical analyses of the different interests of the powers playing on the European chess board.³⁹ From explanations in Pufendorf’s *Einleitung* it became clear that

³³ Conring travelled to Leiden in 1626. He matriculated at the town’s University as a medicine student on May 22 of that same year. Less than three months later Boxhorn would matriculate at Leiden University. For Conring’s matriculation, see *Album studiosorum Academiae Lugduno Batavae MDLXXV-MDCCCLXXV*, p. 192. For Boxhorn’s matriculation, see chapter 3. For Conring, his time at Leiden and his time in the Dutch Republic, see Constantin Fasolt, *The Limits of History* (University of Chicago Press; Chicago, 2004), pp. 59-64, with quote on p. 60. Boxhorn and Conring knew of each others work. Boxhorn possessed a copy of Conring’s *De origine juris Germanici*. See *Catalogus Variorum & Insignium Librorum, Celeberrimi ac Eruditissimi Viri Marci Zuveri Boxhornii, Eloquentia ac Historiarum, dum viveret, Professoris in alma Lugdono-Batav. Academia* (Petrus Leffen; Leiden, 1654), l. In Conring’s collected works we find, amongst others, references to Boxhorn’s *Commentariolus*, ‘an elegant little book’ (‘elegans libellus’). See Hermann Conring, *Opera* (Friedrich Wilhelm Meyer; Braunschweig, 1730), Vol. 3, p. 22, and Vol. 4, p. 244.

³⁴ Michael Stolleis, “Hermann Conring und die Begründung der deutschen Rechtsgeschichte”, in Hermann Conring, *Der Ursprung des Deutschen Rechts*. Übersetzt von Ilse Hoffmann-Mecklenstock. Herausgegeben von Michael Stolleis (Insel Verlag; Frankfurt am Main/Leipzig, 1994), p. 258.

³⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 264.

³⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 262.

³⁷ Martin van Gelderen, “Aristotelians, Monarchomachs and Republicans: Sovereignty and *Respublica Mixta* in Dutch and German Political Thought, 1580-1650”, in Martin van Gelderen and Quentin Skinner (eds.), *Republicanism: A Shared European Heritage*, Vol. 1: *Republicanism and Constitutionalism in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge University Press; Cambridge, 2002), p. 217.

³⁸ Alfred Dufour, “Pufendorf”, in J.H. Burns (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Political Thought, 1450-1700* (Cambridge University Press; Cambridge, 1991), p. 562.

³⁹ For a discussion of Valckenier’s ‘political-historical ideas’, see E.O.G. Haitsma Mulier, “Die politisch-historischen Ideen von Petrus Valkenier”, in Albert de Lange and Gerhard Schwinge (eds.), *Pieter Valkenier und das Schicksal der Waldenser um 1700* (Verlag Regionalkultur; Heidelberg, 2004), pp. 108-22.

every state had its own specific interest. What that specific interest was, could best be learned from the individual history and the specific circumstances of the state in question. For Pufendorf the importance of the study of the past went further than providing those in power with examples of proper moral or political conduct; historical investigation was necessary for understanding the contemporary circumstances of individual states and to make the right political choices against the background of one's own interest and those of others.⁴⁰

Three years after the publication of Pufendorf's *Einleitung* a rather critical analysis of Roman historians appeared, the *Animadversiones historicae* (*Historical Observations*, 1685). The work was written by Jacob Perizonius (1651-1715), professor of history at Franeker University (Friesland) and, from 1693 onwards, Leiden University. Perizonius considered classical authors like Livy as normal men who made mistakes. But although they were not infallible, this did not mean that their works were useless. Classical authors had a value as historical sources; by critically studying them and comparing them with one another it was possible to determine from what classical authors told in their works how things had really happened.⁴¹ Later on, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, Perizonius took it upon him to defend the Roman historian Quintus Curtius Rufus (first century) against the attack of the Swiss biblical scholar Jean le Clerc (1657-1736), who, in his *Ars critica* (*Critical Art*, 1697), had measured Curtius against the standard of 'right reason' and found him guilty of grave errors. Perizonius defended Curtius by pointing out that it was 'completely idiotic' to judge the works of ancient authors according to modern standards. The context of the author, i.e. the time and place in which the author had lived and written his text, had to be taken into account when judging a work.⁴²

⁴⁰ Thomas Behme holds that 'according to Pufendorf the goal of historiography ... was to investigate the individual appearance and genesis ... of a particular political commonwealth'. Thomas Behme, *Samuel Pufendorf: Naturrecht und Staat: eine Analyse und Interpretation seiner Theorie, ihrer Grundlagen und Probleme* (Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht; Göttingen, 1995), p. 168. 'Ebenso ist auch in der Staatslehre die Lehre von der Staatsklugheit unentbehrliches Hilfsmittel bei der Anwendung der naturrechtlichen Staatszielbestimmung in konkrete Handlungsanweisungen (oder in Urteile über bereits vollzogene Staatshandlungen), die auf Zustand und Lage einzelner politischer Gemeinwesen bezogen sind. Diesen in seiner individuellen Erscheinung und Genese zu untersuchen, ist nach Pufendorf Aufgabe der Geschichtsschreibung, welche das als Basis für Urteile in Staatssachen unentbehrliche Faktenwissen zu liefern hat.'

⁴¹ For Perizonius and the *Animadversiones historicae*, see Th.J. Meijer, *Kritiek als herwaardering: het levenswerk van Jacob Perizonius (1651-1715)* (Ph.D.-dissertation, Universitaire Pers Leiden; Leiden, 1971), pp. 66-71.

⁴² See Grafton, *What was History?*, pp. 1-18, with quote on p. 17.

The cases of Pufendorf and Perizonius illustrate that by the later seventeenth and the early eighteenth century attitudes towards the past, the study of the past, and historiography had changed. These changes did not mean that the old views or practices had disappeared. Narrative histories that followed the humanist prescriptions for writing history – divisions in books, a focus on the ‘political’ – continued to be written. For someone like Henry St. John (1678-1751), viscount Bolingbroke, history was still *magistra vitae*, ‘teaching by example’.⁴³ Yet despite these continuities notable changes had occurred. One of these changes was a growth in historical consciousness. The past came to be seen as something distinct from the present. There were some real differences between the past and the present, and this put restrictions on the utility of matters past for present purposes. On the other hand, people also became aware that the present could only be understood by understanding the events and developments from the past that had shaped the present. Thus, the growing historical consciousness was a double-edged sword. A second change was that history as the study of the past emancipated from being a handmaiden of ethics and politics, which it was supposed to supply with historical examples, to being an investigative and analytical tool for understanding contemporary circumstances and politics. Some early modern scholars even thought of history as a science and inroads were made to make the craft of the historian more scientific. A third change was the fall of the classical authors from their pedestal. Their histories came to be seen as the works of mere mortals that contained errors that asked for a careful reading of these works. No longer considered to be infallible, classical authors came to be treated as sources like ‘modern historical science’ defines sources.⁴⁴

Early modern political thought

If the landscape of early modern European historical thought had altered by the end of the seventeenth century in comparison to 100 or 200 years before then so had that of early modern European political thought. Three of the most important early modern scholars that can be connected to this alteration

⁴³ For Bolingbroke, see Burrow, *A History of Histories*, pp. 309-10, and Grafton, *What was History?*, pp. 31, 251-52, with quote on p. 252. However, Bolingbroke was not a proponent of the uncritical use of historical examples. See Daniel Woolf, “From Hystories to the Historical: Five Transitions in Thinking about the Past, 1500-1700”, in Paulina Kewes (ed.), *The Uses of History in Early Modern England* (Huntington Library; San Marino, 2006), pp. 44-45.

⁴⁴ Like Perizonius did. Meijer, *Kritiek als herwaardering*, p. 70, with quote there.

are Thomas Hobbes, René Descartes, and Baruch de Spinoza (1632-1677).⁴⁵ Their ideas – either directly or indirectly – shaken, or at least were felt by contemporaries to shake, the pillars of traditional political thought.⁴⁶ In the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic that traditional political thought, according to Ernst Kossmann in his famous study of 1960, was ‘Aristotelian’ and ‘humanist’. It followed the Aristotelian view that man was a social being and political society a natural phenomenon. A characteristic humanist element was a strong focus on antiquity, both on its literary heritage – the classics – and on its history. Furthermore, within traditional seventeenth-century Dutch political thought monarchy was seen ‘as the original, the simplest, and often the best form of government’. Finally, traditional seventeenth-century Dutch political thought was also ‘academic’ and had almost no ‘contact with Dutch political life’; it was out of touch with ‘the real political world’.⁴⁷

The actions of stadholder William II (1626-1650) and his death on November 6, 1650, mark a breaking point in Kossmann’s story. After William’s death ‘a genuinely republican theory made its appearance’ in the Dutch Republic, an event that, in Kossmann’s view, ‘represented a revolutionary break with tradition’.⁴⁸

Among those who broke with tradition were the Leiden cloth merchants Johan and Pieter de la Court. In Kossmann’s analysis, Johan de la Court – whom he gives pride of place – was influenced by both Descartes and Hobbes. From the former Johan derived his ideas of the passions, while he followed the latter in the English man’s view of the state of nature and in seeing fear as the driving force behind human actions. Kossmann, however, also connected the oldest of the De la Court brothers to Boxhorn, whom he described as ‘an analyst and empiricist who ... remained deliberately and with conviction within the traditional mould ... without attempting to reconcile it with his modern, realist insights ... of *raison d’état*’. Johan, according to Kossmann, had been a student of Boxhorn, whose ‘modern’ *raison d’état* thinking might have

⁴⁵ Of these three men, two, Descartes and Spinoza, lived at least a part of their lives in the Dutch Republic. During Boxhorn’s lifetime, Descartes’s first three works all got published in the Dutch Republic (see chapter 6) and the same holds true for Hobbes’s *De Cive*, of which Boxhorn owned a copy (see for this particular point chapter 8).

⁴⁶ We can think, for example, of Hobbes’s perception of man as an unsocial being. For a short discussion of Hobbes’s political thought, see Glenn Burgess, “England and Scotland”, in Lloyd, Burgess and Hodson (eds.), *European Political Thought*, pp. 366-68.

⁴⁷ I have used here the English edition of Kossmann’s study. This edition appeared in 2000, bound together with two other studies on early modern Dutch political thought from Kossmann’s hand. Kossmann, *Political Thought in the Dutch Republic*, pp. 29-30, 50. In this thesis all references are to the English edition of 2000.

⁴⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 53.

influenced the Leiden cloth merchant, whose ideas, on their turn, exercised a great influence on Spinoza.⁴⁹

After Kossmann's study many publications have appeared that have added to or (partially) revised his findings concerning seventeenth-century Dutch political thought. These will not all be discussed here.⁵⁰ Rather, what follows is a short and certainly not all-encompassing overview in which the results of several studies on Dutch and European political thought that have appeared after Kossmann's study of 1960 are brought together. This overview, together with the above discussion of Kossmann's study of 1960, will provide a short historiographical survey of studies on Dutch political thought to which we can compare the findings of this thesis. In addition, this overview will also try to connect Dutch political thought and Dutch political authors to developments in political thought that occurred elsewhere in early modern Europe in order to provide a proper context in which we can place Boxhorn's political thought.

In his study of 'political science' at Leiden University, which covers the period from 1575, the year Leiden University was founded, until approximately the middle of the seventeenth century, Harm Wansink detected two important 'currents' or 'traditions' in the teaching of politics at Leiden: a 'philological-historical' one, in which Tacitus held an important position, and a 'philosophical' one, in which the teachings of Aristotle played an important role.⁵¹ The former, which was the most dominant of the two traditions, consisted of professors who 'had the duty to teach history', but who were also 'active in the field of the politica', which, at least officially, belonged to the field of ethics. Among those professors Wansink ranked men like Lipsius, Heinsius, and Boxhorn.⁵² An important contribution of Wansink's study is that he demonstrated the international character of Leiden University. Students from all over Europe – and even beyond – flocked to Leiden, outnumbering the number of Dutch students during the period 1626-1650.⁵³ In Wansink's words, Leiden University, 'the most important centre of scholarly life in Europe' during the seventeenth century, was Europe's 'last big, truly international university'.⁵⁴

⁴⁹ Ibidem, pp. 42, 64-83, with quote on p. 42.

⁵⁰ For a recent general discussion of early modern Dutch political thought, see Van Gelderen, "The Low Countries", pp. 376-415.

⁵¹ Harm Wansink, *Politieke wetenschappen aan de Leidse universiteit, 1575-±1650* (Ph.D.-dissertation; Utrecht, 1975), passim, with quotes taken from the English summary on pp. 248-49.

⁵² Ibidem, p. 106.

⁵³ See chapter 3, with references there.

⁵⁴ Wansink, *Politieke wetenschappen aan de Leidse universiteit*, p. 3. For the place of politics within the curriculum of Leiden University, see chapter 3.

The philological-historical tradition detected by Wansink can be connected with a current of thought called 'Neostoicism'.⁵⁵ In the broadest sense, Neostoicism can be described as the revival of the ideas of the ancient Stoics in Europe during the early modern period. Characteristics of Neostoicism are a belief that 'the course of events' is determined by providence, a call to action, especially to participate 'in political society', 'a *practical orientation*', and 'a *methodology* which places a high value on "imitatio", both for theory' – i.e. follow what the Bible and ancient authors teach us – 'as well as for practice', in which the principle of *historia magistra vitae* applies, which, as we have seen, was one of the hallmarks of Renaissance humanism.⁵⁶

According to Gerhard Oestreich, the main figure of Neostoicism was Justus Lipsius, whose influence was felt throughout Europe, especially in Germany and France, but also in the Dutch Republic. In the Dutch Republic Lipsius's influence can be seen in the works of Grotius, the two Leiden professors Dominicus Baudius (1561-1613) and Franco Burgersdijk (1590-1635), the brothers De la Court, and Spinoza.⁵⁷

Lipsius's two most important Stoic works were the *De constantia* (*On Constancy*, 1584) and the *Politicorum sive civilis doctrinae libri sex* (*Six Books of Politics or Political Instruction*, 1589) or *Politica* (*Politics*), described by Oestreich as 'the principal political work of Neostoicism'.⁵⁸ The *Constantia* was directed at the citizen and taught him to be patient and obedient. In the *Politica*, on the other hand, Lipsius turned to the ruler, who in his eyes had to be virtuous and prudent.⁵⁹

The *Politica* shows Lipsius's preference for rule by one man, the prince, a form of government that Lipsius saw as a necessary condition for peace (*pax*) and concord (*concordia*).⁶⁰ He further adhered to the 'traditional argument that religious unity was the pre-condition of political harmony'. In Lipsius's view political unity sanctified the persecution of public heresy, a stand that earned

⁵⁵ See Hans W. Blom, "Political Science in the Golden Age: Criticism, History and Theory in Dutch Seventeenth Century Political Thought", in *The Netherlands' Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 15 (1979), pp. 54-55, and Gerhard Oestreich, *Neostoicism and the Early Modern State*. Edited by Brigitta Oestreich and Helmut G. Koenigsberger; translated by David McLintock (Cambridge University Press; Cambridge, 1st ed. 1982, 2008), pp. 91-92.

⁵⁶ Blom, "Political Science in the Golden Age", p. 55, and Oestreich, *Neostoicism and the Early Modern State*, pp. 18, 29.

⁵⁷ Oestreich, *Neostoicism and the Early Modern State*, pp. 90-117, and the introduction by Jan Waszink to Justus Lipsius, *Politica: Six Books of Politics or Political Instruction*. Edited, with Translation and Introduction by Jan Waszink (Van Gorcum; Assen, 2004), pp. 126-27.

⁵⁸ Oestreich, *Neostoicism and the Early Modern State*, p. 57.

⁵⁹ *Ibidem*, pp. 35, 43.

⁶⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 43.

him the critique of Dirck Volckertszoon Coornhert (1522-1590), 'the most fervent Dutch champion of religious toleration of the Revolt period'.⁶¹

Besides Lipsius's view on religious persecution, another controversial aspect of the *Politica* was his concept of 'mixed prudence' (*prudencia mixta*). By mixed prudence Lipsius meant the mixing of prudence and deceit. Lipsius allowed the prince to make use of deceptive techniques like dissimulation and bribery 'so long it is done moderately and with good aims'. In the evil times Lipsius thought he and his contemporaries were living in, the prince had to know when to put on the skin of the lion and when that of the fox.⁶²

The importance Oestreich attributed to the Neostoic element in Lipsius's *Politica* has been refuted. Instead, the *Politica* has been identified as a 'work predominantly Tacitist or Machiavellian in nature', a work of which 'Tacitus is the most important source'.⁶³ Lipsius's use of and admiration for Tacitus – he called the Roman historian a 'sharp' and 'sagacious' writer⁶⁴ – can be put in a broader perspective, that of the rise of a current in early modern political thought and literature that modern day scholars call 'Tacitism'. In a recent short survey dealing with Tacitism, Tacitism has been described as 'a complex, even protean phenomenon', of which the roots go back to the fifteenth century.⁶⁵ At that time, interest in Tacitus was still marginal. During the fifteenth and a large part of the sixteenth century, Cicero and Livy outshone Tacitus in popularity; they were the models to follow, both in literary style and, at least in the case of Cicero, also in political morality.⁶⁶

Tacitus's real breakthrough occurred 'in the later sixteenth century, when Tacitus enjoyed an overwhelming and unprecedented popularity'.⁶⁷ In the

⁶¹ Van Gelderen, "The Low Countries", pp. 393-94, with quote on the latter. The description of Coornhert is taken from Jonathan I. Israel, *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall, 1477-1806* (Clarendon Press; Oxford, 1st ed. 1995, 1998), p. 98.

⁶² Oestreich, *Neostoicism and the Early Modern State*, pp. 48-49, and Lipsius, *Politica*, IV.13-14, pp. 506-33, with quote on p. 509.

⁶³ See the introduction by Jan Waszink to Lipsius's *Politica*, pp. 12-14, 93-102, 108-10, 148-55, 163, with quotes on p. 12 and p. 98.

⁶⁴ In the dedication of his 1574 edition of Tacitus's works. See Jan Waszink, "Your Tacitism or Mine? Modern and Early-Modern Conceptions of Tacitus and Tacitism", in *History of European Ideas*, Vol. 36 (2010), p. 376.

⁶⁵ See the entry "Tacitus and Tacitism", in Anthony Grafton, Glenn W. Most and Salvatore Settis (eds.), *The Classical Tradition* (Belknap Press of Harvard University Press; Cambridge/London, 2010), pp. 920-24, with quote on p. 920. If I would have to give a short description of early modern 'Tacitism', I would describe it as a preference for, and use of, the style and content of the works of Tacitus in Europe during the early modern period.

⁶⁶ See Waszink, "Your Tacitism or Mine?", p. 375.

⁶⁷ Alexandra Gajda, "Tacitus and Political Thought in Early Modern Europe, c. 1530-c. 1640", in A.J. Woodman (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Tacitus* (Cambridge University Press; Cambridge, 2009), p. 253.

seventeenth century Tacitus was the most prominent ancient historian.⁶⁸ It became a fashion to write in the style of Tacitus, a style characterised by brevity and irregularity amongst others.⁶⁹ As we have already noted, Dutch scholars like Heinsius and Grotius tried to imitate Tacitus's style and, as we shall see in chapter 3, so did Boxhorn.

Tacitus was not only popular because of his literary style, but also because of the content of his works.⁷⁰ In his works Tacitus talked about rebellions and civil wars, intrigues at the imperial court and the Roman Senate, and 'the mysteries of command' (*arcana imperii*), the secrets that are connected to the art of ruling. To those living in Europe in the last decades of the sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth century, a time when Europe was plagued by religious strife, civil wars, and belligerent princes, the topics Tacitus discussed and the events he narrated were felt to be especially relevant to their own time. For Marc-Antoine de Muret (1526-1585), for example, the French humanist scholar and one of Lipsius's teachers at the University of Rome, the topicality of Tacitus for his own age was what made the Roman historian useful to him and his contemporaries.⁷¹

In his works Tacitus 'looks at things as they really *are*', that is, as he thinks things really are.⁷² His view on human behaviour is pessimistic. Man, according to Tacitus, is a power hungry animal and most people are driven by self-

⁶⁸ Peter Burke, "A Survey of the Popularity of Ancient Historians, 1450-1700", in *History and Theory: Studies in the Philosophy of History*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (1966), pp. 135-52, esp. pp. 150-51, and Donald R. Kelley, "Tacitus Noster: The *Germania* in the Renaissance and Reformation", in idem, *The Writing of History and the Study of Law*, pp. 152-67, 185-200. For the influence of Tacitus on early modern Dutch historiography, see Simon Groenveld, "Pieter Corneliszoon Hooft en de geschiedenis van zijn eigen tijd", in P.A.M. Geurts and A.E.M. Janssen (eds.), *Geschiedschrijving in Nederland: studies over de historiografie van de Nieuwe Tijd*, Vol. 1: *Geschiedschrijvers* (Martinus Nijhoff; The Hague, 1981), pp. 65-94; Haitsma Mulier, "Grotius, Hooft and the Writing of History in the Dutch Republic", pp. 56-72; J.D.M. Cornelissen, "Hooft en Tacitus: bijdrage tot de kennis van de vaderlandse geschiedenis in de eerste helft van de zeventiende eeuw", in idem, *Eendracht van het land: cultuurhistorische studies over Nederland in de zestiende en zeventiende eeuw*. Met een essay over leven en werk door E.O.G. Haitsma Mulier en A.E.M. Janssen (De Bataafse Leeuw; Amsterdam, 1987), pp. 53-101; Leopold Peeters, "P.C. Hooft en P.C. Tacitus: Nederlandse historie in Romeins gewaad", in Klaas Grootes and J. den Haan (eds.), *Geschiedenis, godsdienst, letterkunde* (Nehalennia; Roden, 1989), pp. 114-20; Lesley Gilbert, "Hooft as Historian and Political Thinker", in *Dutch Crossing*, No. 49 (1993), pp. 130-45, that contains a critical assessment of both Simon Groenveld and J.D.M. Cornelissen; Leopold Peeters, "Hooft, Tacitus en de Medici: een Florentijnse variant van een Romeinse moordzaak", in Jeroen Jansen (ed.), *Omnibus idem: opstellen over P.C. Hooft ter gelegenheid van zijn driehondervijftigste sterfdag* (Uitgeverij Verloren; Hilversum, 1997), pp. 101-5; E.O.G. Haitsma Mulier, "De humanistische vorm: over de stilering van de politiek", in Jo Tollebeek, Tom Verschaffel and L.H.M. Wessels (eds.), *De palimpsest: geschiedschrijving in de Nederlanden 1500-2000*, Vol. 1 (Uitgeverij Verloren; Hilversum, 2002), pp. 39-43; Waszink, "Tacitisme in Holland", pp. 240-63.

⁶⁹ See Waszink, "The Ideal of the Statesman-Historian: The Case of Hugo Grotius", p. 116.

⁷⁰ As has been argued by Jan Waszink, 'in Tacitus's unique "style", content cannot be separated from style (form) in the narrower sense of the word'. Ibidem.

⁷¹ See Gajda, "Tacitus and Political Thought in Early Modern Europe", p. 254.

⁷² Waszink, "Your Tacitism or Mine?", p. 375.

interest.⁷³ Since for Tacitus, as for ancient historians in general, ‘historical causation ... is a matter of human intentions, motives and decisions’, these characteristics of human nature are important in explaining events, a task which Tacitus believes to be a part of the duties of a historian.⁷⁴

Tacitus’s attention for how matters really are and his pessimistic view of man put him in the same camp as Machiavelli and at odds with the Ciceronian tradition, which was the dominant tradition in sixteenth-century European political thought.⁷⁵ In the Ciceronian tradition the focus lied on how matters should be. To the Renaissance man who followed the Ciceronian-humanist prescriptions, the ideal man was a virtuous and active member of society and a pious Christian. Furthermore, in the Ciceronian tradition what was morally right (*honestum*) was also deemed to be succesful (*utile*).⁷⁶

Machiavelli challenged this connection between *honestum* and *utile*.⁷⁷ He advised ‘a prince who wishes to maintain his position to learn how to be able not to be good’ and held that ‘in order to maintain the state, a prince ... must also, when necessary, know how to prefer what is bad’.⁷⁸ In the Tacitean-Machiavellian world view, the end seemed to justify the means.

Tacitus is an ambiguous writer and so was his reception in early modern Europe. Concerning Tacitism as a current in political thought, at least four different sorts of ‘Tacitisms’ have been discerned: a black Tacitism, a red Tacitism, a pink Tacitism, and a critical Tacitism. Black Tacitism was ‘disguised Machiavellianism’. Its opposite was red Tacitism, which was ‘disguised republicanism’. Among pink Tacitism are ranked ‘supporters of limited monarchy in an age of absolutism’, a group of people to which Boxhorn has been linked. Finally, critical Tacitism covers Tacitists, who attacked ‘Tacitus in order to attack Machiavelli’.⁷⁹

⁷³ Ronald Mellor, *The Roman Historians* (Routledge; London, 1999), p. 97, and Waszink, “The Ideal of the Statesman-Historian: The Case of Hugo Grotius”, p. 116.

⁷⁴ Miriam T. Griffin, “Tacitus as a Historian”, in Woodman (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Tacitus*, p. 175.

⁷⁵ For Machiavelli’s focus on how matters really are, see *Il principe*, XV. For Machiavelli’s pessimistic view of man, see *Il principe*, XVIII. ‘But as men are wicked and not prepared to keep their word to you, you have no need to keep your word to them.’ Quoted from *The Essentials Writings of Machiavelli*. Edited and translated by Peter Constantine. Introduction by Albert Russell Ascoli (The Modern Library; New York, 2007), p. 69. In this thesis all quotations from Machiavelli’s *Il principe* are taken from this edition.

⁷⁶ Gajda, “Tacitus and Political Thought in Early Modern Europe”, p. 254.

⁷⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 255.

⁷⁸ Machiavelli, *Il principe*, XV, p. 59, and XVIII, p. 69.

⁷⁹ Peter Burke, “Tacitism”, in T.A. Dorey (ed.), *Tacitus* (Basic Books; New York, 1969), pp. 162-66, with quotes on p. 163 and p. 166. For the connection between Boxhorn and pink Tacitists, see the entry “Tacitismus”, in Gert Ueding (ed.), *Historisches Wörterbuch der Rhetorik*, Vol. 9 (Max Niemeyer Verlag; Tübingen, 2009), p. 411.

No matter how people read Tacitus, many early modern readers of the great Roman historian agreed that valuable and important political lessons could be learned from him. In the Dutch Republic Baudius, a professor at Leiden University and historiographer of the States General, qualified Tacitus as ‘the greatest teacher of prudence’ (*maximus prudentiae magister*) and ‘the father of civic prudence’ (*pater civilis prudentiae*). Similar praises can be heard from Heinsius and Boxhorn.⁸⁰ If we combine these praises with the actual lectures men like Heinsius and Boxhorn gave on Tacitus and with the use of Tacitus by learned men such as Grotius and Hooft, it is not too farfetched to say that there was a Tacitean current – and perhaps even currents – in Dutch political thought during the first half of the seventeenth century.⁸¹

It is undeniable that Tacitus plays an important role in Boxhorn’s scholarly activities and in his political thought, as will become clear from this thesis. Another celebrity from antiquity who plays an important role in Boxhorn’s political thought is Aristotle, the old grand master of European science and philosophy. It is to his influence on the intellectual climate of early modern Europe we will now briefly turn.

Despite all their critique on the cultural legacy of the recent bygone ages and on the learning of the scholastics, for most humanists Aristotle still remained ‘the philosopher’. Indeed, if the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries saw the rise of a new or renewed interest in the teachings of Plato, Lucretius and Seneca,⁸² then the sixteenth century also witnessed an unprecedented rise in the number of Aristotelian commentaries thanks to the growth of the number of universities, which boosted the demand for such works, and the growth of the number of printing presses, which facilitated the supply.⁸³ In

⁸⁰ For Baudius and a discussion of his political ideas, see Wansink, *Politieke wetenschappen aan de Leidse universiteit*, pp. 144-49, with quotes on p. 146. For Heinsius’s praise of Tacitus, see chapter 3 of this thesis. For Boxhorn’s, see chapter 7.

⁸¹ In the Dutch Republic the influence of Tacitus did not stop at the middle of the seventeenth century. For example, for George Hornius (1620-1670), professor of history at Leiden University after Boxhorn’s death, Tacitus was an important source of reference. See the entry “Hornius, Georgius (1620-70)”, in Wiep van Bunge et al. (eds.), *The Dictionary of Seventeenth and Eighteenth-Century Dutch Philosophers*, Vol. 1: A-J (Thoemmes Press; Bristol, 2003), p. 452. ‘It should be noted that Hornius as a rule illustrated his political principles by referring to Tacitus.’ Another example of Tacitus’s enduring influence after 1650 can be found in the works of Spinoza. Chaim Wirszubski, “Spinoza’s Debt to Tacitus”, in Richard Koebner (ed.), *Studies in Medieval and Modern Thought and Literature. Scripta Hierosolymitana*, Vol. 2 (Magnes Press; Jerusalem, 1955), pp. 176-86. One of the two editions of Tacitus’s work that Spinoza owned was the edition that Boxhorn had published, together with his own commentaries, in 1643. E.O.G. Haitsma Mulier, “Spinoza en Tacitus: de filosoof en de geschiedschrijver”, in E.O.G. Haitsma Mulier, Lodewijk Maas and J. Vogel (eds.), *Het beeld in de spiegel: historiografische verkenningen: liber amicorum voor Pieter Blaas* (Uitgeverij Verloren; Hilversum, 2000), p. 74.

⁸² Otterspeer, *Het bolwerk van de vrijheid*, pp. 37-38.

⁸³ See the entry “Aristotle and Aristotelianism”, in Grafton, Most and Settis (eds.), *The Classical Tradition*, p. 75. Between 1500 and 1650 the number of universities that were founded, restored and/or modelled far outnumbered the number of universities that were abolished, transferred and/or merged,

addition, there was also an ‘upswing in Aristotelian studies’, added, amongst others, by the Reformation.⁸⁴ In sum, in the sixteenth century Aristotle and the different schools of thought that can be grouped under the wide umbrella of ‘Aristotelianism’ or to which we can add the adjective ‘Aristotelian’ were still very much alive.

The same can be said for the first half of the seventeenth century. At the beginning of that period an Aristotelian school of thought emerged in the Holy Roman Empire that modern scholars have labelled ‘political Aristotelianism’.⁸⁵ Some of the most important characteristics of this school of thought, which enjoyed a particular popularity in Germany during the seventeenth century, can be summarised as follows. Within political Aristotelianism, politics (*politica*) was treated as a practical science (*ars/scientia*) which had its own methodological *apparatus* that tried to combine theory (*doctrina/scientia*) with practice (*rationes/usus*).⁸⁶ Political Aristotelians saw politics as an autonomous discipline, distinct and separated from ethics and theology, which had its own goal: the common good (*bonum commune*) of a given community that was expressed in secular terms as the particular advantage of a certain *res publica* – commonwealth (*utilitas/interest Reipublicae*).⁸⁷ Trotting in the footsteps of Aristotle, political Aristotelians believed that this advantage depended on social, political, and historical conditions. Thus, they tended to be constitutional relativists.⁸⁸ This ‘primacy of constitutional relativism’ explains why political Aristotelians had such a great interest in history: for them history was an important auxiliary science that provided the empirical material for their political analysis.⁸⁹

reaching its peak in the period between 1551 and 1600. After 1650 ‘the number of foundations was balanced by the number of abolitions’. Willem Frijhoff, “Patterns”, in Hilde de Ridder-Symoens (ed.), *A History of the University in Europe*, Vol. 2: *Universities in Early Modern Europe (1500-1800)* (Cambridge University Press; Cambridge, 1st ed. 1996, 2003), p. 71.

⁸⁴ Ibidem.

⁸⁵ Von Friedeburg and Seidler, “The Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation”, p. 157.

⁸⁶ Horst Dreitzel, *Protestantischer Aristotelismus und absoluter Staat: die “Politica” der Henning Arnisaes (ca. 1575-1636)* (Franz Steiner Verlag; Wiesbaden, 1970), p. 118; Wolfgang Weber, *Prudentia gubernatoria: studien zur Herrschaftslehre in der deutschen politischen Wissenschaft des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Max Niemeyer Verlag; Tübingen, 1992), p. 340; Van Gelderen, “Aristotelians, Monarchomachs and Republicans”, p. 208.

⁸⁷ Dreitzel, *Protestantischer Aristotelismus und absoluter Staat*, pp. 183, 209-11.

⁸⁸ Hans W. Blom, *Causality and Morality in Politics: The Rise of Naturalism in Dutch Seventeenth-Century Political Thought* (Ph.D.-dissertation; Utrecht, 1995), p. 97; E.H. Kossmann, “Enkele laat-zeventiende-eeuwse Nederlandse geschriften over Raison d’Etat”, in idem, *Vergankelijkheid en continuïteit: opstellen over geschiedenis* (Uitgeverij Bert Bakker; Amsterdam, 1995), p. 110; Van Gelderen, “Aristotelians, Monarchomachs and Republicans”, p. 211; Von Friedeburg and Seidler, “The Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation”, p. 159. For Aristotle, see, for instance, *Politics*, 1296b1 [IV:12], 1323a1 [VII:1], and 1328a1-1328b1 [VII:8].

⁸⁹ Weber, *Prudentia gubernatoria*, pp. 20-21. This is particular evident in the works of Hermann Conring, Horst Dreitzel, “Hermann Conring und die Politische Wissenschaft seiner Zeit”, in Michael

Political Aristotelians believed that ‘man was by nature a social being’. Consequently they saw society as a natural phenomenon.⁹⁰ However, this belief in man’s natural sociability did not stop a man like Henning Arnisaeus, professor at Helmstedt and one of the founding fathers of the *politica* genre, to observe that ‘it happens from time to time that men enter society, not at the guidance of nature, but compelled by necessity or indigence’.⁹¹ Arnisaeus also drew a distinction between civil society (*civitas*) and the commonwealth, which he defined ‘as the order of command and obedience’.⁹²

Finally, in the field of ethics political Aristotelians followed a mixture of Aristotelian and Stoic ethics, with an emphasis on obedience (*obedientia*) and endurance (*constantia*) for subjects, and trust (*bona fides*) and practical wisdom (*prudentia*) for rulers.⁹³ They also put a heavy emphasis on the importance of positive law as a regulating mechanism to order society.⁹⁴

The importance of political Aristotelianism for the present study is that multiple positive links can be established between it and its German representatives, on the one hand, and Dutch political thought in the first half of the seventeenth century, on the other. Franco Burgersdijk, for example, a professor at Leiden University and one of Boxhorn’s teachers, has been called ‘a follower’ of Bartholomaeus Keckermann (1573-1609), the ‘Systematic Aristotelian’, whose *Systema doctrinae politicae* (*Systems of Political Science*, 1607) was a ‘foundational text of Political Aristotelianism’.⁹⁵ The figure of Conring, ‘the most eminent representative of the last generation of Political Aristotelianism’, provides us with another link; like Boxhorn he was a student of both Burgersdijk and Heinsius, whose praise of Tacitus went hand in hand with a great admiration for Aristotle and whose edition of Aristotle’s *Politics* (1621)

Stolleis (ed.), *Hermann Conring (1606-1681): Beiträge zu Leben und Werk* (Duncker and Humblot; Berlin, 1983), pp. 156-57; Notker Hammerstein, “Die Historie bei Conring”, in *ibidem*, pp. 221, 231-32; Stolleis, “Hermann Conring und die Begründung der deutschen Rechtsgeschichte”, pp. 258-64.

⁹⁰ Bo Lindberg, “Political Aristotelianism in the Seventeenth Century”, in Marianne Pade (ed.), *Renaissance Readings of the Corpus Aristotelicum* (Museum Tusulanum Press; Copenhagen, 2001), pp. 244-45, with quote on p. 245.

⁹¹ Henning Arnisaeus, *De republica, seu relectionis politicae libri duo* (The heirs of Lazarus Zetzner; Strasbourg, 1636), I.1.2, p. 8. ‘Fit tamen, ut interdum homines societatem ineant, non ductu naturae, sed necessitate aut indigentia coacti ...’ English translation quoted from Annabel S. Brett, *Changes of State: Nature and the Limits of the City in Early Modern Natural Law* (Princeton University Press; Princeton, 2011), p. 119.

⁹² Van Gelderen, “Aristotelians, Monarchomachs and Republicans”, p. 209, with references there.

⁹³ Lipsius had of course led the way in his *Constantia* and *Politica*. Von Friedeburg and Seidler, “The Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation”, p. 160, and Weber, *Prudentia gubernatoria*, p. 346.

⁹⁴ Von Friedeburg and Seidler, “The Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation”, p. 159. ‘Apart from its formal principles as stated by Aristotle, “law” was regarded as positive law from the perspective of the ordering of the public weal, dependent as this was on the social structure. In politics, as “the science of reality”, positive law replaced “natural law”.’

⁹⁵ Van Gelderen, “Aristotelians, Monarchomachs and Republicans”, pp. 210, 214. A short discussion of Burgersdijk’s political ideas and Boxhorn’s relationship to Burgersdijk will follow in chapter 3.

was used by Conring.⁹⁶ A link can also be established with Grotius. Arni-saeus's *De jure majestatis libri III* (*Three Books On the Right of Majesty*, 1610) has been identified as 'an important source' of Grotius's *De imperio summarum potestatum circa sacra* (*On the Authority of the Supreme Powers in Matters of Religion*, 1647).⁹⁷ To these three links we can add the *De republica* (*On the Commonwealth*, 1613) of Paulus Busius (c.1570-1617), professor at Franeker University, a work which 'in structure and vocabularly ... shares the basic tenets of Political Aristotelianism'.⁹⁸ Finally, there is Boxhorn himself, whose main political work, the *Institutiones politicae*, belonged to the *politica* genre and of which copies found their way into the libraries of Conring and Pufendorf.⁹⁹ We will see that Boxhorn shared some of the common beliefs of political Aristotelians, but not all, with some important consequences for the interpretation of his political thought.

Of the five Dutch scholars mentioned above – Burgersdijk, Heinsius, Grotius, Busius, and Boxhorn – Grotius's political ideas have received by far the greatest attention of modern scholars. A subject in modern scholarship to which Grotius is often connected is 'republicanism', and then specifically, if not exclusively, its alleged Dutch brand.¹⁰⁰ For example, in his study of 1960 Ernst Kossmann spoke of a Dutch republicanism that was visible, amongst others, in the *De antiquitate reipublicae Batavae* (*The Antiquity of the Batavian Republic*, 1610) of Grotius and in the work of Busius. In Kossmann's eyes, this Dutch republicanism 'did not form a systematic whole'; he considered it to be 'opinion rather than doctrine'.¹⁰¹ In a later article, which he devoted to a dis-

⁹⁶ Ibidem, p. 214, with quote there, and Fasolt, *The Limits of History*, pp. 60-61. In 1656 Conring published an edition of Aristotle's *Politics*. This edition contained 'Heinsius's version of the Greek text, accompanied by the Latin translation of Victorius' (i.e. Petrus Victorius (1499-1585)). Fasolt, *The Limits of History*, pp. 73, 88, with quote on the latter. A Latin quote from Heinsius's edition of Aristotle's *Politics* can be found in a dissertation held by one of Conring's students. Joachimo Behrens, "Dissertatio de optima republica", in Hermann Conring, *Opera*, Vol. 3 (Friedrich Wilhelm Meyer; Braunschweig, 1730), XX.21, p. 837. For Heinsius's praise of Tacitus and his admiration for Aristotle, see chapter 3.

⁹⁷ By Harm-Jan van Dam in his introduction to Hugo Grotius, *De imperio summarum potestatum circa sacra*. Critical Edition with Introduction, English Translation and Commentary by Harm-Jan van Dam, Vol. 1 (Brill; Leiden/Boston/Köln, 2001), p. 126.

⁹⁸ Van Gelderen, "Aristotelians, Monarchomachs and Republicans", p. 212.

⁹⁹ For the *Institutiones politicae* belonging to the *politica* genre, see Weber, *Prudentia gubernatoria*, passim. For Conring, see *Catalogvs Bibliothecae Conringianae Variis in omni genere doctrinae eximiusque libris refertae ...* (Hammius; Helmstedt, 1694), p. 196. For Pufendorf, see Fiammetta Palladini (ed.), *La Biblioteca di Samuel Pufendorf: catalogo dell'asta di Berlin del settembre 1697* (Harrassowitz Verlag; Wiesbaden, 1999), p. 69.

¹⁰⁰ The literature on republicanism is extensive. For some literature on Dutch republicanism, see, amongst others, the contributions of Martin van Gelderen, Jonathan Scott, and Wyger Velema in the first of the two *Republicanism* volumes (2002) edited by Martin van Gelderen and Quentin Skinner. For a critical discussion of these two volumes, see Perez Zagorin, "Republicanism", in *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, Vol. 11, No. 4 (2003), pp. 701-14. In what follows I will only briefly discuss some observations concerning Dutch republicanism in the first half of the seventeenth century.

¹⁰¹ Kossmann, *Political Thought in the Dutch Republic*, pp. 31-37, with quotes on p. 31. In this study

cussion of Dutch republicanism in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Kossmann focused on the poet and historian Hooft rather than on Grotius for his analysis of the nature of Dutch republicanism in the first half of the seventeenth century.¹⁰² In this article Kossmann tried to test the relevance of the model of the 'Machiavellian tradition' as delivered by John Pocock in Pocock's seminal study *The Machiavellian Moment* (1975) in the case of the Dutch Republic.¹⁰³ Hooft's republicanism, according to Kossmann, is 'extremely difficult' to place in Pocock's description of the Machiavellian tradition. While Pocock's Machiavellian tradition is an 'anti-commercial republicanism, agrarian, combative, stressing the duty of citizens to participate in government and, above all, in warfare' so that they can help 'to defend and to aggrandize the state', Hooft, the scion of a family that belonged to 'the Amsterdam mercantile patriciate', kept aloof from the conflicts between Remonstrants and Counter-Remonstrants during the so-called Truce controversies (1611-1618/19) and believed that 'politics must serve peace'.¹⁰⁴

A less peaceful and more aggressive form of Dutch republicanism has been detected by Richard Tuck in the early seventeenth-century writings of Grotius and his friends. Tuck summarised 'this early seventeenth-century Dutch republicanism ... as a combination of the Venetian constitution with the Florentine foreign policy'. Grotius and his friends favoured an aristocratic form of government and stressed 'the need for an expansive and even imperial military programme'.¹⁰⁵ None of Grotius's early work, however, delivered 'the most powerful public statement of republican theory in the early years of the Dutch republic'. This honour Tuck bestowed on the *De republica Hebraeorum* (*The Hebrew Republic*, 1617), a work of Grotius's friend Petrus Cunaeus (1586-1638), professor of politics, history, and law at Leiden University. In the *De republica Hebraeorum* Cunaeus described the Hebrew commonwealth as a

Kossmann nowhere gives a clear and precise definition of what he means by 'republicanism'. From the passage referred to in this footnote it can be deduced that it entails a 'defence of the republican form of government' (p. 31) and seeing 'an aristocratic republic' (p. 32) or an 'aristocracy' (p. 35) as the best form of government.

¹⁰² Ibidem, pp. 169-93, esp. pp. 173-77 for Hooft. This article was first published as E.H. Kossmann, "Dutch Republicanism", in *L'età dei Lumi: studi storici sul Settecento Europeo in onore dei Franco Venturi*, Vol. 1. *Storia e diritto*, Vol. 16 (Jovene Editore; Naples, 1985), pp. 453-86.

¹⁰³ Ibidem, pp. 170-73. J.G.A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition: With a New Afterword by the Author* (Princeton University Press; Princeton, 1st ed. 1975, 2003).

¹⁰⁴ Ibidem, pp. 171-72, 175-77, with quotes on pp. 171-72, 176-77. For a short discussion of the Truce controversies, see chapter 3.

¹⁰⁵ Richard Tuck, *Philosophy and Government, 1572-1651* (Cambridge University Press; Cambridge, 1993), pp. 159-60. It is interesting to note that Tacitus, whom Grotius greatly admired, was also an imperialist. See Mellor, *The Roman Historians*, p. 100.

‘virtuous republic of egalitarian land-owners’.¹⁰⁶ This republic had a special form of government, which Cunaeus, following the Jewish scholar Flavius Josephus (37/38-100), called a theocracy ‘as one might call the sort of state whose chief and ruler is God alone’.¹⁰⁷

The *De republica Hebraeorum*, which Cunaeus had dedicated to the States of Holland, reveals Cunaeus’s negative view on wealth and commerce.¹⁰⁸ In the work he described wealth and luxury as ‘the things that usually lead to the downfall of even the most powerful peoples’.¹⁰⁹ Cunaeus further recorded that the ancient Jews had ‘led a life free of commerce’, had lived in inland areas, and had been ‘cut off from traders and travelers’. Thanks to the latter two conditions the Jews had ‘kept their way of life uncorrupted for so many years’.¹¹⁰

Contrary to Cunaeus, Grotius took a positive stance on commerce. He believed commerce to be essential for the well-being of the Dutch Republic and spent almost his entire adult life defending the commercial empire the Dutch were building overseas.¹¹¹ For example, in the preface to *Mare Liberum* (*The Free Sea*, 1609) Grotius wrote:

A few years ago, when I saw that the commerce with that India which is called the East was of great importance for the safety of our country and it was quite clear that this commerce could not be maintained without arms while the Portuguese were opposing it through violence and trickery, I gave my attention to stirring up the minds of our fellow-countrymen to guard bravely what had been felicitously begun ...¹¹²

¹⁰⁶ *Ibidem*, pp. 167-69, with quote on p. 169.

¹⁰⁷ Petrus Cunaeus, *The Hebrew Republic*. With an Introduction by Arthur Eyffinger; translated and annotated by Peter Wyetzner (Shalom Press; Jerusalem/New York, 2006), I.1, p. 12. The term ‘theocracy’ can be found in Flavius Josephus, *Against Apion*, II.165. According to Lea Campos Boralevi, ‘for Cunaeus theocracy was not a constitutional arrangement, nor did it mean government by the priests, but “God’s government”, i.e. based on the best (divine) laws, which provided for a collective ethos and assured social harmony – Flavius’s *symphonia*: the most important of these were the agrarian laws, which provided for equality in the Hebraic model’. Lea Campos Boralevi, “Classical Foundational Myths of European Republicanism: The Jewish Commonwealth”, in Van Gelderen and Skinner (eds.), *Republicanism: A Shared European Heritage*, Vol. 1, p. 259.

¹⁰⁸ In Richard Tuck’s words: ‘Indeed, throughout the work van der Cun [i.e. Petrus Cunaeus-JN] mounted a polemic against wealth and commercial activity detached from land ...’ Tuck, *Philosophy and Government*, p. 168.

¹⁰⁹ Cunaeus, *The Hebrew Republic*, I.4, p. 21.

¹¹⁰ *Ibidem*.

¹¹¹ See Martine Julia van Ittersum, “The Long Goodbye: Hugo Grotius’ Justification of Dutch Expansion Overseas, 1615-1645”, in *History of European Ideas*, Vol. 36 (2010), pp. 386-411.

¹¹² *Ibidem*, p. 388, with reference there.

Cunaeus's and Grotius's different views on trade are not isolated cases. They are examples of the division that existed in the Dutch Republic between those who held a positive view on trade and the acquisition of wealth and those who did not. Among the latter we can count, besides Cunaeus, Lipsius and Heinsius. In the *Politica* Lipsius had described money as 'the mother of Luxury and many other evils' and had signalled the destructive powers of 'excessive wealth' for 'princes' and 'the kingdom'.¹¹³ He had advised to install a censor, who, amongst others, 'shall abolish the pursuit of riches, or reduce it as much as the circumstances permit'.¹¹⁴ In his description of the fall of the Roman Republic Heinsius made it clear that the moral defects (voluptuousness, avarice, and ambition) that had accompanied the huge amounts of resources and wealth Rome's empire had bequeathed it, had been easily exploited by its enemies to create internal discord. Interestingly, Heinsius described Jugurtha, the first person who took advantage of the decline in Roman moral standards, as a sly and cunning merchant, who 'lured the Senate into his factions with presents and gifts, as if the Senate was an object for sale'. This not only shows that in the seventeenth century the *persona* of the merchant was not even undisputed among the Dutch themselves, but also points out to the problem that it were especially those in power who were most liable to bribery and corruption.¹¹⁵

¹¹³ Lipsius, *Politica*, IV.11, p. 487. 'Often I have heard about the kings, and the nations, which have lost through abundance great empires which they had obtained through virtue when they were poor.' Lipsius quotes Sallust, *Epistulae ad Caesarem senem de re publica*, 2.7.5. (It is uncertain if Sallustius Crispus is indeed the author of these letters.) Some of Lipsius's comments on the left side of the quotes on this page read: 'It is in the interest of Princes to reduce wealth.' 'And of the kingdom.' 'Which perish through excessive wealth.' It must be noted, however, that although Lipsius in this part of the *Politica* (IV.11) does not have a theory of 'financial bookkeeping' of the monarchy or state, he does point out in another part of the *Politica* (V.6) that getting enough money belonged to the preparations for war. I owe this observation to Jan Waszink whom I would like to thank for his help on this matter.

¹¹⁴ *Ibidem*, pp. 488-89. 'Itaque merito Censor, Pecuniae studium tollet, aut quoad res feret, minuet.' 'Thus it is right that our Censor shall abolish the pursuit of riches, or reduce it as much as the circumstances permit.' Lipsius quotes Sallust, *Epistulae ad Caesarem senem de re publica*, 2.7.3.

¹¹⁵ Daniel Heinsius, "De secunda & postrema Romanorum aetate: & de Taciti utilitate ac praesentia. Habita cum C. Cornelii Taciti Equitis Romani Annales interpretaturus esset", in *idem, Orationum editio nova, Prioribus auctior. Accedunt Dissertationes aliquot, cum nonnullis Praefationibus ...* (Elzevier; Amsterdam, 1657), XV, p. 170. 'Graeci disciplinas attulerunt, sed cum iis pariter ambitionem: Asia delicias ingentes, sed cum iis voluptates. Omnes simul, opes maximas ac copias, sed auaritiam cum istis. Vt cum homines jam nihil possent, spoliati libertate sua & exuti, vitia victorum, orbem victum vindicare atque vlcisci voluisse videantur. Primus omnium Jugurtha, qui in bello Numantino Scipionem fuerat secutus, vafer ac versutus, suis posse vitiis Romanorum expugnari callide intellexit. Tanti animi mercator, vt cum spem in ferro non haberet, auro fugam ab exercitu redimeret, Senatam vero donis ac muneribus in partes suas, vt venale mercimonium, pertraheret.' The characterisation of Jugurtha as a merchant seems to be of Heinsius's own coining, for neither Sallust nor the Roman historian Florus, Heinsius's main sources, describe Jugurtha as a merchant. See, however, Sallust, *The Jugurthine War*, XXXV.10, where Sallust has Jugurtha say that Rome "'was a city for sale and soon to be doomed – if only it found a buyer'". Sallust, *Catilina, Iugurtha, Historiarum fragmenta selecta; Appendix Sallustiana*. Recognovit breuique annotatione critica instruxit L.D. Reynolds (Clarendon Press; Oxford, 1991), *Iugurtha*, XXXV.10, p. 85. 'Sed postquam Roma egressus est, fertur saepe eo tacitus respiciens postremo dixisse: "urbem uenalem et mature perituram, si emptorem inuenerit.'" English translation quoted from Sallust,

Among those who held a positive view on commerce and the acquisition of wealth we can count, besides Grotius, Boxhorn and Pieter de la Court. As we will see in chapter 4, Boxhorn saw commerce as an important instrument of enrichment that benefitted both the private Dutch individual and the Dutch Republic as a whole. In the *Interest van Holland (The Interest of Holland, 1662)* Pieter de la Court claimed that Holland, which was the richest and economic most powerful province of the Dutch Republic, rested 'purely' on 'the flourishing of fishing, manufactures and commerce'.¹¹⁶ Indeed, in Pieter de la Court's eyes Holland's resistance depended on trade and manufactures.¹¹⁷

The attention just paid in this introduction to the different views Dutch scholars and writers took on trade can be justified on the ground that the Dutch Republic was to a large extent a mercantile state. Therefore, the theme of trade deserves a place in a discussion about Dutch political thought, for it can tell us something about how the Dutch looked at their own society and how their ideas related to the environment in which they lived and worked.

But if the Dutch Republic was a mercantile state, it was also a state made up from several political bodies – the provinces – and a state which harboured several different religious groups. The Dutch Republic was thus neither a political nor a religious homogenous state. In such an environment and against the background of the Dutch Revolt, which, after all, had started thanks to discord between groups holding different religious beliefs and political opinions, it should not surprise us that concord and the means of achieving it were important subjects the Dutch thought and wrote about.¹¹⁸ Lipsius, for example, as we have already observed, believed rule by one man to be a necessary condition for concord, a condition that the fragmented Dutch political system in which political authority was divided between the States General and the seven individual provinces that constituted the Dutch Republic clearly not fulfilled. In this thesis we will also pay attention to what Boxhorn has to say

Catiline's War, The Jugurthine War, Histories. Translated with an Introduction and Notes by A.J. Woodman (Penguin Books; London, 2007), p. 80. In this thesis all English quotations taken from Sallust's *Catiline's War* and *The Jugurthine War* are quoted from this edition.

¹¹⁶ V.D.H., *Interest van Holland, ofte gronden van Hollands-Welvoeren* (Johannes Cyprianus vander Gracht; Amsterdam, 1662), v-vi. 'Ende dat het bloejen der Visseryen, Manufacturen en Negotien, daar op Holland purelik bestaat, gewisselik veroorsaaken moet ongeloovelik machtige, geld- en- volkrijke Steeden, die door haar bequame situatie, zeer lichtelik onwinbaar te fortificeeren zijn ...' The summarising comment adjoining the passage from which this quote is taken reads: '*Hollands waarachtig interest*' (*Holland's true interest*). Ibidem, v.

¹¹⁷ Ibidem, p. 53. 'Want als men alle deze belastingen over de Hollandse koopmanschap en handwerken considereerd, en zijne gedachten laat gaan dat Holland zonder de zelve in geen deel kan subsisteren; zo en kan ik my over die dwaasheid niet genoeg verwonderen.'

¹¹⁸ For a discussion of early modern Dutch political thought that concentrates on 'the Netherlandish quest for peace and concord', see Van Gelderen, "The Low Countries", pp. 376-415, with quote on p. 379.

about the fragmented political infrastructure of the Dutch Republic, about the question of religious unity vis-à-vis religious toleration, and about the possibility of concord between several people and the means of achieving it.

The Dutch preoccupation with concord can be seen as forming a part of the European wide quest for order and stability. This quest, fostered by the civil and religious wars that plagued Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, did not remain confined to the world of politics or religion. It also extended to the realm of science and philosophy.

In the view of Richard Popkin the Reformation had led to a *crise pyrrhoniennne*, an intellectual crisis in which ‘finding a criterion of truth’ in the field of religion had eventually led to ‘an assault on the bases of all knowledge’ that rendered uncertain all forms of scientific and religious knowledge.¹¹⁹ It was this crisis that triggered Descartes to develop his philosophy. In short, Descartes believed that by doubting man could acquire a knowledge that was beyond doubt. In first instance, doubting, if ‘properly and diligently’ conducted, will make man ‘completely uncertain of everything’. But then man can become aware of the fact that he is doubting or thinking and therefore must exist – Descartes’s famous *cogito ergo sum* (‘I think, therefore I am’). Descartes believed ‘this truth “I think, therefore I am”’ to be ‘so certain and so assured’ that he declared it to be ‘the first principle of the Philosophy for which I was seeking’. Thus, the Frenchman found his answer to the sceptical crisis of the age in scepticism itself.¹²⁰

The impact of Descartes’s ideas on the European stage was profound. In his monumental study of the Radical Enlightenment Jonathan Israel has identified Cartesianism as one of the main causes behind the so-called ‘Crisis of the European Mind’, a phenomenon that Israel described as ‘the unprecedented intellectual turmoil which commenced in the mid-seventeenth century, with the rise of Cartesianism and the subsequent spread of “mechanical philosophy” or the “mechanistic world-view”, an upheaval which heralded the onset of the Enlightenment proper in the closing years of the century’.¹²¹ In Israel’s story Cartesianism played an important role in the disruption of ‘the cultural

¹¹⁹ Richard Popkin, *The History of Scepticism: From Savonarola to Bayle*. Revised and Expanded Edition (Oxford University Press; Oxford, 1st ed. 1979, 2003), pp. 3, 97-98, with quotes on p. 3 and p. 97. The term ‘pyrrhoniennne’ is derived from Pyrrho of Elis (c.360-c.270 BC), a Greek philosopher who is regarded as the founder of scepticism. In the words of Richard Popkin, Pyrrho ‘was not a theoretician but rather a living example of the complete doubter, the man who would not commit himself to any judgment that went beyond what seemed to be the case’. *Ibidem*, xviii.

¹²⁰ *Ibidem*, pp. 143-57, with quotes on p. 151. Popkin quotes René Descartes, *Discours de la Méthode*, IV.

¹²¹ Jonathan I. Israel, *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity, 1650-1750* (Oxford University Press; Oxford, 1st ed. 2001, 2002), p. 14.

and intellectual system' that – 'with the partial exception only of England and the United Provinces' – prevailed 'in mid-seventeenth-century Europe'. This system was 'doctrinally coherent, geared to uniformity, authoritarian, and formidably resistant to intellectual innovation and change'. According to Israel, 'from the 1650s onwards ... variants of the New Philosophy' – 'which in most cases meant Cartesianism' – 'breached the defences of authority, tradition and confessional theology, fragmenting the old edifice of thought at every level from court to university and from pulpit to coffee-shop'.¹²² It was 'under the impact of the New Philosophy' that 'the ascendancy of theological orthodoxy and scholastic Aristotelianism' weakened.¹²³ The intellectual European crisis that unfolded in the second half of the seventeenth century also had a political philosophical dimension, for one of its children was the Radical Enlightenment, which was 'republican', rejected 'divine-right monarchy', and showed 'anti-aristocratic and democratic tendencies'.¹²⁴

Even if the precise nature of these phenomenons, their causes and effects, and their impact on European political thought can be debated, it seems a fair observation that already before the Early Enlightenment in the late seventeenth century, changes had occurred in early modern Europe that had upset the traditional intellectual heritage. As already mentioned, in the field of moral philosophy Machiavelli had challenged the age-old connection between *honestum* and *utile*. In the field of science the heliocentric ideas of Nicolaus Copernicus (1473-1543) and Galileo Galilei (1564-1642) went against the traditional religious dogma, shared by both Protestants and Catholics, that the earth was the center of the universe. Finally, long before Spinoza, biblical exegesis conducted by Desiderius Erasmus (1467/69-1536) and Joseph Justus Scaliger (1540-1609) had already come up with disturbing results that questioned the integrity of the Bible as it had been handed down through the ages.¹²⁵ All in all, we can conclude that if 'the old edifice of thought' only seri-

¹²² Ibidem, pp. 14, 17-18, with quotes on p. 14 and p. 17.

¹²³ Ibidem, p. 20.

¹²⁴ Ibidem, p. 21.

¹²⁵ Erasmus found out that the so-called 'Johannine comma', a passage in the first letter of the apostle John (1 John 5: 7-8) that was considered as an important biblical argument in favour of the doctrine of the Trinity, was missing in the Greek manuscripts that he used for his annotated edition of the New Testament. 'Erasmus was prepared to believe' that the Johannine comma was missing in the Greek manuscripts 'because it had never been there'. He therefore did not include this passage in his first edition of the New Testament (Basel, 1516). See Joseph M. Levine, "Erasmus and the Problem of the Johannine Comma", in *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 58, No. 4 (1997), pp. 578, 581-82, with quotes on p. 582.

Scaliger, the famous French scholar who lived at Leiden from 1593 onwards, believed that he had found 'gaps and errors' in the texts of both the Old and New Testament, but was afraid to publish the results of his biblical exegeses. Anthony Grafton, *Athenae Batavae: The Research Imperative at Leiden, 1575-1650* (Primavera Pers; Leiden, 2003), p. 10.

ously started to crumble after 1650, then this did not mean that before 1650 all was quiet on the European intellectual front. This thesis will contribute to our understanding of the Dutch intellectual climate at the eve of the great intellectual upheavals that invested Europe in the second half of the seventeenth century by looking at the scholarly dispute over Descartes's ideas that erupted in the Dutch Republic in the 1640s and Boxhorn's position in that dispute.¹²⁶

To conclude our short overview of early modern Dutch and European political thought, we will briefly summarise some of the results of our investigation. First, it is clear that Dutch political thought in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries cannot easily be comprehended under one specific denominator. We have seen that different currents of political thought have been and can be detected in sixteenth- and seventeenth century Dutch political thought. A researcher of early modern Dutch political thought has to keep this in mind and give account if, and if so, how and to what extent his or her research subject relates to the different currents of political thought that have thus far been detected. Second, an investigation into sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Dutch political thought has to take into account the fact that the Dutch Republic was a predominantly mercantile, politically fragmented, and religiously heterogeneous state. Therefore, what Dutch political authors have to say, for example, about trade and wealth deserves a place in a study that deals with early modern Dutch political thought. Finally, we have the international dimension. First, early modern Dutch political thought was influenced by foreign authors, for example, by Descartes or Hobbes. Second, a current in Dutch political thought like Tacitism did not originate in the Dutch Republic, nor was confined to its borders. Third, Dutch political authors were not only influenced by foreign authors, but they themselves, on their turn, exercised influence on foreign authors. Lipsius and Grotius are here the examples *par excellence*. Thus, the relationship between early modern Dutch political thought and the early modern political thought of other European countries was not a one-way street. It consisted of mutual contact and influence. This international dimension also has to be kept in mind in a study of early modern Dutch political thought.

¹²⁶ See chapter 6.

Chapter 3

Biography

Early years (1612-1625)

Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn was born in Bergen op Zoom on August 28, 1612.¹ Bergen op Zoom was a Dutch garrison town in the northwest corner of the dukedom of Brabant. As in many garrison towns, the garrison was the main economic activity in Bergen op Zoom, although the town had managed to keep some of its old, pre-Revolt trading functions.² The impact of the garrison on life at Bergen op Zoom must have been great: military personnel and their families constituted some 30% to 50% of the total population. During the Twelve Years' Truce (1609-1621) this figure dropped to about 25%. The loss of soldiers and their families was somewhat compensated by immigration from the south and by an increase in births.³ Besides Marcus and his twin brother Hendrik (1612-1640), the town could also welcome Boxhorn's two sisters Sibilla (1614-?) and Constantia (c.1617-?) during these years of population decline.⁴

The parents of these four children were Jacobus Zuerius (†1617) and Anna Boxhorn († c.1618/25). They were both descendants from refugees from the south. Boxhorn's mother Anna was the daughter of the passionate and violently anti-Catholic minister Hendrik Boxhorn (c.1544-c.1632), about whom later more. His father Jacobus served as a minister of the Reformed church at Bergen op Zoom between 1604 and 1617. He was the brother of Marcus

¹ J.G. Frederiks and F.J.P. van den Branden, *Biographisch woordenboek der Noord- en Zuidnederlandse letterkunde* (Veen; Amsterdam, 1st ed. 1878, 1890), p. 105.

² Bergen op Zoom's pre-Revolt trading functions were connected to the town's position as a hub between the towns of Antwerp, Brussels and Malines, which were the political and administrative centres of Brabant and the seats of the Habsburg government in the Netherlands, on the one hand, and the provinces of Holland and Zeeland, on the other. Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, pp. 264-66; C.C.M. de Mooij, *Geloof kan bergen verzetten: reformatie en katholieke herleving te Bergen op Zoom, 1577-1795* (Uitgeverij Verloren; Hilversum, 1998), pp. 53-58; W.A. van Ham, *Macht en gezag in het Markiezaat: een politiek-institutionele studie over stad en land van Bergen op Zoom (1477-1583)* (Uitgeverij Verloren; Hilversum, 2000), pp. 16-17.

³ De Mooij, *Geloof kan bergen verzetten*, pp. 52, 104-20.

⁴ For Sibilla, see http://www.markiezenhof.nl/index.php?option=com_genealogie_zoeken&Itemid=36&sub=detail&id=571564 (Date: 25/11/2010). For Constantia, see http://www.markiezenhof.nl/index.php?option=com_genealogie_zoeken&Itemid=36&sub=detail&id=575121 (Date:25/11/2010). Both references are to baptism records.

Zuerius (+1603), who had held the holy office of minister at Bergen op Zoom between 1592 and 1603.⁵

Marcus Zuerius had been called to the pulpit to assist Jacobus Baselius junior (1560-1604).⁶ Baselius junior, who like the brothers Marcus and Jacobus Zuerius came from the Southern Netherlands, was the driving force behind the Calvinist offensive to reform the society of Bergen op Zoom along godly lines. He played an important role in the reorganisation of the poor care system and the foundation of the town orphanage in 1597, and he successfully managed to integrate the Reformed congregation of Bergen op Zoom into the classis of Tholen (Zeeland).⁷ He also left his mark on the town's education institutes, including the Latin school where Boxhorn and his twin brother Hendrik made their first acquaintance with Latin under the guidance of the German Richard Lubbaeus (c.1580-1651), that 'indefatigable, succesful teacher of talents', whom the town council had appointed as rector in 1612.⁸ A grandson of Baselius junior who also listened to the name Jacobus Baselius (1623-1661) became a close friend of Boxhorn. During his study at Leiden Baselius stayed at Boxhorn's house. Later he helped the industrious scholar with his many publications and after Boxhorn's death Baselius published a biography of Boxhorn together with his letters.⁹ The bond between the Zuerius family and the Baselius family must be traced back to these early attempts at Reformed confessionalisation at the end of the sixteenth century.

Boxhorn's father passed away before the young Marcus had reached the age of five.¹⁰ Now a widow, his mother decided to move with her children to Breda where Boxhorn's grandfather Hendrik Boxhorn served as a minister. Unlike Bergen op Zoom, Breda had officially signed the Union of Utrecht. The town belonged to the patrimonium of the princes of Orange, who as lords of

⁵ For both Jacobus and Marcus Zuerius, see F.A. van Lieburg, *Repertorium van Nederlandse hervormde predikanten tot 1816*, Vol. 1 (Van Lieburg; Dordrecht, 1996), p. 243, and De Mooij, *Geloof kan bergen verzetten*, p. 667.

⁶ De Mooij, *Geloof kan bergen verzetten*, pp. 202-3.

⁷ NNBW, Vol. 9, pp. 67-68, and De Mooij, *Geloof kan bergen verzetten*, pp. 196-98.

⁸ Gerbrand A. Bredero, *Boertigh, amoreus, en aendachtigh groot lied-boeck* (Tjeenk Willink/Noorduijn; The Hague, 1979), p. 181, and Jacobus Baselius, "Historia vitae & obitus, Viri Celeberrimi Marci Zuerii Boxhornii, Eloquentiae primùm dein Historiarum & Politices in Academia Lugduno-Batava Professoris dignissimi", in Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata* (Johann Theodor Fleisher et al.; Frankfurt/Leipzig, 1679), iii. 'Sed ut secundum seriem vitae procedamus, utriusque hujus gemelli pater vix elapso sexennio vitam cum morte, ingenti suorum damno & Ecclesiae luctu, commutavit, eoq; orbatus linguae Latinae rudimenta primùm uterque didicit in Patriâ, sub Richardo Lubbaeo, ingeniorum moderatore indefesso nec infelici, verùm Matre Bredam secedente.'

⁹ NNBW, Vol. 9, pp. 68-69. Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn, *Epistolae & poemata* (Caspar Commelinus; Amsterdam, 1662). Unless indicated otherwise, all references in this thesis to Boxhorn's *Epistolae et poemata* refer to the edition of 1679.

¹⁰ Boxhorn's father died on July 2, 1617. Van Lieburg, *Repertorium van Nederlandse hervormde predikanten tot 1816*, Vol. 1, p. 243.

Breda exercised sovereignty over the barony. Lost to the Spaniards in 1581, stadholder Maurits (1567-1625) recaptured the town with a surprise attack in 1590.¹¹ Although at first it seemed that Maurits would return to the tolerant religious policy of his father, staunch Calvinists soon got the upper hand and began to employ all kinds of initiatives to suppress and drive back the influence of Catholicism.¹² A leading figure in this Calvinist offensive was Hendrik Boxhorn.

Born as the son of an undertaker and educated at the University of Louvain, where he had taken part in the expurgation of the works of Erasmus, Hendrik Boxhorn, a former Catholic priest and ex-Lutheran minister, arrived at Breda in 1602 after he had been put out of his ecclesiastical office in Woerden (Holland) by its town government 'because on the pulpit he had displayed it to the congregation as despicable'.¹³ Some of his activities were mirror images of those conducted by Baselius junior in Bergen op Zoom a decade earlier. Between 1602 and 1607 Hendrik Boxhorn was the regent of Breda's Latin school where he inaugurated a new time of growth and prosperity.¹⁴ In 1606 the town orphanage opened its doors thanks to his zealous efforts.¹⁵ His passionate character and educational background made Hendrik Boxhorn a useful weapon in the propaganda war the two confessional blocks waged for the common man's soul. Many times he took up the pen to combat popish superstition and to warn the citizens of Breda for the tricks of the Jesuits, 'the devil's most fowl waste'.¹⁶

¹¹ M.P. Christ, *De Brabantse Saecle: het vergeefse streven naar een gewestelijke status voor Staats-Brabant, 1585-1675* (Stichting Zuidelijk Historisch Contact; Tilburg, 1984), pp. 18-19, 58-61.

¹² J.L.M. de Lepper, "De katholieke kerk", in V.A.M. Beermann, F.A. Brekelmans and J.P. van Dooren (eds.), *Geschiedenis van Breda*, Vol. 2 (Interbook; Schiedam, 1977), pp. 163-76; J.P. van Dooren, "De kerken van de Reformatie", in *ibidem*, pp. 213-17; Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, pp. 387-88.

¹³ A.J. van der Aa, *Biographisch woordenboek der Nederlanden*, Vol. 2 (J.J. van Brederode; Haarlem, 1855), pp. 1120-21. '... omdat hij haar op den predikstoel verachtelijk ten toon gesteld had voor de gemeente.' See further Lambertus Barlaeus, "Oratio Funeris In Excessum Clarissimi Viri, Marci Zuerii Boxhornii, Eloquentiae & Historiarum in inclita Academia Luguno-Batavâ, dum viveret, Professoris celeberrimi, habita In Auditorio Theologico IX. Octobris, Anno M DC LIII", in Henning Witte, *Memoriae philosophorum, oratorum, poetarum, historicorum, et philologorum nostri seculi clarissimorum renovatae, decas sexta* (Martin Hallervord; Frankfurt am Main, 1679), pp. 144-46; George Haven Putnam, *The Censorship of the Church of Rome and Its Influence upon the Production and Distribution of Literature*, Vol. 1 (The Knickerbocker Press; New York/London, 1906), p. 233; Jan Pieter de Bie and Jakob Loosjes (eds.), *Biographisch woordenboek van protestantsche godgeleerden in Nederland*, Vol. 1 (Martinus Nijhoff; The Hague, 1907), pp. 549-52; NNBW, Vol. 2, pp. 236-37.

¹⁴ M.A.M. Nauwelaerts, *De oude Latijnse school van Breda* (Provinciaal Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen in Noord-Brabant; 's-Hertogenbosch, 1945), pp. 44-49.

¹⁵ Van Dooren, "De kerken van de Reformatie", pp. 216-19.

¹⁶ See, for example, Hendrik Boxhorn, *Anti-pater Gouda, Dat is Patris Ioannis de Gauda, Priesters van Jesu-wijt Nederslach, over syn Predicatie opden Paeps-Alderheylighen dach ghedaen, opheteceekent ende wederleydt, door D. Henricom Boxhorniom, licentiaet in de H. Theol. ende Bediender des Evangelij tot Breda* (Felix van Bambix; Rotterdam, 1611), i-iii, p. 6*. See also Alastair Duke, *Reformation and Revolt in the Low Countries* (The Hambledon Press; London, 2003), p. 264.

Hendrik Boxhorn's zealotry did not win him the hearts of the other Reformed ministers at Breda, who suspected him of still adhering to Catholic doctrines.¹⁷ It also made him an easy target for mockery. When the Spaniards captured Breda for a second time in 1625, a cartoon and satirical poems appeared in which Hendrik Boxhorn and his wife Sibylla Styls were ridiculed. And that was not the end of it. Boxhorn's grandmother Sibylla became a hated figure among Catholics in Brabant after the Jesuit Herman Hugo (1588-1629), in his history of the siege of Breda, had accused her of being the main instigator behind the destruction of an image of the Virgin Mary.¹⁸

It was to the care of this feisty but not undisputed Calvinist minister that young Marcus's education was entrusted. Trained as a priest at Louvain and an expert in Latin, Greek and Hebrew, Hendrik Boxhorn was in the perfect position to educate his grandsons in 'the knowledge of at one time the truth, at another the elegance of the Latin language'.¹⁹ He probably gave his grandsons a thorough introduction into Scripture, Latin, and classical literature in accordance with the curriculum taught at the Latin school of Breda, which the twin brothers most likely also attended. This meant that like pupils at other Latin schools in the Dutch Republic Marcus and his twin brother Hendrik learned the Ten Commandments, the Heidelberg Catechism, and Cato's Distichs by heart. They digested the letters of Erasmus and the works of Cicero and Terentius (c.195-c.159 BC) to learn Latin grammar and to enhance their knowledge of Latin words. In the spirit of the ideal of *imitatio*, the imitation of the classics in language and style, they trained themselves in writing let-

¹⁷ Van Dooren, "De kerken van de Reformatie", pp. 216-19.

¹⁸ Herman Hugo, *The Siege of Breda by the Arms of Philip the Fourth under the Government of Isabella achieved by the Conduct of Ambr. Spinola* (Hastenius; Louvain, 1627), p. 147, and Maurits Sabbe, *Brabant in 't verweer: bijdrage tot de studie der Zuid-Nederlandsche strijdliteratuur in de eerste helft der 17^{de} eeuw* (Res-seler; Antwerp, 1933), pp. 144-47, 156. Boxhorn would not forget the accusation. In his history of the capture of Breda by Frederik Hendrik in 1637 he defended his grandmother's honour against Hugo's accusation. Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn, *Historia obsidionis Bredae et Rerum Anni M DC XXXVII* (Isaac Commelinus; Leiden, 1640), p. 165. 'Tradit Hermannus Hugo, caetera diligens scriptor & accuratus, alterum eorum direpta Mariana statua mutilatum, Sibyllae Stylsiae, conjugis Henrici Boxhornii, instinctu. Ad quae memoranda sinistra fama, aut factionis studium, a vero eum deflexere. Quod civium, qui supersunt, conscientiae, & fidei rerum, pietati denique in aviam maternam debui.'

¹⁹ Baselius, "Historia vitae & obitus", iii. 'Avo materno in disciplinam traditus est. Quo insuper ut praeceptore usus multum profecit in cognitione tum veritatis, tum elegantiae linguae Latinae.' Barlaeus, "Oratio Funebri In Excessum Clarissimi Viri, Marci Zuerii Boxhornii", p. 145. 'Huic verò tam praeclarae domui non minimum splendorem intulit avus Defuncti nostri, Henricus Boxhornius vir eximia doctrinae, & ardentis in Deum zeli. Hic cum Pontificiae religioni initiatus esset, eamque diu, qua voce, qua calamo asseruisset, summae inter Suos fuit existimationis, et dignitatis. Etenim Lovanii cum studiis operam navasset, et Latinis, Graecis, Hebraicisque litteris haut leviter esset tinctus, ad sacram Theologiam se contulit, in qua tantos brevi tempore fecit profectus, ut dignus fuerit iudicatus, qui Licentiae gradum in eadem consequeretur: cumque idem Romanae Sedis tunc vindex esset acerrimus, eam ab Episcopo suo dignitatem obtinuit, ut Tinensi Ecclesiae praeficeretur Decanus, & haereticae, ut vocant, pravitatis Inquisitor.' 'Tinensi' probably refers to Tienen, a town some 18 kilometres to the southeast of Louvain.

ters and in translating classical Latin texts into Dutch and then back again into Latin. Greek was also a part of the curriculum and maybe the two boys also made an early acquaintance with logic and ethics, although these subjects were only officially introduced at Latin schools in the Dutch Republic with the ‘Schoolorder’ that the States of Holland issued in October 1625.²⁰

By that time Boxhorn had perhaps already left Breda to study at the University of Leiden. His departure, however, had not been voluntary but had been forced upon him by the surrender of Breda, after an eleven months’ siege, to Ambrogio Spinola (1569-1630) on June 2, 1625. The surrender, immortalised on canvas by Diego Velázquez (1599-1660), gave a great boost to Spain’s military reputation although the town’s low strategic value scarcely justified the high price the Spaniards paid for this military victory.²¹ For Boxhorn and his family the surrender meant forced exile; the new Spanish regime put a ban on Protestant services and gave Protestants two years to leave the town.²² And so, ‘because of religion’, Hendrik Boxhorn left Breda and moved to Leiden, taking his two grandsons Marcus and Hendrik – Boxhorn’s mother had by then passed away – with him for further education in preparation for their future tasks in the service of the Lord.²³

Student (1626-1631)

1. *The town and the university*

In 1632 Boxhorn published the *Theatrum Hollandiae (Theatre of Holland)*, a historical-topographical description of Holland and the province’s most important towns and villages.²⁴ Of all the towns that Boxhorn discusses in the book

²⁰ Nauwelaerts, *De oude Latijnse school van Breda*, pp. 51-53. See also Willem Frijhoff and Marijke Spies, *Dutch Culture in a European Perspective*, Vol. 1: 1650: *Hard-Won Unity* (Palgrave Macmillan; Basingstoke, 2004), pp. 243-46, and Anna Frank-van Westrienen, *Het schoolschrift van Pieter Teding van Berkhout: vergezicht op het gymnasium onderwijs in de zeventiende-eeuwse Nederlanden* (Uitgeverij Verloren; Hilversum, 2007), passim.

²¹ Jonathan I. Israel, *The Dutch Republic and the Hispanic World* (Clarendon Press; Oxford, 1982), pp. 106-9, and Henry Kamen, *Spain’s Road to Empire: The Making of a World Power, 1492-1763* (Penguin Books; London, 1st ed. 2002, 2003), pp. 321-23.

²² Van Dooren, “De kerken van de Reformatie”, pp. 218-19.

²³ Barlaeus, “Oratio Funeris In Excessum Clarissimi Viri, Marci Zuerii Boxhornii”, p. 148. ‘Breda igitur ad hostibus capta, vel potius fame dedita, postquam religionis causa cum avo suo Leidam concessisset, quae deerant sibi studia, pari diligentia et ardore pertexuit.’ Basilius, “Historia vitae & obitus”, iii. ‘Itaque Henricus Boxhornius cum Nepotibus suis & reliqua familiâ, matre ipsâ jam vita functa, Lugdunum in Batavis, quietem ministerii quidem, non studiorum & institutionis, quaesivit & invenit.’

²⁴ Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn, *Theatrum sive Hollandiae comitatus et urbium Nova Descriptio* (Hendrik Hondius; Amsterdam, 1632). For a more elaborate discussion of this book, see chapter 7.

he pays by far the most attention to Leiden. Reasons for the extensive attention are easily given. 'Now follows Lugdunum Batavorum, which its inhabitants call Leiden, a very large town that should be honoured because of its old age.'²⁵ Besides its large size and old age, Boxhorn also praises Leiden for being the capital of 'Rijnland', 'the most fertile land of whole Holland', and for its cloth industry that brings the town great prosperity.²⁶ 'Nowadays, as in the past, Leiden flourishes through the trade of cloths, some thick, others thin ... for which very large houses are set up that are commonly called *Hallen*.'²⁷ But what really distinguishes Leiden from all the other towns of Holland is its University, 'the pride and stronghold of the Muses', the birthplace of many great men, praised and admired by people far and away.²⁸

Some six years after his first arrival in Leiden and on the brink of his academic career at the town's University, Boxhorn's review of Leiden not only shows that he had mastered the skills of flattery but also that he had grown accustomed to the town and its characteristics. His first acquaintance with Leiden, however, must have been something of a shock to him. From the front line of the battle between 'freedom' and 'tyranny' and between Calvinism and Catholicism, Boxhorn moved to the safe interior of the Dutch Republic and to one of the citadels of the Counter-Remonstrants, who represented the more orthodox stream of Dutch Calvinism. His move to Leiden also meant that he exchanged the rural Generality lands for the highly urbanised and densely populated province of Holland. From a situation of economic stagnation and decline Boxhorn entered a world of growth and opportunity.²⁹ While the size of the population of both Bergen op Zoom and Breda had first suffered from the turmoils of war and later from the Twelve Years' Truce, Leiden's population had more than doubled since the beginning of the seventeenth century; from circa 22,000 inhabitants in 1600 the population of Leiden had increased

²⁵ Ibidem, p. 181. 'Lugdunum Batavorum, quod Leidam sui vocant, jam consequitur, Urbs amplissima ipsaque vetustate veneranda.'

²⁶ Ibidem, p. 218. 'Ager circumjectus totius Hollandiae uberrimus est, qui Rhenolandiae nomine vocitari vulgo consuevit, cuius caput hodie Leyda est.'

²⁷ Ibidem, p. 233. 'Hodie, ut & olim, floret Leyda pannorum, qua densorum, qua tenuium (sajettas & burettas vocant) mercuta, cui aedes amplissimae, *Hallae* vulgo nuncupantur, destinatae sunt.'

²⁸ Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn, "Preface", in idem, *Theatrum*, iv. 'Tu Leyda ut vetustate tua merito possis gloriari, ita illud in te potissimum, quod Musarum decus & praesidium merita sis appellari. De Academia tua loquor, quae amplissimis privilegiis & eximiis ornata ingeniis, nobilissimos quosque Iuvenes è longe dissitis regnis, ad capiendum animi cultum, ad se invitat. Et gloriatur merito aeterna ista Domus, Viros Principes ex se produisse.' Idem, *Theatrum*, p. 205. 'Venio nunc ad celeberrimam Academiam; quâ prae caeteris Belgij urbis Leyda maxime inclaruit, & haud parvam apud externas gentes laudem & admirationem reportavit.'

²⁹ Jan de Vries and Ad van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy: Success, Failure and Perseverance of the Dutch Economy, 1500-1815* (Cambridge University Press; Cambridge, 1997), pp. 50-57.

to some 47.000 in 1625, a figure that would grow to around 49.000 in 1650.³⁰ To house all these newcomers and to make room for new industrial development, Leiden had to expand twice, in 1611 and 1644.³¹ The expansions gave a great impulse to construction and related industries and helped to make Leiden one of the biggest textile manufacturing centres of Europe.³²

The main reason behind the rapid growth of Leiden's population was a massive influx of immigrants. The majority of these immigrants came from the Southern Netherlands. Some, like Boxhorn and his family, had left their homes out of religious considerations. Others sought new prospects and economic prosperity. Leiden offered opportunities to both groups, and by allowing immigrants to profess their own faith (and in some cases even to start their own congregation) and by exempting newcomers from paying certain taxes the town magistracy actively tried and succeeded in luring many immigrants to enter Leiden's gates and to facilitate the town's economic growth with their labour, capital, and skill.³³

Just at the time that the flow of immigrants from the Southern Netherlands started to decrease the outbreak of the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648) caused a new stream of immigrants to seek refuge in the Dutch Republic.³⁴ Harm Wansink and Howard Hotson have shown that the University of Leiden was a main beneficiary of this new stream of immigrants. The Thirty Years' War had a devastating effect on German universities, Protestant and Catholic alike, as Imperial, Danish, Swedish, Spanish, and French armies swept across the Empire besieging and capturing university towns such as Heidelberg in the Palatinate and Ingolstadt in Bavaria. The devastation and disruption caused by these armies forced many students from Central and Eastern Europe to study elsewhere. Many Protestant students, such as Conring, set course for the Dutch Republic.³⁵ It was mainly thanks to these students that the annual matriculation at Leiden University rose from 249 students between 1601 and 1625 to 443 students between 1626 and 1650. During the latter period, the Uni-

³⁰ Dirk Jaap Noordam, "Demografische ontwikkelingen", in Simon Groenveld (ed.), *Leiden: de geschiedenis van een Hollandse stad*, Vol. 2 (Stichting Geschiedschrijving Leiden; Leiden, 2003), pp. 43-45.

³¹ R.C.J. van Maanen, "Stadsbeeld en ruimtelijke ordening", in Groenveld (ed.), *Leiden*, Vol. 2, pp. 25-27.

³² De Vries and Van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, pp. 279-90, and Milja van Tielhof, "Een open economie, in voor- en tegenspoed: de economische ontwikkeling van Holland", in Thimo de Nijs and Eelco Beukers (eds.), *Geschiedenis van Holland*, Vol. 2 (Uitgeverij Verloren; Hilversum, 2002), pp. 151-53.

³³ Noordam, "Demografische ontwikkelingen", p. 53, and Boudien de Vries, Jan Lucassen, Piet Lourens and Harm Nijboer, "Het economische leven: spectaculair succes en diep verval", in Groenveld (ed.), *Leiden*, Vol. 2, pp. 88-95.

³⁴ Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, p. 330.

³⁵ See chapter 2, footnote 31.

versity welcomed more than 11.000 students; of these over half were foreigners (5713) and over one quarter Germans (2966). In comparison to the German students, the numbers of English (553) and French (434) students, the second and third largest groups of foreign students to matriculate at Leiden University during the second quarter of the seventeenth century, paled.³⁶

The explosive growth of its population had some severe consequences for Leiden. Although Leiden expanded three times in the seventeenth century, the town was always crowded as immigrants kept pouring in from the rest of the Dutch Republic, the Southern Netherlands, and other places.³⁷ Space was scarce and expensive, which helps to explain why the University in its physical form stayed relatively small in comparison to other European universities.³⁸ In most cases students and professors themselves were responsible for finding accommodation. The town government tried to help by placing some forty houses at the disposal of students and professors but these were never enough to accommodate all students, who on average made up about two or three percent of Leiden's total population. Many students had to rent rooms in taverns or private houses. Some also lived with professors, who often rented rooms to the sons of the rich and famous or to the most promising students to supplement their income.³⁹ Boxhorn, for example, who as a professor lived at the Steenschuur, a continuation of the Rapenburg where the University was located, not only offered lodging to Baselius, but also to Rochus Hoffer (1615-1671), the son of Adriaen Hoffer (1589-1644), an important *regent* from Zierikzee (Zeeland) with whom Boxhorn maintained good relationships, and to Johan Jespersson Kruus (c.1617-1644), the son of Jesper Mattson (c.1576-1622), Lord High Treasure of Sweden.⁴⁰

³⁶ Howard Hotson, "A Dark Golden Age: The Thirty Years' War and the Universities of Northern Europe", in Allan I. Macinnes, Thomas Riis and Frederik Pedersen (eds.), *Ships, Guns and Bibles in the North Sea and Baltic States, c.1350-c.1700* (Tuckwell Press; East Linton, 2000), pp. 235-70, esp. p. 254ff. The absolute figures are taken from Wansink, *Politieke wetenschappen aan de Leidse universiteit*, pp. 7, 11.

³⁷ In 1658 Leiden had to expand for a third time. The town's population continued to grow to peak at some 55.00 inhabitants in 1675, after which decline set in. However, at the end of the century Leiden still counted some 53.000 inhabitants. Van Maanen, "Stadsbeeld en ruimtelijke ordening", p. 27, and Noordam, "Demografische ontwikkelingen", pp. 45, 53.

³⁸ Anthony Grafton, "Civic Humanism and Scientific Scholarship at Leiden", in Thomas Bender (ed.), *The University and the City: From Medieval Origins to the Present* (Oxford University Press; New York/Oxford, 1988), p. 63.

³⁹ Otterspeer, *Het bolwerk van de vrijheid*, pp. 257-64.

⁴⁰ P.J. Meertens, *Letterkundig leven in Zeeland in de zestiende en eerste helft der zeventiende eeuw*. Verhandelingen der Nederlandsche akademie van wetenschappen, afdeling letterkunde. Nieuwe reeks, Vol. 48, No. 1 (Noord-Hollandsche Uitgevers Maatschappij; Amsterdam, 1943), p. 365, and E.H.G. Wrangel, *De betrekkingen tusschen Zweden en de Nederlanden op het gebied van letteren en wetenschap, voornamelijk gedurende de zeventiende eeuw*. Translated by H.A.C. Beets-Damsté (Bril; Leiden, 1901), pp. 163-64.

With so many people cramped together within the confines of the town walls it was impossible for professors and students to seal themselves off from urban life. Nor could the other town dwellers seal themselves off from university life as they sometimes must have wished for, especially in the months January and February, when the German students held their annual carnival raids through town. Inevitably, professors and students had to deal with Dutch culture and society as much as the local Dutch population had to deal with them. Leiden was not a homogeneous unity, but a mixture of different nationalities, religious groups, and economic classes that had to live next to each other and with each other. The University, its staff, and its students just added some new and sometimes exotic colours to the pallet.⁴¹

2. *Leiden University I. Goals, administration, and organisation*

The foundation of Leiden University in 1575 was a political act with specific religious and political objectives. Leiden University was to be a 'stronghold of freedom' and to serve as a 'firm buttress and support of freedom and the good lawful government of the land not only in matters of religion, but also in matters that concern the civil common good'.⁴² For this purpose, the newly founded University was given two specific tasks: to educate servants for the public church, the state and the army, and to train technical specialists.⁴³ To make sure that the University would strive to meet these objectives, the main actors behind the foundation, William of Orange (1533-1584) and the States of Holland, refused to place the University under the direct supervision of the Reformed church, nor to leave it in the hands of the town magistracy only. Instead, control of the University was divided between three curators, appointed by the States of Holland, and Leiden's four burgomasters. Initially, the curators were appointed for life. Later they were appointed for a certain

⁴¹ Between 1626 and 1650 a couple of dozen students from the Ottoman Empire, Russia, North Africa, and Persia visited the University of Leiden. See the figures given by Wansink, *Politieke wetenschappen aan de Leidse universiteit*, p. 11. See further Grafton, "Civic Humanism and Scientific Scholarship at Leiden", pp. 63-65; Otterspeer, *Het bolwerk van de vrijheid*, pp. 51-58; Benjamin Roberts and Willem Otterspeer, "Onderwijs en wetenschap", in Groenveld (ed.), *Leiden*, Vol. 2, p. 213.

⁴² William of Orange in a letter to the States of Holland and Zeeland, December 28, 1574. 'Alsoe tot een vast stuensel ende onderhoudt der vryheyt ende goede wettelicke regieringe des lants niet alleen in zaeken der religie, maer oock in tgene den gemeynen borghelicken welstandt belanght insonderheyt ende voor alle dynghen van noode is dat hier binnen slandts ende die Graeffelicheden van Hollandt ofte van Zeelant eenen goede, genouchsaeme ende vermaerde schole ofte universiteyt werdde opgericht ...' Quoted from Otterspeer, *Het bolwerk van de vrijheid*, p. 61. The motto of Leiden University is 'praesidium libertatis'.

⁴³ Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, pp. 569-72, and Grafton, *Athenae Batavae*, pp. 8-9.

period of time, although this rule was never strictly observed, making it still possible for some curators to fulfil their office until their death. The burgomasters were chosen every year by the town council (*vroedschap*) of Leiden from among its own members.

Besides the college of curators and burgomasters, the other important administrative organ of Leiden University was the University senate. The senate consisted of some fifteen to twenty professors of all four faculties. The head of the senate was the *rector magnificus*, who was appointed by the stadholder on a yearly basis. The senate's primary tasks were to keep order amongst the students, to defend the privileges of the University and to determine the timetable and the subjects treated in the lectures. However, in all matters the curators and burgomasters had the last say and they did not shrink back to intervene everytime they deemed this necessary for the maintenance of good order.⁴⁴ Thus, although professors at Leiden enjoyed a considerable freedom, it was the college of curators and burgomasters and ultimately their superiors, the States of Holland, the stadholder, and the Leiden town council, that determined what subjects the professors could discuss and how far they could go in their teaching.⁴⁵

The consequences of the close ties between Leiden University and the political authorities, so close that one can see the University as 'culturally speaking ... a kind of court near the centre of government in The Hague', became especially evident during the Twelve Years' Truce when internal religious and political conflicts brought the Dutch Republic to the brink of civil war.⁴⁶ One of the seeds of the conflicts was a dispute that had started as early as 1603 between two Leiden professors of theology, Jacobus Arminius (c.1559-1609) and Franciscus Gomarus (1563-1641), on the subject of predestination. Without going into too much detail, the so-called Truce controversies came down to this. On the one hand stood the adherents of Arminius, the Remonstrants, who enjoyed the support of a small majority in the States of Holland. Prime among their supporters were Johan van Oldenbarnevelt (1547-1619), advocate of the States of Holland and Holland's leading political figure, and Hugo Grotius, at that time pensionary of Rotterdam. On the other hand stood the followers of Gomarus, the Counter-Remonstrants, who could count on the backing of the stadholder of Holland, prince Maurits, and the majority in the States General.

⁴⁴ See chapter 6.

⁴⁵ Otterspeer, *Het bolwerk van de vrijheid*, pp. 75-80, 297-301; Ronald Sluijter, *Tot ciraet, vermeerderinge ende heerlyckmaeckinge der universiteit: bestuur, instellingen, personeel en financiën van de Leidse universiteit, 1575-1812* (Uitgeverij Verloren; Hilversum, 2004), pp. 25-59; Notker Hammerstein, "Relations with Authority", in De Ridder-Symoens (ed.), *Universities in Early Modern Europe (1500-1800)*, pp. 144-45.

⁴⁶ Waszink, "The Ideal of the Statesman-Historian: The Case of Hugo Grotius", p. 106.

Besides their differences on the subject of predestination the two camps were divided on other issues as well. The Remonstrants wanted room for both their religious views and those of the Counter-Remonstrants within one public church, the authority over which they placed in the hands of the political authorities. The Counter-Remonstrants staunchly opposed such ideas. Their ideal was one public church with one common confession that was free from political interference, especially in matters concerning doctrines of faith.

In 1618/19 the conflict came to a dramatic end. Backed by a vague resolution of the States General 'to do what was necessary "for the service, security, peace and prosperity of the lands"' Maurits succeeded to defeat the opposition in Holland.⁴⁷ Oldenbarnevelt, with whom Maurits had also differed on foreign policy, was arrested and executed on a scaffold outside the Ridderzaal in The Hague. Grotius was sentenced to a lifelong imprisonment at castle Loevenstein, but in 1621 he managed to escape and fled to Paris.⁴⁸

At Leiden the town council was purged of Remonstrants after which the town became a stronghold of the Counter-Remonstrants. Remonstrants were actively prosecuted, especially by Willem de Bont (c.1588-1646), professor of law at Leiden University and from 1619 until his death bailiff (*schout*) of Leiden.⁴⁹ The board of curators and burgomasters and the professor corps of Leiden University were also purged. Among the victims were Cornelis van der Mijle (1579-1642), curator and son-in-law of Oldenbarnevelt, Petrus Bertius (1565-1629) and Caspar Barlaeus (1584-1648), both professors in the faculty of arts, and Gerard Vossius, regent of the Staten-college, the college responsible for the housing and education of poor theology students. Van der Mijle and Vossius both returned, although Van der Mijle had to wait more than twenty-one years for his reinstatement as curator in 1640. Vossius had more luck: in 1622 he was appointed professor of eloquence and universal chronology.⁵⁰ To

⁴⁷ Geert H. Janssen, *Het stokje van Oldenbarnevelt*. Verloren Verleden, Vol. 14 (Uitgeverij Verloren; Hilversum, 2001), p. 64. '... te doen wat "voor dienst, verseeckerheyt, rust ende welvaert van de landen" noodzakelijk was.' The States General had taken this step in secret, without informing or consulting the deputies of the States of Holland. Ibidem. See also A.Th. van Deursen, *Maurits van Nassau, 1567-1625: de winnaar die faalde* (Uitgeverij Bert Bakker; Amsterdam, 2000), pp. 265, 314, with reference on the latter.

⁴⁸ For further details, see Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, pp. 421-77. For some more recent views, see A.Th. van Deursen, *De last van veel geluk: de geschiedenis van Nederland, 1555-1702* (Uitgeverij Bert Bakker; Amsterdam, 2004), pp. 191-213, and Maarten Prak, *The Dutch Republic in the Seventeenth Century: The Golden Age*. Translated by Diane Webb (Cambridge University Press; Cambridge, 2005), pp. 29-37.

⁴⁹ Simon Groenveld and J.A.F. de Jongste, "Bestuur en beleid", in Groenveld (ed.), *Leiden*, Vol. 2, pp. 55, 65-66, and Jan Wim Buisman, "Kerk en samenleving", in ibidem, pp. 131-43, esp. pp. 136-38.

⁵⁰ For Van der Mijle, see H.A.W. van der Vecht, *Cornelis van der Myle* (Klein; Sappemeer, 1907), pp. 134-35, and *Album scholasticum Academiae Lugduno-Batavae MDLXXV-MCMXL*. Samengesteld door C.A. Siegenbeek van Heukelom-Lamme; met medewerking van O.C.D. Idenburg-Siegenbeek van Heukelom (E.J. Brill; Leiden, 1941), p. 109. For Vossius, see Cor Rademaker, *Leven en werk van Gerardus Joannes Vossius (1577-1649)* (Uitgeverij Verloren; Hilversum, 1999), p. 131; Wickenden, G.J. *Vossius and the Humanist Concept of History*, pp. 6-8; *Album scholasticum Academiae Lugduno-Batavae MDLXXV-MCMXL*, p. 168.

replace Bertius and Barlaeus, the new board of curators and burgomasters succeeded in luring Franco Burgersdijk to Leiden. Daniel Heinsius, professor of history and politics, was not prosecuted thanks to his religious orthodoxy.⁵¹

3. Leiden University II. Structure, method, and content of education

Leiden University was modelled after the University of Paris. That means that it had four faculties: three 'higher' faculties where the three 'sciences' (*scientiae*) of theology (*theologia*), law (*jus*) and medicine (*medicina*) were taught, and one 'lower' faculty, the faculty of arts (*artes*), also known as the faculty of 'philosophy and the free arts' (*philosophia et artes liberales*), where knowledge was taught that was seen as propaedeutic.⁵² Since Boxhorn only finished his study of philology and spent his whole active career at the faculty of arts, we will focus on the curriculum and the method of teaching at this particular faculty.⁵³

On August 12, 1626, Hendrik Boxhorn, eighty-one-years old, enrolled himself and his two grandsons Marcus and Hendrik in the faculty of arts.⁵⁴ The faculty of arts 'was the faculty of both the beginning and the beginner. It was both propaedeutic and pedagogic. Though it occupied the lowest rung on the ladder of knowledge, it was the faculty that determined what ordered rational knowledge was'.⁵⁵ Since the Middle Ages, that 'ordered rational knowledge' consisted of at least the free arts. The free arts were divided into two blocks,

⁵¹ Otterspeer, *Het bolwerk van de vrijheid*, pp. 281-89. For Heinsius, see Paul Sellin who convincingly refutes Dirk ter Horst's judgement that Heinsius was a turncoat who betrayed his former Arminians friends by siding with the winners. Compare P.R. Sellin, *Daniel Heinsius and Stuart England* (Oxford University Press; London, 1968), pp. 18-32, with D.J.H. ter Horst, *Daniel Heinsius (1580-1655)* (Ph.D.-dissertation, Hoeijenbos; Utrecht, 1934), pp. 71-87. See also J.H. Meter, *The Literary Theories of Daniel Heinsius: A Study of the Development and Background of His Views on Literary Theory and Criticism during the Period from 1602 to 1612*. Translated by Ina Swart (Van Gorcum; Assen, 1984), pp. 30-32, 300-1.

⁵² Wansink, *Politieke wetenschappen aan de Leidse universiteit*, pp. 38-61, and Laurence Brockliss, "Curricula", in De Ridder-Symoens (ed.), *Universities in Early Modern Europe*, p. 565.

⁵³ Baselius, "Historia vitae & obitus", iv-v. 'Inter ea temporis Philologicum & Philosophicum studiorum cursum absolvit, & ad Theologiam, cui destinabatur animum applicuit, in qua sub illius facultatis Professoribus, nominatim Johanne Polyandro à Kerckhoven, sic & cum laude profecit ut progressus non illaudanda specimina ediderit, quâ publice, quâ privatim. Sed cum ingenium ad litteraturam quasi natum videretur, illam deserere nequii etiam tum quando cum fructu coepta Theologia studia absolvere poterat. Hinc illa ipsa non intermissa modo, sed plane relicta, solum Philologicum tractatum fuit.' Johannes Polyandrus à Kerckhoven (1568-1646) was appointed professor of theology in 1611. He belonged to the Counter-Remonstrants and was a relative of Scriverius. He performed several diplomatic missions for Frederik Hendrik. Langereis, *Geschiedenis als ambacht*, pp. 197-98, and Sluijter, 'Tot circaet, vermeerderinge ende heerlyckmaeckinge der universiteyt', p. 142.

⁵⁴ *Album studiosorum Academiae Lugduno Batavae MDLXXV-MDCCCLXXV*, p. 194.

⁵⁵ Wilhelm Schmidt-Biggemann, "New Structures of Knowledge", in De Ridder-Symoens (ed.), *Universities in Early Modern Europe*, p. 489.

the *trivium* that consisted of grammar (*grammatica*), rhetoric (*rethorica*) and dialectics (*dialectica*), and the *quadrivium* that consisted of mathematics (*arithmetica*), geometry (*geometrica*), astronomy (*astronomia*) and music (*musica*). In the course of time many shifts took place as the free arts, which had never been regarded as well-defined academic disciplines, were constantly adapted to new discoveries and changing circumstances. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries humanist scholars turned their focus to eloquence and ethics (*ethica*), the latter being one of the four parts of philosophy, which on its turn was often grouped under dialectics.⁵⁶ The humanists' endeavour to return to the sources (*ad fontes*) in order to retrieve the wisdom of the ancients, the Church fathers and, above all, the Bible from the dark recesses of the past, and their interest 'in the *vita activa*, in knowledge for the use of the civil community', made besides Latin and ethics also Greek (*Graeca*), Hebrew (*Hebraeica*), history (*historia*), and politics (*politica*) important subjects of study.⁵⁷

Within the faculty of arts at Leiden University three more or less defined areas of study can be discerned: philology, philosophy, and mathematics.⁵⁸ It was especially in the field of philology that Leiden University excelled. Giants like Justus Lipsius, Joseph Justus Scaliger, and Claude Salmasius (1588-1653) – the later two were invited to illuminate the University merely with their presence and illustrious name – but also lesser gods like Heinsius, Vossius, Thomas Erpenius (1584-1624), and Jacob Golius (1596-1667) pushed to new levels the studies in the classical languages Latin and Greek, in the oriental languages Hebrew and Arabic, and in the 'antiquities' (*antiquitates*) and history. In the field of philosophy Burgersdijk became highly influential. For mathematics the merits of father Rudolf (1546-1613) and son Willebrord (1580-1626) Snellius and Golius should be mentioned.

Politics had no fixed place within the curriculum. Officially, politics belonged to the field of ethics. It was also, however, introduced through the philological study of Latin and Greek, based on the reading and recitation of classical authors such as Cicero, Caesar (100-44 BC), Livy, and Tacitus. The ostensible goal of such study was the obtaining of eloquence (*eloquentia*) and practical wisdom (*prudentia*), particular in the field of ethics. But the topics treated by the classical authors, the purposes of eloquence, and the nature

⁵⁶ The other three parts of philosophy were logic (*logica*), physics (*fysica*), and metaphysics (*metafysica*). Wansink, *Politieke wetenschappen aan de Leidse universiteit*, pp. 42-45.

⁵⁷ De Ridder-Symoens (ed.), *Universities in Early Modern Europe*, passim. Quotation taken from Walter Rüegg, "Themes", in *ibidem*, p. 30.

⁵⁸ Wansink, *Politieke wetenschappen aan de Leidse universiteit*, pp. 51-53.

of the practical wisdom offered, very often brought political questions and action into the forefront of consideration.

The *artes*-programme took two years to complete. Most students, however, only took two or three semesters to follow some courses given at the faculty of arts in combination with a study at one of the three higher faculties. Only a few, like Boxhorn, completed the whole programme.⁵⁹ The word ‘programme’ should not mislead us in thinking that there existed a fixed annual set of courses where a fixed set of subjects was discussed. Often the curators appointed a professor to teach a certain subject (Greek, history, logic) but left the practical implementation to the discretion of the respective professor, for example when they gave Cunaeus, professor of Latin and politics, permission to teach ‘either from the Digests, or from the Code’.⁶⁰ There was also much overlap. Professors with different chairs lectured on the same subjects, like Heinsius and Vossius, who both taught Roman history; the former in his capacity as professor of history, the latter as professor of eloquence and universal chronology.⁶¹ A further complication was that many professors tended to neglect their public lectures so that even if there were series of required lectures on a certain topic not much came of them.⁶² That a professor like Heinsius sometimes did not show up because he was too hung over did not help much either.⁶³

4. Boxhorn’s educational background

To give a brief overview of the kind of education Boxhorn received in the fields of history and politics during his stay as a student at Leiden University, I will give a short sketch of the work of Daniel Heinsius and Franco Burgersdijk. The choice for the work of these two men can be justified on the ground that Boxhorn was a student of both Heinsius and Burgersdijk at a time that Heinsius had the task to teach history and Burgersdijk politics.⁶⁴ Their work can give an

⁵⁹ Wiep van Bunge, *From Stevin to Spinoza: An Essay on Philosophy in the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic* (Brill; Leiden/Boston, 2001), p. 26, and Frijhoff and Spies, *Hard-Won Unity*, pp. 283-84.

⁶⁰ ‘... om naest de professio Politices, ‘t zij ex Digestis, ‘t zij ex Codice te lezen.’ Otterspeer, *Het bolwerk van de vrijheid*, p. 400.

⁶¹ Margreet Ahsmann, *Collegia en colleges: juridisch onderwijs aan de Leidse Universiteit, 1575-1630, in het bijzonder het disputeren* (Wolters-Noordhoff/Egbert Forsten; Groningen, 1990), pp. 583-86.

⁶² Wansink, *Politieke wetenschappen aan de Leidse universiteit*, pp. 24-32, 46-51, 99-106.

⁶³ Heinsius was a notorious drinker. Grafton, “Civic Humanism and Scientific Scholarship at Leiden”, p. 65.

⁶⁴ As we have seen above, Boxhorn matriculated at the faculty of arts of Leiden University on August 12, 1626. From Baselius’s biography of Boxhorn it can be deduced that Boxhorn had completed the *artes*-programme, which took two years to complete, by at least 1629. Baselius, “*Historia vitae &*

insight into what they taught students like Boxhorn about history and politics. In addition to this, we can add that Boxhorn became Heinsius's protégé and was, according to one source, 'intimate' with Burgersdijk. Thus, there is also talk of a personal bond between Boxhorn and these two teachers.⁶⁵

Besides the work of Heinsius and Burgersdijk, I will also briefly consider the work of the poet and antiquarian Petrus Scriverius, a private scholar who became Boxhorn's patron when Boxhorn was still in his younger days.⁶⁶ The work of these three men represent, as it were, three strands in Boxhorn's educational background: a 'classical' humanist approach to history and politics (Heinsius), a philosophical approach to politics (Burgersdijk), and an antiquarian approach to history (Scriverius).

I. The value of history: Daniel Heinsius

Daniel Heinsius was perhaps the brightest star of Leiden University when Boxhorn matriculated there in 1626. Born in Ghent in 1580, Daniel Heinsius moved to Leiden in 1598 to study at the town's university. At Leiden

obitus", iv-v. 'In cujus notitiam non modo, sed & familiaritatem assumptus, hoc Magistro sic profecit ut anno 1629. aetatis vixdum decimo septimo, in victorias insignes & varias ejusdem anni, nominatim ob captam ab Arausionensium Principe Frederico Henrico Sylvam Ducis triumphos tres cecinerit. Quos cum quatuor Academiae tum primariis Professoribus dignos & Avus judicabat publicam lucem adspicere, & Lugduni eodem anno editos omnium applausu lectos fuisse non semel audivi. Inter ea temporis Philologicum & Philosophicum studiorum cursum absolvit, & ad Theologiam, cui destinabatur animum applicuit ... Sed cum ingenium ad litteraturam quasi natum videretur, illam deserere nequirit etiam tum quando cum fructu coepta Theologia studia absolvere poterat. Hinc illa ipsa non intermissa modo, sed plane relicta, solum Philologicum tractatum fuit. Cujus mox alterum specimen publicum edidit, scriptione Encomii Granatarum, horrendae, ut titulus habet, & stupendae in bello virtutis. Quod anno sequenti editum & Patriae suae, Civitatis Bergobzomanæ Magistratui inscriptum ivit.' The two publications Baselius is referring to in this text are: Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn, *Triumphii* (Godefridus Basson; Leiden, 1629) and idem, *Granatarum horrendae, & stupendae in bello virtutis encomium* (J. Navius; Leiden, 1630). That Boxhorn was a student of both Heinsius and Burgersdijk can be inferred from Baselius, "Historia vitae & obitus", iii-iv. 'Qui simul ac Lugdunum Batavorum venit, annos vix tredecem natus, publicas, lectiones Academicas cum fructu audivit, & sic biennium ferme ante tempus à Curatoribus recipiendis studiosis Academicis constitutum, inter studiosos illius Academiae adscriptus, sedulo sese in Philosophicis, sub magno illo Philosopho Francone Burgersdici exercuit, in literatura usus institutione *πολυχρῆε* illius Gerardi Johannis Vossii & Danielis Heinsii, Academiae ocelli.'

⁶⁵ Barlaeus, "Oratio funebris In Excessum Clarissimi Viri, Marci Zuerii Boxhornii ...", p. 152. 'Inter eos praecipue coluit summi & ingenii & doctrinae virum Danielelem Heinsium, maturae jam aetatis senem & emeritum, Academiae nostrae & Graeciae, dum floruit singulare fulcimentum, à quo cum plurimis beneficiis esset affectus Noster, non ingratus esse voluit, sed de tanto heroë, & Euergeta suo nusquam non bene mereri. E cujus etiam ipse lectionibus & dissertationibus eruditissimis plurimum profecerat ... Franconi item Burgesdyckio intimus fuit, philosophorum, ut dictum, in hoc Athenaeo nostro tunc celeberrimo.' Personally, I do not believe Barlaeus's claim concerning Boxhorn's intimacy with Burgersdijk. First of all, to my knowledge, Barlaeus's funeral oration on Boxhorn's death is the only source which mentions this specific characteristic of Boxhorn's relationship with Burgersdijk. Second, in Boxhorn's letters that are published in the *Epistolae et poemata* Burgersdijk is not mentioned once; in them we do not even find any reference to, or lamentation on, Burgersdijk's death in 1635.

⁶⁶ Ibidem. 'Petrum quoque Scriverium maximi fecit ob raram scilicet illius viri in historiis & omni antiquitate peritiam, tum quod promotionis suae auctor & patronus apud Curatores & Magistratum Leidensem fuisset haud postremus: ne jam tanti Maecenatis prolixum in omnes doctos affectum & candorem eloquar, quibus & hunc & alios sibi devinxit Musarum cultores.' Langereis, *Geschiedenis als ambacht*, p. 143.

he became the protégé of the great Scaliger. In 1613 – having already been appointed to positions including the extraordinary professorship of poetry (1603), and the ordinary professorships of Greek (1609) and politics (1612) – the prestigious professorship of history was eventually bestowed upon him. Besides his professorships Heinsius also held the offices of University librarian (from 1607) and secretary of the University senate (from 1608/14). Finally, in 1627 he was appointed as historiographer of the States of Holland. It seems that in the first years of his stay at Leiden University Boxhorn could not have wished for a better positioned professor to become his patron.⁶⁷

Heinsius was ‘an exciting speaker and a stimulating teacher’. As a scholar he preferred poetry and philology.⁶⁸ His publications include plays (*Auriacus*, 1602; *Herodes infanticida*, 1632), editions of the works of Aristotle (*Poetics*, 1610; *Politics*, 1621), and a commentary on the New Testament (*Sacrarum exercitiorum ad Novum Testamentum libri xx*, 1639). Furthermore, several collected editions of Heinsius’s orations appeared, and in his role as historiographer of the States of Holland he wrote a history of the siege of ‘s-Hertogenbosch which was published in 1631 (*Rerum ad Sylvam-Ducis ... gestarum historia*).⁶⁹

Heinsius began his professorship of history with an inaugural oration in which he sang history’s praise.⁷⁰ History, in Heinsius’s words, is a ‘privilege’.⁷¹ It is a privilege that allows humans, mortal beings who only live for a certain period of time, to

singly and once ascend a steep cliff, whence they might behold and survey the peoples of the whole earth, of all ages and generations, and their manners and character, the wars of princes, the laws of the prudent, the situation of countries and cities, all counsels, all actions and their results.⁷²

⁶⁷ NNBW, Vol. 2, pp. 554-55, and Sellin, *Daniel Heinsius and Stuart England*, pp. 3, 13-14, 17-20, 37-38. See also Paul van Heck, “*Cymbalum Politicorum, Consultor Dolosus*: Two Dutch Academics on Niccolò Machiavelli”, in Toon van Houdt et al. (eds.), *On the Edge of Truth and Reason: Principles and Strategies of Fraud and Deceit in the Early Modern Period* (Brill; Leiden/Boston, 2002), p. 50. For Heinsius as Scaliger’s protégé, see also Anthony Grafton, *Joseph Scaliger: A Study in the History of Classical Scholarship*, Vol. 2: *Historical Chronology* (Clarendon Press; Oxford, 1993), p. 391.

⁶⁸ Sellin, *Daniel Heinsius and Stuart England*, p. 17.

⁶⁹ For a ‘Short-Title Checklist of the Works of Daniel Heinsius’, see *ibidem*, pp. 208-52.

⁷⁰ Daniel Heinsius, *De praestantia ac dignitate historiae oratio, Habita cum Historicam Professionem auspicaturus esset* (Lowijs Elzevier; Leiden, 1614). In this thesis most English translations of this oration are taken from Daniel Heinsius, *The Value of History*. Translated into English for the First Time with Notes and Appendices by George W. Robinson (Privately printed; Cambridge, 1943). Where the footnote gives the original Latin text the translation is my own.

⁷¹ *Idem*, *The Value of History*, p. 11.

⁷² *Ibidem*, p. 9.

This overview that history provides frees ‘that fretful animal, whom we call man ... from the limits of time and space’. It also makes man ‘present without danger at all wars and events’ and ‘view in a moment an infinite multitude of matters and affairs’.⁷³ In short, history is a liberating, safe, and speedy passage to information.

The information history offers covers the fields of morality, law, politics, and warfare. According to Heinsius, history shows man ‘what it is to be just and fair ... what is the duty of a judge, what of a senator’ and the arts of war.⁷⁴ Furthermore, through history man gains access to ‘the thoughts, too, and that immense mystery of command, which usually lies concealed in the minds of kings and princes, as in some hidden shrine and sanctuary of a temple’.⁷⁵ Heinsius points out the importance of history for ‘civic prudence’ (*civilis ... prudentia*) and ‘jurisprudence’ (*jurisprudencia*). Without history, civic prudence ‘is tortured and almost wasted away by tasteless, disgusting, and pedantic distinctions and minute divisions of philosophers’.⁷⁶ While the distinctions of philosophers may be tasteless, history ‘is the spice and as it were the soul’ of politics, as Heinsius put it in an earlier oration.⁷⁷ History delivers examples that show, for example, the duty of a senator.⁷⁸ Here we encounter the view, shared by many of Heinsius’s contemporaries, of history ‘as a source of examples for men’s conduct in the world’.⁷⁹

⁷³ Ibidem, p. 10.

⁷⁴ Ibidem, pp. 11-12.

⁷⁵ Heinsius, *De praestantia ac dignitate historiae oratio*, iv. ‘cogitationes quoque & immensum illud imperij arcanum, quod in regum principumque animis, tanquam in adyto quodam & occulto delubri sacrario, plerumque occultatur, in Rep. autem paginam utramque facit, non aliter quam medicus quidam, qui humana secat corpora, ex eventu colligeret ...’ In his translation (p. 11) Robinson has preferred to follow here the text that can be found in the collected edition of Heinsius’s orations that appeared in 1627, which reads: ‘cogitationes quoque & imperii arcana, quae in Regum Principumque animis, tanquam in occulto quodam adyto conclusa jacent, non aliter quam medicus, qui humanum inspicit ac secat corpus, ex eventu protinus colligeret ...’ See Daniel Heinsius, “De praestantia ac dignitate Historiae. Habita cum Historicam professionem auspicaturus esset”, in idem, *Orationum editio nova; Tertia parte auctior; caeteris sic recensitis, ut alia videri possit* (Bonaventura and Abraham Elzevier; Leiden, 1627), XII, p. 147.

⁷⁶ Idem, *The Value of History*, p. 12. In his translation Robinson has translated ‘civilis ... prudentia’ here as ‘political science’. For the importance of history for jurisprudence, see ibidem, p. 14.

⁷⁷ Daniel Heinsius, “Oratio III. Habita cum libellum De Magistratibus Romanis interpretari inciperet”, in idem, *De politica sapientia oratio. Cui duae aliae, & Praefationes sive Dissertationes totidem, quarum argumentum primae paginae praefigitur, accedunt* (Lowijs Elzevier; Leiden, 1614), viii. ‘Condimentum enim huius scientiae, & quasi animus, est historia.’ The dedicatory letter in this publication is dated November 3, 1613. Heinsius was appointed professor of history on November 18, 1613. See Heinsius, *The Value of History*, p. 7, there footnote 1.

⁷⁸ Idem, *The Value of History*, p. 12.

⁷⁹ Haitsma Mulier, “A Repertory of Dutch Early Modern Historiography”, p. 113. See also Grafton, *What was History?*, p. 31.

‘Although all History is magnificent’, in his inaugural oration Heinsius singles out for special praise the ancient Romans and the history of Rome.⁸⁰ He believes that the lives and deeds of the ancient Romans provide his contemporaries with ‘examples of virtue’.⁸¹ In Roman history men are to be found whose conduct is worthy of imitation. In one of Heinsius’s oration we read: ‘... may we imitate Paetus, Seneca, Cremutius, and similar heroes, who lived in the time of Tacitus [and] whose comparable deaths he describes.’⁸²

Heinsius has a high opinion of Tacitus, ‘the unparalleled guide and teacher of civic prudence’.⁸³ What Heinsius admires is that Tacitus had taken account of the truth ‘in such a way that he also adds usefulness’. Furthermore, Tacitus had not just recorded the past for past’s sake, but ‘in order to discover the future by scrutiny’. In this, Tacitus showed himself to be not only a historian, but also a philosopher.⁸⁴ It is therefore no surprise that Heinsius holds that besides ‘civic admonitions and instructions ... examples of true and solid wisdom’ can be gathered from Tacitus.⁸⁵ We will see that Boxhorn also holds Tacitus in high esteem.⁸⁶

Heinsius’s view on the instructive value of history and a historian like Tacitus – as treasure chests of examples, admonitions, and instructions – can be connected to the philological-historical tradition that was so dominant at Leiden University in the first half of the seventeenth century. One of the fundamental pillars of this tradition is the idea that because ‘human nature does not change’ substantially, there is no real difference between the past and the

⁸⁰ Heinsius, *The Value of History*, pp. 16-17, 19, with quote on p. 16.

⁸¹ Idem, *De praestantia ac dignitate historiae oratio*, ix. ‘Quis non excitatur & immensa voluptate perfunditur, cum in illam gentem se abdidit, a qua vim virtutis & exempla, non ut in Graecorum chartis disserendo, sed vita ipsa, ipsis actionibus descripta ac delineata accepimus?’

⁸² Daniel Heinsius, “Post absolutum primum librum Annalium Taciti olim habita. in qua de mutatione Reipublicae, deque Principatus initio agitur”, in idem, *Orationum editio nova, Prioribus auctior. Accedunt Dissertationes aliquot, cum nonnullis Praefationibus ...* (Elzevier; Amsterdam, 1657), XVII [XVI], pp. 187-88. ‘... Paetos, Senecas, Cremutios, ac similes heroes imitemur, qui aetate Taciti vixerunt: quorum parem vitae exitum describit.’

⁸³ Ibidem, p. 179. ‘Quare, quemadmodum qui longum iter susceperunt, ducem viae sibi eligunt, ne temere aberrent: ita nos superiore anno Caii Corn. Taciti, scriptoris maximi, Annales delegimus, quem prudentiae civilis ducem ac magistrum unicum esse arbitrabamur.’ See also Daniel Heinsius, “Habita in auditorio Theologico, cum Secundum Taciti Annalium absolvisset”, in idem, *Orationum editio nova, Prioribus auctior*, XVII, p. 190. ‘Cum hunc Cajum Cornelium Tacitum, civilis principem prudentiae ...’

⁸⁴ Ibidem. ‘Nam cum reliqui Historiarum scriptores, quod a Plinio praeclare dictum est, nihil praeter sanguinem & caedem Annalibus condiderint, res gestas, mores hominum ac vitas exponant, veritatem denique narratione sola profiteantur, fidem autem tanquam auri massam lectoribus appendant, & in eo toti sint: Cornelius hic noster, ita veritatis rationem habuit, ut usum quoque adjungat: rerum successus examinet: ipsas causas ad amussim rationis exigat: praeterita, quod est Historici, commemoret, ut futura, quod est vere sapientis, excutiat.’

⁸⁵ Ibidem, p. 189. ‘Nos exemplo vestro excitati, caeteros ne quidem intuebimur. Nos a te, Corneli, unicum prudentiae oraculum ac robur, praeter haec civilia quae singulis diebus monita ex te haurimus & praecepta, verae ac robustae exempla sapientiae petemus.’

⁸⁶ See below and especially chapter 7.

present. As a result, past examples can serve as lessons for the present or the future.⁸⁷ The possibility of imitation (*imitatio*) makes history ‘the teacher of our lives’ – *historia magistra vitae* – an idea that was, as we have seen, one of the hallmarks of Renaissance humanism.⁸⁸

Another hallmark of Renaissance humanism was the adherence to the principle of *ad fontes* – to the sources. Originally the goal of humanists in going *ad fontes* was to find out or to come as close as possible to the most pristine, pure, and true versions of the classical authors and ancient texts they admired so much. The humanists did this primarily through the internal comparison of texts and manuscripts. In this sense, *ad fontes* meant ‘to the texts’. Heinsius, however, on at least one occasion, uses the principle of *ad fontes* not in the context of philological research but in the context of historical research. In his oration on Julius Caesar, published in 1625, Heinsius advises his audience to follow the principle of *ad fontes* in the study of past events:

Those who have examined the ways of sprigs, stoop very willingly to the roots of trees and flowers, to search from these the causes of even the sprouts and the leaves that nature exposes to the eyes. In the study of past events, young men, the political man must do the same. To solidly search the notable changes and alterations in a commonwealth, one must go to the origin and the sources one day.⁸⁹

A sound investigation of past events requires that the causes of these past events are found out. This employment of the principle of *ad fontes* in historical research returns in at least one of Boxhorn’s works, as we shall see in chapter 7.

Heinsius’s political thought can be classified as Aristotelian and Ciceronian.⁹⁰ Heinsius has a great admiration for Aristotle. He calls the Stagirite ‘the

⁸⁷ Wansink, *Politieke wetenschappen aan de Leidse universiteit*, pp. 79, 158-59; Blom, “Political Science in the Golden Age”, pp. 54-55, with quote on the latter; E.O.G. Haitsma Mulier, “De oudheid in de vroegmoderne tijd: het model van de verre voorouders en hun staatsvorm”, in Henk de Smaele and Jo Tollebeek (eds.), *Politieke representatie* (Uitgeverij Pers Leuven; Louvain, 2002), pp. 140-41.

⁸⁸ Gilbert, *Machiavelli and Guicciardini*, pp. 203-35, still serves as a good introduction to fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Renaissance humanist views on history and politics.

⁸⁹ Daniel Heinsius, “De C. Caesare Dictatore, cum illius Vitam in Tranquillo expositurus esset, habita”, in idem, *Orationum editio nova, Prioribus auctior*, XVIII, p. 201. ‘Qui plantarum rationes excusserunt, ad radices arborum ac florum libentissime descendunt, ut ex iis causas surculorum quoque ac foliorum, quae natura oculis exponit, rimarentur. Idem homini Politico, Adolescentes, in Historia agendum. Ut insignes in Republica mutationes ac conversiones solide rimetur, ad originem ac fontes aliquando veniendum est. quos, ni fallor, omnium quae audivistis, in virtute partim, partim hujus Principis ambitione, jam habebitis.’ For the year of the publication of this oration, see ‘The Short-title Checklist’ in Sellin, *Daniel Heinsius and Stuart England*, p. 222.

⁹⁰ See Van Heck, “*Cymbalum Politicorum, Consultor Dolosus*”, pp. 51-57.

incomparable teacher of all men'.⁹¹ Aristotle had written different political works. In some of them the Greek philosopher had 'taught ... general precepts about civic prudence'. In others he 'had summed up the mysteries of command', the secrets that are connected to the art of ruling.⁹² Aristotle had knowledge of methods that were morally wrong, but had 'never or hardly ever' abandoned 'the criterion of *iustitia*'.⁹³ For Heinsius, Aristotle was 'the patron of Justice'.⁹⁴

In Heinsius's view politics is primarily concerned with virtuous behaviour.⁹⁵ The purpose of history, as a handmaiden of politics, is to provide students of politics with examples of such virtuous behaviour. Yet, there is also another side to Heinsius's political thought. Through the political works of Aristotle, the careful reader could acquire both general knowledge about politics and insights into political motives and tricks that usually remain hidden for the public eye.⁹⁶ History, as we have seen, also provided access to concealed political knowledge. Thus, the study of politics and history could have two educational functions. The first is education in ethics; the second is education in statecraft. For Heinsius, these two functions were probably inseparable. Rulers or administrative office-holders should behave and govern virtuously. In the works of Heinsius's student Boxhorn, however, the moral dimension to the study of politics and history resides to the background, as will become clear in this thesis.

Despite being professor of politics and history and historiographer of the States of Holland, Heinsius's publication list reveals that he was more a philologist than a political thinker or a historian. In 1621 he made a philological contribution to the field of politics with an edition of Aristotle's *Politics*. The work, of which Boxhorn owned a copy, contains the Greek text, a Latin translation and paraphrases.⁹⁷ The importance of this work, and other editions of

⁹¹ Daniel Heinsius, "Ad librum De Magistratibus Romanis. Habita cum libellum De Magistratibus Romanis interpretari inciperet", in idem, *Orationum editio nova, Prioribus auctior*, XX, p. 223. '... cum incomparabili doctore omnium ac nostro Aristotele videbimus.'

⁹² Daniel Heinsius, "De civili sapientia oratio. Habita cum secundum Aristotelis Politicorum interpretari inciperet", in idem, *De politica sapientia oratio*, xi-xii. 'Multa, quod iam aliquoties monuimus, de civili sapientia conscripsit Aristoteles ... Alia fuisse eius viri scripta, in quibus visitato sibi modo ac docendi quasi via, generalia praecepta quaedam de civili disciplina traderet ... alia, quibus imperij arcana & occultas illas artes, quae in vita nunc civili & in aula paginam vtranque faciunt, fuerat complexus.'

⁹³ Van Heck, "Cymbalum Politicorum, Consultor Dolosus", p. 52.

⁹⁴ Heinsius, "De civili sapientia oratio", xiii. 'Opulentus enim, & felix, & Iustitiae patronus, & auctoritate nemini secundus, postquam urbem suam legibus fundasset, expiravit.'

⁹⁵ Wansink, *Politieke wetenschappen aan de Leidse universiteit*, p. 144.

⁹⁶ Heinsius believed that Aristotle had 'formulated his political advice in such a way that it could only be understood by a few people'. Van Heck, "Cymbalum Politicorum, Consultor Dolosus", pp. 55-56.

⁹⁷ *Aristotelis Politicorum Libri VIII. Cum perpetua Danielis Heinsii in omnes libros Paraphrasi* (Elzevier;

Aristotle's *Politics*, is that it offered its readers a direct confrontation with the text and the political ideas of the great Greek philosopher himself. Following these ideas, students could come to conclusions that deviated from the tradition in the *politica* at Leiden University. In Harm Wansink's study of 'political science' at Leiden University we find an example of such a deviation. The example concerns a disputation 'on the best form of government', published in 1602. The disputation was held by a Polish student named Andreas Rey. On the grounds of ideas that follow Aristotle's, Rey concludes that in practice an aristocracy is the best form of government. Rey's opinion, according to Wansink, constituted 'a clear deviation from the tradition' in the *politica* at Leiden University, which was 'monarchical' in nature, i.e. it saw or tended to favour monarchy as the best form of government.⁹⁸ As will be demonstrated in chapter 8 of this thesis, Boxhorn also deviated from the 'monarchical' aspect of the Leiden tradition in the *politica*. Instead he followed Aristotle in the Stagirite's favourable analyses of aristocracy and that mixture of oligarchy and democracy known as the 'polity' or 'constitutional government'.⁹⁹

II. The *politica* of Franco Burgersdijk

Franco Burgersdijk has been described as 'without doubt ... the most influential Dutch philosopher of the first half of the seventeenth century'. A former Leiden student, Burgersdijk had returned from France, where he had held a professorship of philosophy at the Protestant Academy of Saumur, to Leiden University where he became extraordinary professor of logic in 1620. In 1626, the year Boxhorn matriculated at Leiden, he was ordinary professor of logic and ethics. Two years later Burgersdijk exchanged his professorship of ethics for one of physics. He was three times *rector magnificus* before dying in 1635.¹⁰⁰

Burgersdijk was a versatile philosopher. His works cover all the four main branches of philosophy: logic (*Institutionum logicarum libri III*, 1626); physics (*Collegium physicum disputationibus XXXII absolutum*, 1632); metaphysics (*Institutionum metaphysicarum libri II*, 1640); and ethics (*Idea philosophiae moralis*,

Leiden, 1621). For Boxhorn's copy of Heinsius's edition, see *Catalogus Variorum & Insignium Librorum, Celeberrimi ac Eruditissimi Viri Marci Zueri Boxhornii*, xxxii.

⁹⁸ Wansink, *Politieke wetenschappen aan de Leidse universiteit*, pp. 192, 194-95, 237, with quotes on p. 194, p. 195, and p. 237 respectively.

⁹⁹ Aristotle, *Politics*, 1293b1-1294a1 [IV:7-8]. 'For polity or constitutional government may be described generally as a fusion of oligarchy and democracy ...' Quoted from Aristotle, *The Politics and The Constitution of Athens*. Edited by Stephen Everson; translated by Benjamin Jowett (Cambridge University Press; Cambridge, 1st ed. 1997, 2007), p. 103. Unless stated otherwise, all references to, and quotations from, Aristotle's *Politics* refer to, and have been taken from, this edition.

¹⁰⁰ For a recent biography of Burgersdijk and a short discussion of his works, see the entry "Burgersdijk, Franck Pieterszoon (1590-1635)", in Van Bunge et al. (eds.), *The Dictionary of Seventeenth and Eighteenth-Century Dutch Philosophers*, Vol. 1, pp. 181-90, with quote on p. 182.

1623). Burgersdijk's work on politics (*Idea oeconomicae et politicae doctrinae*, 1644) can be grouped under the last category, since, as has already been noted, politics was officially a part of ethics.¹⁰¹

According to Harm Wansink, the *Idea oeconomicae et politicae doctrinae* (*Idea of a science relating to the household and of political science*) 'is without a doubt based on lectures Burgersdijk gave in the first ten years of his professorship', that is, in the period between 1620 and 1629.¹⁰² This period partly coincides with the time that Boxhorn was a student at the faculty of arts, which was somewhere between mid-August 1626 and the year 1629. If Wansink is right, then Boxhorn might have heard and made notes of what nine years after the death of his teacher Burgersdijk came to be published in the *Idea oeconomicae et politicae doctrinae*.¹⁰³

The *Idea oeconomicae et politicae doctrinae* as it was published in 1644 consists of two parts. The first part deals with the household and its organisation, the second part with politics.¹⁰⁴ It is on the second part, labelled the *Idea doctrinae politicae*, that we will concentrate.¹⁰⁵

The *Idea doctrinae politicae* begins with a chapter in which politics is defined as 'the science ... of founding and governing a commonwealth properly'.¹⁰⁶ The goal of political science is 'the felicity of the entire commonwealth, which exists in this; that all may live piously and properly'.¹⁰⁷ This makes political science 'a pagan affair', since it deals, just as philosophy in general, 'not with grace'.¹⁰⁸

Burgersdijk follows Aristotle in the great Stagiritic's view that 'man is by nature a political animal'. Political society is thus a natural phenomenon.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰¹ For a bibliography of Burgersdijk's work, see "Burgersdijk", pp. 188-89.

¹⁰² Wansink, *Politieke wetenschappen aan de Leidse universiteit*, p. 203.

¹⁰³ For the period of time that Boxhorn was a student at the faculty of arts, see footnote 64.

¹⁰⁴ Hans W. Blom, "*Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas*: Burgersdijk's Moral and Political Thought", in E.P. Bos and H.A. Krop (eds.), *Franco Burgersdijk (1590-1635): Neo-Aristotelianism in Leiden* (Rodopi; Amsterdam/Atlanta, 1993), p. 125.

¹⁰⁵ In what follows the Latin quotations are taken from Franco Burgersdijk, *Idea politica cum annotationibus Georgii Hornii* (Felix Lopez de Haro; Leiden, 1668). For the English translations I have benefitted from the translations of Hans Blom, to be found in Blom, "*Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas*: Burgersdijk's Moral and Political Thought."

¹⁰⁶ Burgersdijk, *Idea politica*, I.1, p. 1. 'Politica est doctrina Rempubl. recte constituendi ac gubernandi. Haec enim duo ita sunt conjuncta, ut separari nequeant. Etsi enim Resp. non semper sit constituenda: nemo tamen censi debet Remp. posse gubernare, nisi qui eam possit constituere.'

¹⁰⁷ Ibidem, I.13, p. 7. 'Finis doctrinae Politicae est, felicitas universae Reip. quae in eo sita est, ut omnes pie probeque vivant: deinde ut omnia iis, quatenus fieri potest, suppetant, quae ad vitam commodè degendam necessaria sunt, & ad res communes, & communia jura civitatis adversus vim externam, defendenda. Ex hisce duabus rebus tranquillitas oritur & concordia civium, quod est maximum Reipub. robur.'

¹⁰⁸ Blom, "*Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas*: Burgersdijk's Moral and Political Thought", p. 123.

¹⁰⁹ Burgersdijk, *Idea politica*, I.5, pp. 3-4. 'Politia, sive politica societas, originem traxit à natura. Homo enim sua natura est animal politicum, quod tam ex sermone, quam ex illius usu manifestum est.' See

Burgersdijk sees want and danger as stimuli of man's inclination to live socially but he disagrees with 'some writers on politics' who hold that 'commonwealths have coalesced by force first'.¹¹⁰

Burgersdijk defines a commonwealth – *res publica* – as 'a society of many families, who live under the same government and under the same laws'.¹¹¹ A government can take on different forms. Burgersdijk distinguishes between unmixed and mixed forms of government. There are three unmixed forms of government: monarchy, aristocracy and democracy.¹¹² Of the mixed forms of governments there are also three: a mixture of monarchy and aristocracy, a mixture of aristocracy and democracy, and a mixture of monarchy, aristocracy and democracy.¹¹³

The *Idea doctrinae politicae* shows Burgersdijk's preference for a monarchy. 'Without a doubt, by its nature a monarchy is the best form of government, because it is not liable to dissent.'¹¹⁴ Burgersdijk describes monarchy as a form of government in which one man is in charge, the prince, under whose command all the other people live.¹¹⁵ The combination of the reason why Burgersdijk calls monarchy the best form of government with his description of mon-

Aristotle, *Politics*, 1252b1-1253a1 [I:2], p. 13. 'When several villages are united in a single complete community, large enough to be nearly or quite self-sufficing, the state comes into existence, originating in the bare needs of life, and continuing in existence for the sake of a good life. And therefore, if the earlier forms of society are natural, so is the state ... Hence it is evident that the state is a creation of nature, and that man is by nature a political animal ... Now, that man is more of a political animal than bees or any other gregarious animals is evident. Nature, as we often say, makes nothing in vain, and man is the only animal who has the gift of speech.'

¹¹⁰ Ibidem, I.6, pp. 4-5. 'Hanc tamen naturae propensionem excitaverunt tum egestas, tum periculum. Quia enim uni familiae non suppetuntur omnia ad bene beateque vivendum, & ad propulsandam violentiam, injuriamve quae ab aliis inferri solet, plures familiae sese conjunxerunt, & societatem iniverunt.' Ibidem, I.8, p. 5. 'Quare falsum est, quod nonnulli Politici docent, Imperia & Respublicas, vi primum coaluisse, & ex bello ortam esse summam imperandi potestatem. Non enim factum est ut reliqua multitudo unius imperio se submitteret, quia ille in bello se pro duce gessisset, ac causa victoriae suis sectoribus exstittisset: sed ideo potius se uni submitit, ut illius prudentia ac fortitudine vinceret.' By 'some politici' Burgersdijk might have meant Jean Bodin. In the 1668 edition of Burgersdijk's *Idea politica* (p. 5) there is a reference to Jean Bodin's *Les six livres de la république* (*Six Books of the Commonwealth*), I.6.

¹¹¹ Ibidem, I.2, p. 2. 'Respublica est societas plurium familiarum sub eodem magistratu, iisdemque legibus degentium. Vel sic, Est familiarum rerumque inter illas commonium summa potestate, ac ratione moderata multitudo.'

¹¹² Ibidem, II.1, p. 9. 'Politia sive status Reipub. vel est simplex, vel mixtus. Status simplex dividitur in Monarchiam, Aristocratiam, & Democratiam. Monarchia est status in quo caeteri omnes unius imperio subsunt.'

¹¹³ Ibidem, XXIV.1, pp. 209-10. 'Hactenus actum est de Rebusp. simplicibus; sequuntur mistae. Miscetur aut Respub. vel ex Monarchia & Aristocratia, vel ex Aristocratia & Democratia, vel ex Monarchia, Aristocratia, & Democratia.'

¹¹⁴ Ibidem, XXI.3, pp. 190-92. 'Status Monarchicus haud dubie optimus est naturâ suâ, quia non est obnoxius dissensionibus: & status in quo imperium penes plures est, eatenus est laudabilis, quatenus ad unitatem reducit. Haec unitas in consensione & concordia consistit.'

¹¹⁵ Ibidem, II.1, p. 9. 'Monarchia est status in quo caeteri omnes unius imperio subsunt.'

archy leads to the implicit message that concord is best guaranteed in a form of government where one man is in control and makes all the decisions.¹¹⁶

An important asset for this one man, the prince, to have is knowledge of history, for through it he can get insight into human actions and obtain political prudence.¹¹⁷ Burgersdijk holds that a prince should not only acquire knowledge of ancient history but also of modern history and especially of 'the history of his kingdom and his ancestors', a category of history that we perhaps may somewhat anachronistically call 'national' history.¹¹⁸ From the importance that Burgersdijk attributes to the possession of historical knowledge we can deduce that history should be a part of the 'good education' of the prince, which, together with 'noble birth' makes 'for a virtuous prince'.¹¹⁹

Despite his preference for a monarchy, Burgersdijk is a constitutional relativist. Monarchy is not always the best form of government. Somewhat contrary to Lipsius, who reasoned that because of human weakness there was need of a virtuous prince, Burgersdijk holds that 'when we take human weakness into account, it is not always expedient to prefer a monarchy above other forms of government. Because often the subjects' innate character cannot endure a monarchy. In that case, it is even dangerous to place the highest power in the hands of one person'.¹²⁰ Depending on the circumstances, even a democracy, which Burgersdijk classifies as 'the most imperfect form of government', 'must often be preferred to other forms of government'.¹²¹

In the final chapter of the *Idea doctrinae politicae*, where the mixed forms of government are discussed, other forms of government are praised. There we read that the mixture of monarchy and aristocracy 'seems to be the most outstanding form of government. For it has the advantages of both, and the remedies against the evils, which must be feared in each of them separately'.¹²² The

¹¹⁶ For a more elaborate and somewhat different explanation of the relationship between monarchy and concord in Burgersdijk's political thought, see Blom, "*Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas: Burgersdijk's Moral and Political Thought*", pp. 139-40.

¹¹⁷ *Ibidem*, III.8-9, pp. 21-23.

¹¹⁸ *Ibidem*, III.10, pp. 23-24. 'Neque vero satis est antiquam historiam, Graecorum & Romanorum didicisse: sed etiam moderna cognoscenda. Imprimis debet ad unguem tenere historiam regni sui ac majorum suorum: Ut ex consiliis & factis aliorum, colligat quid sibi sit faciendum.'

¹¹⁹ Blom, "*Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas: Burgersdijk's Moral and Political Thought*", p. 141.

¹²⁰ Burgersdijk, *Idea politica*, II.2, pp. 9-10. 'Monarchia est status simplicissimus maximeque ordinatus: ideoque natura sua firmissimus. Quin etiam haec gubernatio facilius est, faciliusque finem suum assequitur. Attamen habita ratione humanae imbecillitatis, non semper expedit aliis Reip. formis monarchiam praeferri. Saepe enim subditorum indoles monarchiam ferre nequit. Tum etiam periculosum summam rei versari in uno capite.'

¹²¹ *Ibidem*, XXIII.2, pp. 202-3. 'Democratia est status natura sua imperfectissimus quia longissime recedit ab unitate. Et tamen propter singulas circumstantias, saepe caeteris praeferendus est.'

¹²² *Ibidem*, XXIV.2, pp. 210-11. 'Status Monarchicus cum Aristocratia mistus, omnium videtur praestantissimus. Habet enim utriusque commoda, & remedia iis malis opposita, quae ex utroque seorsim metuenda sunt.'

mixture of monarchy, aristocracy and democracy ‘seems to be the safest of all’ on the ground that ‘the other two forms prevent the third from throwing the commonwealth into confusion’.¹²³ Burgersdijk deems this mixture ‘appropriate for towns that control very large dominions, or for entire provinces’.¹²⁴ Was Burgersdijk saying this with the Dutch context in mind? That same question can be asked about Burgersdijk’s view that especially for mercantile towns a mixed form of government consisting of aristocracy and democracy ‘is just right’.¹²⁵ Perhaps he, in both cases, did. But it can also be the case that Burgersdijk, at least with regard to these last two cases, just followed or summarised the content of what Bartholomaeus Keckermann had said about these subjects in his *Systema doctrinae politicae*.¹²⁶

As has been remarked in chapter 2, Burgersdijk has been called a follower of Keckermann, whose *Systema doctrinae politicae* has been labelled a ‘foundational text of Political Aristotelianism’. If we compare Burgersdijk’s political ideas with the characteristics of political Aristotelianism as described in chapter 2, two similarities can be discerned. First, both Burgersdijk and political Aristotelians believe in man’s natural sociability. Second, they both are constitutional relativists. As we shall see, Boxhorn followed his teacher Burgersdijk and political Aristotelians in their constitutional relativism, but, crucially, not in their believe in man’s natural sociability.

¹²³ Ibidem, XXIV.24, pp. 218-20. ‘Superest status ex Monarchia, Aristocratia & Democratia temperatus. Hic status videtur omnium tutissimus, quia duae reliquae formae, tertiam impediunt, ne possit Remp. turbare. Et plerumque oritur hic status, cum subditi Monarchiae aut Aristocratiae pertaesi sunt.’

¹²⁴ Ibidem, XXIV.25, pp. 220-21. ‘Hic status convenit civitatibus, quae sub se continent amplissimas ditiones, aut integris provinciis. Nam in angusta ditione non potest habere locum splendor Monarchicus.’ In his commentary on this thesis George Hornius gives Venice as example. Therefore, it is possible to translate ‘civitatibus’ here as ‘towns’. See ibidem, p. 220. ‘Thes. 25. Exemplum hujus est Resp. Veneta, quae ex Duce, Optimatibus atque etiam ex plebe componitur ...’

¹²⁵ Ibidem, XXIV.13, p. 215. ‘Hic status idoneus est ad regendas singulas urbes, eas praesertim, in quibus mercatura viget, et opificia. Nam in Monarchia, nimia licentia nobilium & aulicorum hominum molesta est mercatoribus et opificibus.’

¹²⁶ I have not made a thorough investigation into this particular matter, but the similarities between what Keckermann has to say about a mixed form of government consisting of aristocracy and democracy and a mixed form of government consisting of monarchy, aristocracy and democracy, on the one hand, and what Burgersdijk says about these subjects, on the other, are sometimes striking. Compare the following two examples. Burgersdijk, *Idea politica*, XXIV.11, p. 214. ‘Status ex Aristocratia et ex Democratia temperatus dicitur, in quo ita imperant optimates ut populus etiam particeps sit imperii.’ Bartholomaeus Keckermann, *Systema disciplinae politicae* (Guilielmus Antonius; Hannover, 1608), II.5, p. 576. ‘Status Reip. temperatus ex Aristocratia & Democratia est, in quo optimates ita imperant, ut simul quoque imperii particeps sit populus, sive cives uniuersi.’ And Burgersdijk, *Idea politica*, XXIV.24, pp. 218-20. ‘Superest status ex Monarchia, Aristocratia & Democratia temperatus. Hic status videtur omnium tutissimus, quia duae reliquae formae, tertiam impediunt, ne possit Remp. turbare. Et plerumque oritur hic status, cum subditi Monarchiae aut Aristocratiae pertaesi sunt.’ Keckermann, *Systema disciplinae politicae*, II.6, p. 586. ‘Plerumque hic status in Rebusp. ortus est ex eo, quod subdit[i] pertaesi sint purae & absolutae monarchiae, aut etiam purae Aristocratiae.’ I would like to thank Jan Hartman for pointing out to me the possible connection between Burgersdijk and Keckermann.

III. Remnants of the past: Petrus Scriverius

Petrus Scriverius was born in Amsterdam in 1576 as the son of a wealthy Dutch merchant. In 1593 he matriculated at Leiden University. He studied law and followed classes in the *artes*-faculty, but never graduated. At Leiden Scriverius came into contact with Heinsius and Hugo Grotius, who both, just like him, belonged to Scaliger's circle of students. He became friends with both men. After his study Scriverius spent most of his adult life in Leiden as a private scholar with a specific interest in the ancient and medieval Dutch past.¹²⁷

Scriverius was a versatile scholar, who occupied himself with poetry, philology, and antiquarian studies. He edited poetry of Heinsius (*Nederduytsche poemata*, 1616) and published an edition of Martial (1618/19). His antiquarian works include a 'learned sourcebook', containing different sources (medieval annals, chronicles and charters, and sixteenth- and seventeenth-century works), which told the history of the counts of Holland from the first count to Philip II (*Principes Hollandiae, et Westfrisiae*, 1650). In addition, Scriverius was also responsible for a collective volume that dealt primarily with the history and government of Holland (*Respublica Hollandiae, et urbes*, 1630).¹²⁸

As a humanist, Scriverius's diverse scholarly activities were directed to the uplifting of the culture of the community to which he belonged.¹²⁹ His 'programme of study', at least as far as his study of the Dutch past was concerned, was finding out the truth, independently, both financially and socially, 'at the service of the citizen'.¹³⁰ Yet despite Scriverius's devotion to the truth and his independence as a private scholar, his antiquarian studies were not 'politically' neutral. 'With his antiquarian work Scriverius wanted to show that the powerful position of Holland in the seventeenth century goes back to Hol-

¹²⁷ For Scriverius's background, life and student days, see Langereis, *Geschiedenis als ambacht*, pp. 105-12. For Scriverius being one of Scaliger's students, see also Sellin, *Daniel Heinsius and Stuart England*, p. 14. For Scriverius's friendship with Heinsius, see Ter Horst, *Daniel Heinsius (1580-1655)*, p. 47. For Scriverius's friendship with Grotius, see the introduction to Hugo Grotius, *The Antiquity of the Batavian Republic*. Edited and translated by Jan Waszink et al. (Van Gorcum; Assen, 2000), p. 30, and Henk Nellen, *Hugo de Groot: een leven in strijd om de vrede, 1583-1645* (Uitgeverij Balans; Amsterdam, 2007), p. 46.

¹²⁸ Langereis, *Geschiedenis als ambacht*, pp. 113, 147, 227, 335-36, 359, with quote on p. 147. For the content of the *Respublica Hollandiae* and Scriverius's involvement, see the introduction to Grotius, *The Antiquity of the Batavian Republic*, pp. 27-28. See further for Scriverius's works Pierre Tuynman, "Petrus Scriverius: 12 January 1576 – 30 April 1660", in *Quaerendo*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (1977), pp. 20-25, with references there. Scriverius's versatility has been emphasised by Pierre Tuynman in: Pierre Tuynman and Michiel Roscam Abbing, "Scriverius, Stoke and Bockenbergh: Scriveriana II", in *Quaerendo*, Vol. 31, No. 4 (2001), p. 266. This article also contains some critical remarks on Langereis's study *Geschiedenis als ambacht*.

¹²⁹ Tuynman, "Petrus Scriverius", p. 11, and Tuynman and Roscam Abbing, "Scriverius, Stoke and Bockenbergh: Scriveriana II", p. 266.

¹³⁰ *Ibidem*, pp. 6, 9, 30 (there footnote 20), with quotes on p. 9.

land's ascendancy during antiquity and the Middle Ages.¹³¹ In other words, Scriverius wanted to legitimise the dominance that the province of Holland had in the Dutch Republic in the seventeenth century on historical grounds.

An example of how Scriverius used history and his knowledge of the past for 'political' ends can be found in the *Respublica Hollandiae, et urbes* (*The Commonwealth and Towns of Holland*). The *Respublica Hollandiae*, published in 1630, contains different works, including an edition of Grotius's *De antiquitate*, which was first published in 1610. In the *Respublica Hollandiae* Scriverius provided Grotius's treatise with new endnotes that contain historical information derived from classical and medieval sources. The goal of these notes was to historically buttress the views Grotius had put forward in the *De antiquitate*. And these views were politically motivated: they were intended to defend Holland's aristocratic form of government, to depict the provincial States of Holland as the ancient bearers of sovereignty and to legitimise the Revolt – and thus ultimately the existence of the Dutch Republic as an independent state – by depicting the Revolt as a fight for the protection of the ancient form of government and the freedom of the Hollanders against the Spanish attempt to 'establish absolute rule'.¹³²

As noted in the introduction, the early modern antiquarian had the task of tracking down, studying, and opening up to others both written and unwritten sources. Scriverius performed this task, if not completely, then at least partially. He tried to see and obtain 'as many manuscripts and printed sources as possible'.¹³³ Judging by Boxhorn's words, Scriverius fairly succeeded in this goal; Boxhorn considered himself lucky that Scriverius granted him access to his library that contained 'so many manuscripts and very old documents'.¹³⁴ Besides collecting and studying manuscripts and old documents, Scriverius also showed the fruits of his scholarly labour to the public. In 1609, for exam-

¹³¹ Langereis, *Geschiedenis als ambacht*, p. 154. 'Scriverius wilde met zijn oudheidkundige werk laten zien dat de machtige positie van Holland in de zeventiende eeuw terugging op een Hollands overwicht tijdens Oudheid en Middeleeuwen.' See also *ibidem*, p. 293. 'Scriverius wilde aantonen dat Hollands machtige positie in de zeventiende eeuw terugging op een overwicht over de aangrenzende streken tijdens de Oudheid en Middeleeuwen.'

¹³² See the introduction to Grotius, *The Antiquity of the Batavian Republic*, pp. 21, 27-30, and the text of *The Antiquity* itself, II.2, p. 57, II.14, p. 65, VI.1-7, pp. 99-103, VII.7, p. 107, with quote on p. 101.

¹³³ Pierre Tuyenman and Michiel Roscam Abbing, "Two History Books that never appeared: Scriverius, Melis Stoke, the Widow van Wouw and Gouthoeven: *Scriveriana I*", in *Quaerendo*, Vol. 27, No. 2 (1997), pp. 77-78, with quote on p. 77.

¹³⁴ Boxhorn in a letter to Pontanus and Scriverius, dated April 1632. Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, p. 24. 'De Bibliotheca tua quid dicam? quae tot M. SS. veterrimisque codicibus aliisque pluribus ejus generis cimeliis referta est, ut magnam felicitatis meae partem semper existimaverim, quod cum ad humanitatem tuam, simul ad ipsam aditum mihi esse voluisti. In qua non tantum de historia, & re literariâ universa, sed de earum conservatrice arte, Typographia Harlemensi dico, certissima mihi patuerunt documenta.' See for this letter also Langereis, *Geschiedenis als ambacht*, p. 185, who dates this letter to April 1, 1632. For some comments on Scriverius's library, see *ibidem*, p. 158.

ple, he published the *Batavia illustrata* (*Batavia Illustrated*), a collected volume containing sixteenth-century works on the Batavian past of the Low Countries, which Scriverius had provided with some notes, together with ‘an inventory of archaeological finds from the Roman period’. In addition to this, he also studied archive files and was acquainted with genealogy and heraldry.¹³⁵

Scriverius’s antiquarian studies primarily (if not exclusively) concerned the Dutch past.¹³⁶ In the *Principes*, his sourcebook on the counts of Holland, Scriverius ascribed most reliability to contemporary sources or sources that stand closest to the events they are related to. But he did not do this uncritically; the reliability of what is described in a source had to be checked. Scriverius also did not blindly follow the historical work of his friend and teacher Janus Dousa (1545-1604), curator of Leiden University and historiographer of the States of Holland, but he compared it with the original sources. In other words, he went *ad fontes*, which in this case meant, to the original historical documents.¹³⁷ Further, in Scriverius’s work we also find the notion that we have to judge what is said in sources by taking into account the ‘situation of the times’ (*conditio temporum*), i.e. is what is said in this or that source possible if we take into account the circumstances of the time from which this or that source derives.¹³⁸

IV. Conclusion

To conclude our investigation into Boxhorn’s educational background we will briefly summarise its results. In the first half of the seventeenth century politics was seen as a part of ethics at Leiden University. Politics not only dealt with questions of a rather abstract nature (e.g. what is sovereignty?) but also with virtue and prudence. Concerning the latter two, history was meant to supply politics with examples that could teach students what virtuous conduct entailed or what a prudent course of action was in this or that situation. Both Heinsius and Burgersdijk deemed history important. Heinsius called history ‘the soul’ of politics and saw the past as a treasure chest containing examples of virtuous behaviour for his contemporaries. Burgersdijk thought knowledge of history important because it could lead to political prudence.

While Heinsius focused on ancient history, Burgersdijk also stressed the importance of knowledge of modern and ‘national’ history. For seventeenth-century Dutch men, ‘national’ history meant the history of their respective

¹³⁵ Langereis, *Geschiedenis als ambacht*, pp. 124-25, 154, 359, with quote on p. 359.

¹³⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 360.

¹³⁷ *Ibidem*, pp. 250, 252-55. For Dousa and his activities in the field of history, see *ibidem*, pp. 51-52. For the relationship between Scriverius and Dousa, see Tuynman, “Petrus Scriverius”, pp. 6-8.

¹³⁸ Kampinga, *De opvattingen over onze oudere vaderlandsche geschiedenis*, pp. 38-39. The phrase ‘*conditio temporum*’ is derived from *ibidem*, p. 38.

town, province, or even perhaps the history of the young Dutch Republic. If Boxhorn wanted instruction in this field of history he could have turned to his patron Scriverius who was one of the leading antiquarians on the Dutch past.

Burgersdijk's teaching would have taught Boxhorn that it was natural for man to live with his fellow-men in a political society. It would also have taught Boxhorn that monarchy is the best form of government, but that given the circumstances this is not always the case. In Heinsius's edition of Aristotle's *Politics* Boxhorn would have found material that concurred with Burgersdijk's teaching, but also material that offered alternatives to the tradition in the *politica* at Leiden University in the first half of the seventeenth century, which favoured monarchy.

Scriverius's work and perhaps also his personal teaching would have introduced Boxhorn to the historical work of the antiquarian. This work focused on the collecting and studying of sources. These sources and the information they contained could be applied for 'political' ends, which Scriverius did. 'In this way' Scriverius's 'antiquarianism compared strongly with the didactical political histories of the humanist historians'.¹³⁹

Finally, Scriverius would probably have pointed out to Boxhorn the importance of going *ad fontes*; to find out the original historical documents instead of relying on the versions of these documents that had been handed down by later scholars. From Heinsius Boxhorn could have learned another employment of the *ad fontes* principle, namely to find out the causes of certain past events, a method of inquiry that Heinsius believed the 'political man' should follow 'in the study of past events'. All in all, the work of Heinsius, Burgersdijk, and Scriverius would have given a young man like Boxhorn insight into several different aspects of history and politics and into the interrelationship between these two branches of knowledge as this interrelationship was seen in early modern Europe.

Professor (1632-1653)

1. Career

Boxhorn finished the *artes*-programme by at least 1629.¹⁴⁰ This was not the end of his student days, because after completing the *artes*-programme Boxhorn went on to study theology. He was a good theology student, 'but since

¹³⁹ Langereis, *Geschiedenis als ambacht*, p. 362. According to Sandra Langereis this not only applies to the antiquarianism of Scriverius, but also to that of Buchelius.

¹⁴⁰ See footnote 64 above.

it seemed that his mind was made for the arts, he was unable to give up the arts'. So Boxhorn quit his study of theology, probably somewhere in 1629.¹⁴¹ Unlike his grandfather, father, and brother Boxhorn would not become a Reformed minister.¹⁴²

After quitting his study of theology Boxhorn stayed in Leiden together with his next of kin.¹⁴³ He did not spend his days in idleness. From his letters to the scholar Johannes Isacius Pontanus (1571-1639) we know that between 1630 and 1632 Boxhorn was working on the *Theatrum*.¹⁴⁴ This work appeared in 1632. That same year also saw the beginning of Boxhorn's lifelong academic career at Leiden University when he, aged twenty, became lecturer of eloquence.¹⁴⁵ Boxhorn would never take up an academic position anywhere else, nor would he ever leave Leiden for a foreign adventure, despite an attempt to lure him to Sweden.¹⁴⁶

Boxhorn's academic career at Leiden University was one of steady progress. The year after his appointment as lecturer of eloquence, he became extraordinary professor of eloquence. In 1636 he was given permission to start a *collegium oratorium publicum* (public college for orators). Four years later followed

¹⁴¹ Baselius, "Historia vitae & obitus", iv-v. 'Inter ea temporis Philologicum & Philosophicum studiorum cursum absolvit, & ad Theologiam, cui destinabatur animum applicuit. in qua sub illius facultatis Professoribus, nominatim Johanne Polyandro à Kerckhoven, sic & cum laude profecit ut progressus non illaudanda specimina ediderit, quâ publice, quâ privatim. Sed cum ingenium ad litteraturam quasi natum videretur, illam deserere nequii etiam tum quando cum fructu coepta Theologia studia absolvere poterat. Hinc illa ipsa non intermissa modo, sed plane relicta, solum Philologicum tractatum fuit. Cujus mox alterum specimen publicum edidit, scriptione Encomii Granatarum, horrendae, ut titulus habet, & stupendae in bello virtutis. Quod anno sequenti editum & Patriae suae, Civitatis Bergobzomanæ Magistratui inscriptum ivit.' The *Granatarum horrendae, & stupendae in bello virtutis encomium* was published in 1630. See footnote 64 above.

¹⁴² Boxhorn's twin brother Hendrik would serve as a minister in forts of the Dutch Republic and in the town of Terneuzen in States Flanders. Baselius, "Historia vitae & obitus", ii. '... & quidem natu major Marco huic fuit Henricus, qui paternis insistentis vestigiis Ecclesiae pastorum desideravit & gessit primum in Fortalitiis à Cruce & Frederico Henrico nomen habentibus, ad Scaldin fluvium in Brabantiae, versus Flandriam, inde Neussae in Flandriae, versus Zelandiam, item confiniis.' See also Van Lieburg, *Repertorium van Nederlandse hervormde predikanten tot 1816*, Vol. 1, p. 33, which provides dates.

¹⁴³ The earliest letter we have of Boxhorn is written at Leiden, on April 4, 1630. The letter is addressed to Pontanus. In the letter Boxhorn sends Pontanus the greetings of his grandfather, his twin brother Henricus and a sister. 'Salve, una cum uxore tuâ, & liberis, à reverendo sene, avo meo, fratre, & sorore item meâ.' Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, pp. 1-2, with quote on p. 2. From the exchange of letters between Boxhorn and his brother Hendrik, on the one hand, and Pontanus, on the other, it can be deduced that Boxhorn and his family were living in Leiden in 1630 and 1631. See Andreas Alciatus, *Tractatus contra vitam monasticam. Cui accedit sylloge epistolarum: nimirum ... Petri Scriverii ... Jo. Is. Pontani ... M. Z. Boxhornii ...* (Gerard Block; The Hague, 1740), pp. 93, 97, 135, 220, 256-57.

¹⁴⁴ See Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, pp. 3, 6-10, 15, 19, 25. For a discussion of the *Theatrum*, see chapter 7.

¹⁴⁵ P.C. Molhuysen, *Bronnen tot de geschiedenis der Leidsche Universiteit*, Vol. 2 (Martinus Nijhoff; The Hague, 1916), p. 179.

¹⁴⁶ Barlaeus, "Oratio funebris In Excessum Clarissimi Viri, Marci Zuerii Boxhornii ...", p. 150. 'Imo in tanto habebatur apud exteros pretio, ut evocatus fuerit à Suecorum apud Ordines Foederatos Legato, Reginae & Procerum nomine ad amplissimas dignitates in Sueciam, sed amorem patriae suae Septentrionum illis filiis praetulit, & Attalics conditionibus animum tunc sua sorte contentum.'

Boxhorn's appointment as ordinary professor of eloquence. In 1643 Boxhorn managed to persuade the curators to allow him to hold political disputations in public.¹⁴⁷ In 1648 he received permission to give public lectures on history in stead of Heinsius, who had been granted a 'temporary dispensation from teaching'. Boxhorn's new task was meant to be provisional probably until Heinsius would resume his teaching responsibilities. Heinsius, however, never resumed teaching and on the title page of the funeral oration Lambert Barlaeus held on Boxhorn's death we read that during his life Boxhorn was 'a very renowned professor of eloquence and history'.¹⁴⁸

Despite his steady rise on the academic ladder, Boxhorn's career was not only a story of success. In 1633, before he was appointed as extraordinary professor of eloquence, Boxhorn had tried to obtain the office of professor of ethics. The curators, however, held his request that this office be assigned to him 'in consideration' and nothing further came of it,¹⁴⁹ perhaps because Cunaeus, who, according to one modern scholar, 'de facto controlled academic appointments in politics and related fields' since his own appointment as professor of politics in 1614 'till his death in 1638', was opposed to it.¹⁵⁰ Boxhorn's attempts to become historiographer of the prince of Orange (in 1640), the States of Zeeland (in 1644), and the States General (in 1649) were also all unsuccessful.¹⁵¹ In addition to this, his appointment as ordinary professor of eloquence only

¹⁴⁷ Molhuysen, *Bronnen tot de geschiedenis der Leidsche Universiteit*, Vol. 2, pp. 183-84, 204, 247, 276, 341-42.

¹⁴⁸ Barlaeus, "Oratio Funebris In Excessum Clarissimi Viri, Marci Zuerii Boxhornii, Eloquentiae & Historiarum in inclita Academia Luguno-Batavâ, dum viveret, Professoris celeberrimi, habita In Auditorio Theologico IX. Octobris, Anno MDC LIII", p. 141. Boxhorn was allowed to temporarily hold public lectures on history on the condition that he 'in the meanwhile shall keep out of the profession of eloquence'. Only after Boxhorn's death did the curators appoint Anthonius Thysius Jr. (c.1603-1665) as 'ordinary professor of eloquence in stead of Boxhorn, who has passed away'. For this researcher it is unclear if Boxhorn was ever officially appointed as professor of history. For Boxhorn, see P.C. Molhuysen, *Bronnen tot de geschiedenis der Leidsche Universiteit*, Vol. 3 (Martinus Nijhoff; The Hague, 1918), p. 20. 'Ende in plaetse van D. Heinsius, Historiarum Professor, is by provisie tot het doen van de publieque lesse in de Historien toegelaten den Professor Marcus Zuerius Boxhornius, op een wedden van f 1000, mits dat deselve Boxhornius sich ondertussen niet en sal bemoeien met de professie Eloquentiae, by hem tot noch toe bedient.' For the appointment of Thysius, see *ibidem*, p. 78. 'Zij [i.e. the curators and burgomasters-JN] benoemen Thysius tot Professor ordinarius Eloquentiae in plaats van Boxhorn, die overleden is.' For Heinsius, see Sellin, *Daniel Heinsius and Stuart England*, pp. 64-65, with quote on p. 65.

¹⁴⁹ Molhuysen, *Bronnen tot de geschiedenis der Leidsche Universiteit*, Vol. 2, p. 183. 'C. en B. houden een verzoek van Boxhorn, om hem de professio Ethicae op te dragen, in bedenken ...'

¹⁵⁰ Campos Boralevi, "Classical Foundational Myths of European Republicanism: The Jewish Commonwealth", p. 258. It is possible that Cunaeus did not want to see a protégé of Heinsius, with whom he 'had never been on the best of terms', be appointed as professor of ethics. Cunaeus was married into the Leiden patriciate and was intimate 'with the local magistracy, amply represented among curators'. See the introduction of Arthur Eyffinger to Cunaeus, *The Hebrew Republic*, xxii-xxiv, with quotes on xxiii and xxiv. On the other hand, it could also be that Boxhorn was deemed too young and unexperienced for such an office, or simply not qualified enough. Finally, it could also be that out of financial considerations the curators and burgomasters did not want to appoint an ordinary professor of ethics.

¹⁵¹ For these attempts, see Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, pp. 158-59, 219-20, 225-26, 308-9.

came after a 'repeated request' of Boxhorn to assign this office to him.¹⁵² Boxhorn, then, did not always get what he wanted, and when he did, it did not always come easily.

2. Personal life

According to his biographer and friend Jacobus Baselius, Boxhorn 'had a long and upright posture. And his hair, together with a grey face, gave that posture a certain ugly dark colour'. This dark colour once led a Dutch soldier to take Boxhorn for a Spaniard.¹⁵³ The French philosopher Pierre-Daniel Huet (1630-1720), who visited Leiden on his way back from Sweden to Paris somewhere between 1652 and 1653, draws an unflattering picture of Boxhorn. According to Huet, Boxhorn had a 'harsh and livid face ... dotted with red pustules, like the face which the dictator Sulla allegedly had'. And like Sulla, Boxhorn 'displayed in talk a violent and savage person'.¹⁵⁴

Huet was not the only contemporary who made unflattering comments on Boxhorn's person. The German antiquarian Thomas Reinesius (1587-1667), 'mentor' of the so-called 'Aldorf circle' that criticised Boxhorn, speaks of Boxhorn's 'fieriness' or 'tempestousness' (*calor*) and 'credulity' (*credulitas*).¹⁵⁵ On the other hand, Lambert Barlaeus, in his funeral oration on Boxhorn's death, holds that Boxhorn 'was a man with a mild and pleasant character, who was

¹⁵² Molhuysen, *Bronnen tot de geschiedenis der Leidsche Universiteit*, Vol. 2, p. 247. 'C. en B. benoemen Boxhorn op zijn herhaald verzoek tot Prof. ordinarius Eloquentiae.'

¹⁵³ Baselius, "Historia vitae & obitus", xviii. 'Statura corporis ipsi fuit longa & erecta, & quam cum subfuscâ facie crines efficiebant qualemcunque deformem nigredinem eam candore animi sui albicantem reddere solebat. Unde cum Bredâ captâ inter exeuntium Hispanorum spectatores & ipse esset, & à nostrate quodam milite ipso audiente pro Hispano ob dictam nigredinem habitus, illi homini facètè nonminus quam vere respondebat ...'

¹⁵⁴ Pierre-Daniel Huet, *Commentarius de rebus ad eum pertinentibus* (Henri du Sauzet; Amsterdam, 1718), p. 125. 'Nec spectantes fallebat Marci Zuerii Boxhornii atrox & lurida facies, rubentibus perspersa pustulis, qualis illa fuisse fertur Sullae Dictatoris; alloquio enim itidem asperum quippiam & ferox praeferabat.' Huet had visited Leiden before, probably on his outward journey to Sweden. Huet travelled from Paris to Sweden and back again somewhere between February 1652 and May 1653. His unflattering picture of Boxhorn may perhaps have been inspired by his affection for Salmasius. For the dates of Huet's journey to Sweden, his view of Boxhorn, and his affection for Salmasius, see April G. Shelford, *Transforming the Republic of Letters: Pierre-Daniel Huet and European Intellectual Life, 1650-1720* (University of Rochester Press; Rochester, 2007), pp. 29, 38. For Sulla, see Plutarch, *Fall of the Roman Republic: Six Lives*. Translated by Rex Warner with Introduction and Notes by Robin Seager (Penguin Books; London, 1st ed. 1958, 1972), p. 67. 'But the terribly sharp and dominating glare of his blue eyes was made still more dreadful by the complexion of his face in which the pale skin was covered with angry blotches of red.' For my translation I have greatly benefitted from the translation offered by Daniel Droixhe in Daniel Droixhe, "Boxhorn's Bad Reputation: A Chapter in Academic Linguistics", in Klaus D. Dutz (ed.), *Speculum historiographiae linguisticae: Kurzbeiträge der IV. Internationalen Konferenz zur Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaften* (Nodus Publikationen; Münster, 1989), p. 370.

¹⁵⁵ Droixhe, "Boxhorn's Bad Reputation", pp. 366-67.

gifted with a unique charm'.¹⁵⁶ But in Barlaeus's funeral oration there is also a hint that there is something true about the 'fieriness' Reinesius speaks of. For, as Barlaeus says, Boxhorn, 'when he was alive, allowed to observe the character of his people [i.e. the people of Brabant-JN], who, because he was a Brabander and from Bergen op Zoom, was, besides the kindness that is innate to this people, full of a certain warlike and heroic character'.¹⁵⁷ Boxhorn, so it seems, was not a gentle lamb.

From the sheer amount of publications that appeared during his lifetime and after his death, we can say that Boxhorn was an industrious scholar.¹⁵⁸ In 1652, the year before he died, he was still industrious enough to be able to publish a more than 1200 pages thick history of the world.¹⁵⁹ Sometimes, however, Boxhorn did too many things at the same time, to the dismay of the quality of his work.¹⁶⁰

Further, we can say that Boxhorn had a certain sense of humour. In his *Spiegeltien vertoonende 't lanck hayr ende hayrlocken, by de oude Hollanders en Zeelanders gedragen* (*Mirror showing the Long Hair and Locks, worn by the Old Hollanders and Zeelanders*), his first contribution to the so-called 'hairy war' (see below), he takes opposition against the unreasonableness that the preachers who preached against the wearing of long hair 'ground their reason on the example of our fathers', who, according to Boxhorn, wore long hair. 'If they [i.e. our fathers-JN] could now hear in those churches, in which their bodies

¹⁵⁶ Barlaeus, "Oratio funebris In Excessum Clarissimi Viri, Marci Zuerii Boxhornii ...", pp. 144. 'Qua in urbe cum nascendi initium sumpsisset Defunctus noster, utriusque & coeli & soli temperiem vita & moribus mirificè expressit. Erat enim vir ingenio miti & blando, singularique adhaec morum suavitate praeditus, quae Brabantorum velut propria quaedam dos est.'

¹⁵⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 145. '... sic & in Defuncto nostro, dum vixit, perspicere licuit genium suae gentis, qui cum Brabantus esset, & Bergopzomius, praeter congenitam illi populo humanitatem, Martiale quiddam spirabat, & heroicae indolis.' See also Baselius, "Historia vitae & obitus", xviii. 'Non dico de aliis animi dotibus, addito nunc hoc uno quod cum Brabantus & quidem Bergizomius esset referretque genium gentis suae, Martiale quiddam & heroicae indolis spirabat ut inquit in oratione qua ei parentavit Lambertus Barlaeus Graecae ling. in Acad. tum Profess.'

¹⁵⁸ More than 50 works, published between 1629 and 1663, can be attributed to Boxhorn. Of these, more than 45 appeared before 1654.

¹⁵⁹ Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn, *Historia universalis sacra et profana, A Christo nato ad annum usque mdcl. in qua Illustrium Gentium ac Principum origines, res gestae, variae mutationes in ecclesia et republica, aliaque ex variis, etiam hactenus ineditis, monumentis traduntur* (Petrus Leffen; Leiden, 1652). See chapter 7 for this work.

¹⁶⁰ In 1632, while he was busy with the *Theatrum*, Boxhorn was also working on 'an edition of the writers of the *Historia Augusta*'. Both works appeared in 1632. Johann Heinrich Boecler called Boxhorn's edition of the *Historia Augusta* 'full of faults' (*vitiiosissimus*). Droixhe, "Boxhorn's Bad Reputation", p. 360. In a letter of February 1632 to Claude Salmasius, Boxhorn tells the Frenchman that he 'could unobtrusively have stolen only a few hours from this work [i.e. the *Theatrum*-JN] to examine the less important writers of Roman history', i.e. the writers of the *Historia Augusta*. Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, p. 21. 'Theatrum meum Comitatus, & Urbium Hollandiae, in quo singularum civitatum origines, incrementa, jura, privilegia, immunitates, & res domi, militiaeque gestas prosecuti sumus, sub praelo est, & jam carceres mordet. Adeo ut paucas tantum horulas, flagitante Typographo, minoribus rei Romanae Scriptoribus recensendis huic operi [i.e. *Theatro*-JN] potuerim suffurari.' For Boecler, see below.

still rest, the heavy judgement that is passed there on the long hairs, truly their hair would stand on end.¹⁶¹ To his sense of humor we can add that Boxhorn could also appreciate the joys of life. As one source reveals to us Boxhorn was an ardent smoker who smoked and read or wrote at the same time thanks to 'a hole in the middle of the brim of his hat, in which he stuck his burning pipe'.¹⁶²

His letters show that Boxhorn also had sincere feelings for his loved ones. The death of his brother in 1640 caused him great grief.¹⁶³ In the last year of his life, when he already felt his own end nearing, Boxhorn was saddened about the illness of one of his daughters and feared for her life.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶¹ Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn, *Spiegelgietien, Vertoonende 't lanck hayr ende hayrlocken, By de oude Hollanders ende Zeelanders gedragen* (Jaques Fierens; Middelburg, 1644), pp. 34-35. 'Het is dan immers oock niet redelijck, dat die gene, welke het langhe hayr van de hoofden eenigher inghesetenen bestaen te preecken, hare reden vesten in het voorbeeltsel van onse oude vaederen, die, het gantsch swaer viel het hayr van den hoofde te hooren spreken. Indien sy t' hans hooren conden in die kercken, in de welke hare lichaemen noch rusten, het sware oordeel, datdaer over de langhe hayren ghevelt werdt, voorwaer de hayren souden haer staen te berghen.'

¹⁶² The source is Urbain Chevreau (1613-1701), the French traveller and philosopher. According to Chevreau 'a gentleman, who had studied under *Boxhorn*, in Holland, once told me that that professor had an extraordinary passion for tobacco and for reading. To not interrupt both these pleasures, and to enjoy them at the same time, both the one and the other, he had made a hole in the middle of the brim of his hat, in which he stuck his burning pipe, and thus he smoked, whenever he wanted to read or write.' Urbain Chevreau, *Chevraeana ou mélanges d'histoire, de critique*, Vol. 2 (Florentin and Pierre Delaulne; Paris, 1700), p. 108. 'Un Gentilhomme qui avoit étudié sous *Boxhorn*, en Hollande, m'a dit autrefois que ce Professeur avoit une passion extraordinaire pour le Tabac & pour la lecture. Pour n'interrompre point ce double plaisir, & pour jouir tout à la fois, de l'un & de l'autre, il avoit fait un trou au milieu du bord de son chapeau, où il mettoit la Pipe allumée, & fumoit ainsi, quand il vouloit lire, ou composer.' The early nineteenth-century English version of Chevreau's story that I have consulted reads somewhat differently. 'A gentleman told me, who had studied under Boxhorne at Leyden, that this learned professor was equally indefatigable in reading and smoking. To render these two favourite amusements compatible with each other, he pierced a hole through the broad brim of his hat, through which his pipe was conveyed, when he had lighted it. In this manner he read and smoked at the same time.' See Urbain Chevreau, "Chevraeana", in M. Garnier, C.J.F. Beaucousin and Thomas Carnegy (eds.), *The French Anas*, Vol. 3 (Richard Phillips; London, 1805), pp. 51-52. For Chevreau, see the entry "Chevreau, Urbain (1613-1701)", in Luc Foisneau (gen. ed.), *The Dictionary of Seventeenth-Century French Philosophers*, Vol. 1 (Thoemmes Continuum; London, 2008), pp. 261-62. In a letter to Pontanus, dated October 28, 1633, Boxhorn holds that 'tobacco ... cleanses the head'. Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, p. 37. 'Dissertatiuncula illa de tabaca, & helleboro veterum à te instituta impemse me cepit. Caput herba illa, ut & helleborus, purgat, quantum video. Proinde pergam eandem insaniam insanire; haud dubiè expurgatum defaecatumque caput ex illo fumo reportaturus.' I was unable to find the little dissertation of Pontanus to which Boxhorn is referring in this letter.

¹⁶³ Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, p. 168. 'Ego verò, vir amplissime, unici fratris tristissimo excessu ita hactenus sum confusus, ut vix mei meminisse potuerim aut amicum.'

¹⁶⁴ *Ibidem*, pp. 311-12. 'Scripturienti quoque ad te filiola velut manum iniecit, quae lenta febricula absumi, & sensim contabescere videtur: Metuo igitur, ne finem cum exordio conjungat adeoque vivere desinat in ipso vitae apparatu ... Caeterum querelarum desino, & animum obfirmo constantibus vel praeceptis, vel exemplis. Si enim haec vita fere sit viventis supplicium, certe exilium, non jam male cum mea illa virguncula agitur; & si mors sit transitus ad vitam illam caelestissimam, & solem vitalem, festinari ejus discessum, male doleo. Sed paterni animi pietas vix sinit in praesens ut fatear male me dolere. Mihi quippe carendum erit & spe, quam & non parvam conceperam & longam inchoaveram; & tot osculis, tot amplexibus dulcissimoque spectaculo loqui aut ire conantis infantiae haesitationum; imprimis vere innocentiae, quam in toto adultorum populo non invenias. Carendum mihi erit parvula quidem, sed tamen vitae & verae sapientiae magistra; ad cujus simplicitatem ac instar nisi me compo-

During his life Boxhorn had to cope with several losses in his immediate family circle. He had become an orphan before he was thirteen. A sister may have died before he had reached the age of eighteen.¹⁶⁵ His grandfather, who had taken Boxhorn and his brother and sister(s) to Leiden, past away circa 1632. Boxhorn also outlived his twin brother Hendrik, who died somewhere between September 8 and November 11, 1640, after an illness of at least nine months.¹⁶⁶

Besides the loss of relatives Boxhorn also had to deal with physical problems during his life. His letters reveal that Boxhorn was ill from time to time. In a letter of 1636 he writes to Johan Frederick Gronovius (1611-1671) that he had been struck by a disease. According to a doctor a 'great mass of slime had struck my stomach'.¹⁶⁷ From another letter to Gronovius it becomes clear that a year later Boxhorn had again suffered troubles with his stomach.¹⁶⁸ In 1645 he reveals to Rochus Hoffer that he has been hit by the disease that troubles him every year; he describes that disease as 'a swelling of the spleen'.¹⁶⁹ The following year Boxhorn finds himself 'poisoned with a yearly and almost deadly disease'.¹⁷⁰ These illnesses that struck Boxhorn could last for months.¹⁷¹

nam, carendum & mihi intelligo regno delitiisque, ac divitiis coelorum.'

¹⁶⁵ In the first letter listed in the *Epistolae et poemata*, dated April 4, 1630, Boxhorn sends Pontanus the greetings of his grandfather, brother and sister. Ibidem, p. 2. 'Salve, una cum uxore tuâ, & liberis, à reverendo sene, avo meo, fratre, & sorore item meâ.'

¹⁶⁶ In a letter to Constantijn Huygens, dated September 8, 1640, Boxhorn tells Huygens that his brother has been sick for nine months. Ibidem, p. 164. 'Et paullo diutius in Zelandia, sub finem feriarum nostrarum, haerere coactus sum ob contumacissimum unici & jam desideratissimi fratris mei morbum. Quem jam menses novem cum atrophia ac tabe colluctantem, ab humanae omnis artis praesidio defecatum, desertum, superioribus diebus vitae exemplum ita doleo, ut ob recentem & atrocem adeo plagam, vix solatia nunc admittam.' Two months later, on November 8, Boxhorn writes to Rochus Mogge that 'thusfar I am so confused by the very sad death of [my] only brother, that I was hardly capable of thinking about me or [my] friends'. Ibidem, p. 168. 'Ego verò, vir amplissime, unici fratris tristissimo excessu ita hactenus sum confusus, ut vix mei meminisse potuerim aut amicorum.'

¹⁶⁷ Boxhorn to Gronovius, January 8/12, 1636. Ibidem, p. 68. 'Quod ad postremas tuas tarde adeo respondeam, Doctissime Gronovi, fecit qui me in urbem reversum invasit, sed jam deseruit, languor, dicam an morbus, per quem nec valere mihi, nec aegrotare licebat. Stomachum meum, ut quidem Medicus assererat, magna vis pituitae invaserat.' Boxhorn paraphrases here Seneca, *Ad serenam de tranquillitate animi*, I.2. '... in statu ut non pessimo, ita maxime querulo et moroso positus sum: nec aegroto nec ualeo.' Latin text quoted from Seneca, *Dialogorum libri dvodecim*. Recognovit brevique adnotatione critica instruxit L.D. Reynoldus (Clarendon Press; Oxford, 1977), IX.1.2, p. 207.

¹⁶⁸ Boxhorn to Gronovius, January 23, 1637. Ibidem, p. 80. 'Superioribus diebus ad me scripsit Pontanus noster, voluitque ut has [epistolas-JN] ad te curarem. Quas quidem ante biduum transmissas oportebat, sed imbecillitas ventriculi mei non permisit: Non quod eo ad scribendum sit opus, sed quod affecto illo, totius corpusculi languorem miser sentirem[.] Cypriani codice M.S. si usus fueris, velim ad me transmittas.'

¹⁶⁹ Boxhorn to Rochus Hoffer, January 7, 1645. Ibidem, p. 230. 'Raptim & aegrâ manu, (nam anniversarius mihi morbus, tumor lienis incubuit.)'

¹⁷⁰ Boxhorn to Vincentius Fabricius, November 12, 1646. Ibidem, pp. 277-78. 'Statueram humanitatem hanc tuam praevenire ipse, sed cum annuo & prope ultimo commistus morbo coactus sum ea intermittere officia, ad quae jam pridem obstrictum me agnoscebam.' Born at Hamburg, Vincentius Fabricius (1612-1667) studied medicine at Leiden University. Later in life he became pensionary and burgomaster of Danzig.

¹⁷¹ Put Boxhorn's letter of January 8/12, 1636, to Gronovius side by side with his letter to Pontanus, dated June 14, 1636. Ibidem, p. 70. 'Clarissime Cognate, doleo profecto quod fere semper mearum

From 1647 onwards Boxhorn's health seemed to have taken a turn for the worst.¹⁷² From a letter of the German poet and former Leiden student Andreas Gryphius (1616-1664) to Johann Heinrich Boecler (1611-1672) we learn that in the summer of 1647 Boxhorn had 'passed the cliffs of a severe disease, nay even of death'.¹⁷³ At the end of his life Boxhorn was struck by a disease that hit his joints and limbs. His feet got 'so weakened that Boxhorn quite rarely went, or rather crawled, to the university with a tortoise-like and staggering pace'. The problems with his feet were followed up by problems with his stomach. Boxhorn could no longer keep everything in; he had a hard time with solid food and followed a diet of drinks and sauces.¹⁷⁴ Boxhorn's personal life was certainly not without its tribulations.

However, despite the adversities Boxhorn met with, his personal life was not all sorrow and misery. On December 7, 1639, Boxhorn married Susanne Duvelaar († c.1653), a daughter of Pieter Joosten Duvelaar (1590-1645), who was a member of the town council of Middelburg.¹⁷⁵ Susanne bore Boxhorn

ad te litterarum initia in excusanda earum infrequentia debeant occupari. Iterum morbos loquor, & occupationes. Aliquot jam menses nec aegrotō, nec valeo, sed, ut ille loquitur, in statu quaerulo sum, & moroso.' And his letter of January 7, 1645, to Rochus Hoffer with his letter to Constantijn Huygens, dated March 10, 1645. Ibidem, pp. 231-32. 'Caeterum ut ut ea lentitudine largiter in humanitatem tuam peccasse possim videri, veniam tamen ab eadem facile hunc hominem impetraturum confido, qui per menses jam aliquod languet, & dum neque valet satis, neque aegrotat, vix praesens aut literarum ministerio debita officia valuit occupare.' In both letters that are quoted Boxhorn uses Seneca, *Ad serenum de tranquillitate animi*, I.2, to describe his condition.

¹⁷² Baselius, "Historia vitae & obitus", xvii. 'Quod quidem ut ei commune fuit cum plerisque mortalium, ita non aliud evenit, quam ex magna hominis occupatione, prae negotiorum dum varietate tum mole, aliisque ex aliis inde nascentibus avocamentis, & praeter haec adversa sub finem vitae valetudine. Quā tamen ad annum trigesimum quintum & ultra sic satis firma usus est. excepto uno alterove graviori morbo, quo decubuit.'

¹⁷³ The letter is written on July 12, 1647. See Stefan Kiedroń, *Andreas Gryphius und die Niederlande: niederländische Einflüsse auf sein Leben und Schaffen* (Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego; Wrocław, 1993), pp. 51-52, with the Latin quotation on p. 52. 'Boxhornius ingentis morbi, quin imo mortis scopulos praetervertens, incredibile dictu quam hilari fronte tuas exceperit, quam larga panegyri laudes Boecleri me coram illustravit.' Boecler was a German professor of eloquence and later of history at the University of Strasbourg. See Weber, *Prudentia gubernatoria*, pp. 94-95. See also Droixhe, "Boxhorn's Bad Reputation", p. 363, of whose translation I have benefitted.

¹⁷⁴ According to Lambertus Barlaeus, to whom we owe this information, there was no consensus among the doctors how to call this disease: phthisis, atrophy, or anorexia? Barlaeus, "Oratio funebris In Excessum Clarissimi Viri, Marci Zuerii Boxhornii ...", p. 153. 'Quo nomine fuerit appellandus hic affectus, medicorum inter se disceptent filii. Phthisin alii vocant: alii Atrophiam, vel Anorexiam: nonnulli omnes has pestes quasi facto agmine in ipsum incurrisse verius affirmant. Quicquid sit, haec occulta lues, ut incrudescere primum coepit, pedes labefactavit aegri nostri, corporis sui columnas, quos ita attenuarat, ut rarius, nec nisi testudineo ac vacillante gradu ad Academiam proreperet potius quam iret. Subsecuta est deinde nutritionis, & virium omnium dejectio, ut cibum nullum admitteret fastidiosus stomachus. Si quid enim vel carnum ovillarum, vel piscium fluviatilium, aut firmioris edulii ingereretur, continuo id reddere coactus fuit. Solo potu Cereali, vino, & embammatis liquidioribus vitam utcunque sustentabat.' See also Droixhe, "Boxhorn's Bad Reputation", p. 363, of whose translation I have benefitted.

¹⁷⁵ According to Pieter Meertens, in 1632 Boxhorn was intended to marry a relative of Susanne, a girl from Flushing. This marriage, however, did not go through. Meertens, *Letterkundig leven in Zeeland in de zestiende en eerste helft der zeventiende eeuw*, p. 364. I have not found any evidence of this intended

two daughters, Johanna (c.1643-1667 or later) and Anna Justina (1651-?).¹⁷⁶ A third child, born shortly after Boxhorn's death in October 1653 and according to his biographer Baselius 'certainly a boy', was either stillborn or dying. Soon after the death of her husband and third child, Susanne also past away, leaving Boxhorn's two daughters behind as orphans.¹⁷⁷

Boxhorn's marriage to Susanne Duvelaar connected him to a patrician family in one of the main commercial maritime towns of the Dutch Republic.¹⁷⁸ It

marriage of Boxhorn in his letters. For the date of Boxhorn's marriage to Susanne Duvelaar, see his letter to Antonius Matthaeus, dated November 13, 1639. Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, p. 150. 'Itaque ad nuptiarum nostrarum sollemnia, quibus dies dictus est Decembris septimus, te cum uxore tuâ nunc voco.' Antonius Matthaeus (1601-1654) was professor of law at Utrecht and was married to Anna Pontanus, the eldest daughter of Johannes Isacius Pontanus. *NNBW*, Vol. 7, p. 847. See also Johannes Isacius Pontanus, *Brieven van en aan Jo. Is. Pontanus, 1595-1639*. Uitgegeven door P.N. v. Doorninck en P.C. Molhuysen (Gebrs. Van Brederode; Haarlem, 1909), viii-ix.

¹⁷⁶ Barlaeus, "Oratio Funebris In Excessum Clarissimi Viri, Marci Zuerii Boxhornii ...", p. 147. 'Verum uti majorum natalibus meritisque resplendet Defunctus noster, ita nec affinitate eum minus fortunatum judico, qui cum ad nuptias animum appulisset, uxorem sibi delegit non togata de plebe aliquam, sed patritia è gente virginem, nempe Susannam Duvelariam, Petri Duvelarii Middelburgensium Consulis spectatissimi filiam, insignibus cum corporis, tum animae dotibus ornatam foeminam, quae foecunda mater geminam marito suo peperit sobolem, at sequioris sexus, Johannam Boxhorniam natu majorem, & Annam Justinam, minorem annis erectae utramque indolis filiulam.' A 'Joanna Zverius Boxhorn' is mentioned as a witness at a baptism on March 25, 1667, at Bergen op Zoom. See: http://www.markiezenhof.nl/index.php?option=com_genealogie_zoeken&Itemid=36&sub=detail&id=670383. (Date: 6/12/2010). For the birth date of Johanna, see [http://leiden.digitalestamboom.nl/\(jv2f114512xw3b550b3i5145\)/detailx.aspx?p=3744325&ID=255334&book=D&role=F&page](http://leiden.digitalestamboom.nl/(jv2f114512xw3b550b3i5145)/detailx.aspx?p=3744325&ID=255334&book=D&role=F&page). (Date: 7/12/2010). For the birth date of Anna Justina, see [http://leiden.digitalestamboom.nl/\(jv2f114512xw3b550b3i5145\)/detailx.aspx?p=3744883&ID=255333&book=D&role=M&page](http://leiden.digitalestamboom.nl/(jv2f114512xw3b550b3i5145)/detailx.aspx?p=3744883&ID=255333&book=D&role=M&page) and [http://leiden.digitalestamboom.nl/\(jv2f114512xw3b550b3i5145\)/detailx.aspx?p=3744884&ID=255332&book=D&role=M&page](http://leiden.digitalestamboom.nl/(jv2f114512xw3b550b3i5145)/detailx.aspx?p=3744884&ID=255332&book=D&role=M&page). (Date of both records: 7/12/2010). These last two records indicate that Anna and Justina were a twin. However, both Barlaeus and Baselius, who was a close friend of Boxhorn, indicate that Boxhorn only had two daughters. Baselius, "Historia vitae & obitus", xix. 'Sed ad finem vitae accedo, paucis de conjugio ejus praemissis quod sub finem anni 1639. cum lectissimâ virgine Susannâ, Amplissimi & optimi viri Petri Duvelarii Middelburgensium Consulis filiâ contraxit, & secundâ prole utrâq; femellâ beatum vidit.' Modern scholarship confirms Barlaeus's and Baselius's story. According to Murk van der Bijl, Boxhorn had two daughters, Johanna and Anna Justina. The latter married Johannes van Miggrode (1624-?), registrar and treasurer of Middelburg, with whom she had one son, Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn van Miggrode (1682-1720). Murk van der Bijl, *Idee en interest: voorgeschiedenis, verloop en achtergronden van de politieke twisten in Zeeland en vooral in Middelburg tussen 1702 en 1715* (Ph.D.-dissertation, Wolters-Noordhoff/Bouma's Boekhuis; Groningen, 1981), supplement V. See also Josua van Iperen, *Historische redenvoering, bij het ontdekken der gedenknaalde; opgericht ter eere van Joannes van Miggrode, den eersten en voornaamsten kerkhervormer van Zeeland ...* (Martinus de Bruyn; Amsterdam, 1774), pp. 171-73, 178-180, who provides dates.

¹⁷⁷ Baselius, "Historia vitae & obitus", xix. 'Tertiùm uterum gerens illa maritum amisit, & paulo post obitum mariti partum enixa, ut inaudivi masculum quidem sed mortuum aut moribundum, utrumque deinde secuta est.' This child was born somewhere between Boxhorn's death on October 3, 1653, and Barlaeus's oration on Boxhorn's death six days later on October 9. Barlaeus, "Oratio Funebris In Excessum Clarissimi Viri, Marci Zuerii Boxhornii ...", p. 147. 'Tertia in utero prole posthuma jam gravida ex Defuncto nostro relicta, partuique proxima peracerbo conjugis sui divortio immane quantum affligitur.' For the date of Barlaeus's funeral oration, see footnote 13 above.

¹⁷⁸ Middelburg was one of the seven members of the States of Zeeland. In the middle of the seventeenth century the town had around 30.000 inhabitants, as much as Rotterdam in Holland and the town of Utrecht. In the Dutch Republic only Amsterdam, Leiden, and Haarlem had more inhabitants than Middelburg at that time. Middelburg housed the admiralty college of Zeeland and the Zeeland chambers of the Dutch East India Company (VOC) and the Dutch West India Company (WIC). It was also 'strictly Reformed'. J.H. Kluiver, *De soevereine en independente staat Zeeland: de politiek van de provincie*

also strengthened his ties with Zeeland. Before his marriage Boxhorn already stood in contact with Adriaen Hoffer, a *regent* from Zierikzee, Rochus Mogge (1609-1657), who was a burgomaster of Zierikzee from 1646 onwards, and Adriaen Veth (1608-1663), the son of a *regent* of Middelburg, who after Boxhorn's death would become pensionary of Zeeland. Other people connecting Boxhorn to Zeeland were Hoffer's son Rochus, who would follow in his father's footsteps, and Herman Anthoniszoon de Huybert (1593-1650), secretary and pensionary of Zierikzee and later councillor at the Court of Holland. Both were friends with Boxhorn.¹⁷⁹

Adriaen Hoffer is one of the three main recipients of Boxhorn's letters that are collected in the *Epistolae et poemata* (*Letters and Poems*). Boxhorn and Hoffer, who besides being a Zeeland *regent* was also a poet, seem to have had a good and friendly relationship. Boxhorn housed Hoffer's son Rochus when the latter studied at Leiden, while Hoffer helped Boxhorn with his work on the *Chroniick van Zeelandt* (*Chronicle of Zeeland*, 1644) of Jan van Reygersberch (sixteenth century).¹⁸⁰

The other two main recipients of Boxhorn's letters are Johannes Isacius Pontanus and Constantijn Huygens (1596-1687). Pontanus was a relative of Boxhorn and a friend of Scriverius. Two times a student at Leiden University, Pontanus spent the second part of his life as a professor at Harderwijk, a town in the province of Gelderland in the Dutch Republic. He wrote a number of historical works, including a history of Amsterdam (*Rerum et urbis Amstelodamensium historia*, 1611), a history of Gelderland (*Historiae Gelricae libri XIV*, 1639), and, as historiographer of the Danish king Christian IV (1588-1648), a history of Denmark (*Rerum Danicarum historia*, 1631).¹⁸¹ Boxhorn sought Pon-

Zeeland inzake vredesonderhandelingen met Spanje tijdens de Tachtigjarige Oorlog tegen de achtergrond van de positie van Zeeland in de Republiek (De Zwarte Arend; Middelburg, 1998), pp. 15, 18, 22-24, with quote on p. 23, and Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, pp. 295, 328, 332.

¹⁷⁹ For Boxhorn's connections to Zeeland, see Meertens, *Letterkundig leven in Zeeland in de zestiende en eerste helft der zeventiende eeuw*, pp. 364-66, 368-69. Adriaen Veth and Boxhorn had once seen each other in the presence of Scriverius. Boxhorn in a letter to Pontanus and Scriverius, April 1632. Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, p. 24. 'Memini adhuc ejus diei, quo de Hollandicorum Comitum primis initiis, atque adeo historia eorum universa non ex aliorum judicio, sed ex tua sententia libere & graviter disserebas. Testabitur id mecum, qui tunc aderat, Adrianus Vettius noster, novum Zeelandiae suae decus ...' The *Epistolae et poemata* contain one letter of Boxhorn to Veth. The letter is dated November 1632. *Ibidem*, pp. 28-29.

¹⁸⁰ Boxhorn to Adriaen Hoffer, November 19, 1641. Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, p. 187. The first letter of Boxhorn to Adriaen Hoffer in the *Epistolae et poemata* dates November 11, 1636, four days after Hoffer's son Rochus had enrolled as a student of the arts at Leiden University. Rochus's stay at Leiden, where Rochus lodged at Boxhorn's house, can be said to be the start of the friendly relationship between Adriaen Hoffer and Boxhorn. *Ibidem*, p. 79. 'Ego certè de amicitia tua, quam adeo prolixè mihi offerre voluisti, vehementer mihi gratulor. Meum erit omni obsequio huic benivolentiae tuae respondere.' See also Meertens, *Letterkundig leven in Zeeland in de zestiende en eerste helft der zeventiende eeuw*, p. 365.

¹⁸¹ See in general Karen Skovgaard-Petersen, *Historiography at the Court of Christian IV (1588-1648): Studies in the Latin Histories of Denmark by Johannes Pontanus and Johannes Meursius* (Museum Tusulanum

tanus's help during his work on the *Theatrum* and Pontanus contributed to Boxhorn's work on Juvenal.¹⁸²

Constantijn Huygens was a poet and secretary to two princes of Orange, first to Frederik Hendrik (1584-1647) and later to William II. His function as secretary to the prince of Orange gave Huygens an important position within the Dutch Republic of Letters. In all of his three attempts to obtain, respectively, the office of historiographer of the prince of Orange, the States of Zeeland and the States General, Boxhorn sought the help of Huygens.¹⁸³ He also turned to Huygens to get his father-in-law Pieter Duvelaar elected as burgomaster of Middelburg. While his own attempts did not have the desired result, his father-in-law was more lucky; in 1641 Pieter Duvelaar was elected burgomaster of Middelburg, an event for which Boxhorn thanked Huygens.¹⁸⁴

Among the recipients of Boxhorn's letters are also people who lived in Bergen op Zoom. The *Epistolae et poemata* contain letters of Boxhorn to his former teacher Richard Lubbaeus, to his friend and biographer Jacobus Baselius, and to Johannes Antonius de Rouck and Justus Turcq (1611-1680), two members of Bergen op Zoom's urban elite.¹⁸⁵ From his letter to Turcq we learn that Boxhorn visited his native town at least once.¹⁸⁶ Thus, while Boxhorn spent most of his adult life at Leiden, he did not lose contact with the town in which he was born.

Boxhorn did not see much of the world. As far as this author can tell Boxhorn never travelled to places that lay outside the jurisdiction of the Dutch

Press; Copenhagen, 2002), pp. 37-43. Pontanus was married to a cousin of Boxhorn. See Rijklof Hofman, "Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn (1612-1653)", in Laurant Toorians (ed.), *Orbis Linguarum*, Vol. 1: *Kelten en de Nederlanden: van prehistorie tot heden* (Peeters; Louvain/Paris, 1998), p. 158. For the friendship between Pontanus and Scriverius, see Langereis, *Geschiedenis als ambacht*, p. 109, and Skovgaard-Petersen, *Historiography at the Court of Christian IV (1588-1648)*, p. 56, there footnote 61. For some remarks on Pontanus's history of Amsterdam, see E.O.G. Haitsma Mulier, "Descriptions of Towns in the Seventeenth-Century Province of Holland", in Arthur K. Wheelock Jr. and Adele Seeff (eds.), *The Public and Private in Dutch Culture of the Golden Age* (University of Delaware Press; Newark, 2000), pp. 24-32.

¹⁸² Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, pp. 6, 8, 39, 67.

¹⁸³ *Ibidem*, pp. 158-59, 225-26, 308-9. To obtain the office of historiographer of the States of Zeeland, Boxhorn had also turned to his friend Adriaen Hoffer for help. Boxhorn to Adriaen Hoffer, May 5, 1644. *Ibidem*, pp. 219-20.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibidem*, pp. 178-79, 182-83. In 1643 and 1644 Boxhorn once more turned to Huygens to get his father-in-law elected again as burgomaster of Middelburg. *Ibidem*, pp. 208, 226-27.

¹⁸⁵ The *Epistolae et poemata* contain three letters to Lubbaeus, three letters to Baselius while Baselius was at Bergen op Zoom, one letter to De Rouck, and one letter to Turcq. *Ibidem*, pp. 144-45, 160-62, 172-73, 190-93, 228-229, 234, 277. The De Rouck family and the Turcq family were two of the more than ten families who together formed the patriciate or urban elite of Bergen op Zoom. See De Mooij, *Geloof kan Bergen verzetten*, p. 186.

¹⁸⁶ Boxhorn to Turcq, April 1642. Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, p. 190. 'Cum superiore anno, caniculae aestu anniversarium nobis otium faciente ad te venissem, Vir amplissime, tum ut tui, amici veteris, tum ut dulcissimae patriae, cujus regundae ornandaeque, cura tibi inprimis est demandata, aspectu me oblectarem, ea humanitate exceptus sum; ut nihil majoribus officiis aut benevolentia fieri posse judicarem.'

Republic.¹⁸⁷ The farthest place he ever went to was Lillo, a village north of Antwerp with a fort, perhaps to see his new-born nephew Jacobus Zuerius or to witness his birth.¹⁸⁸ Boxhorn declined a move to Sweden where 'very important offices' awaited him. If we may believe Lambertus Barlaeus, Boxhorn 'preferred the love for his fatherland above those sons of the north'.¹⁸⁹

3. Professional life

For the larger part of his academic career, it was Boxhorn job to teach eloquence. This job required certain oratorical skills. In the eyes of his contemporaries Boxhorn was a gifted and eloquent speaker. His advancement to the office of extraordinary professor of eloquence at the age of twenty and the fact that it was he who held orations on important events such as the death of William II testify to that.¹⁹⁰ His biographer Baselius says that Boxhorn had made

¹⁸⁷ We have letters from Boxhorn that are sent from Middelburg and one letter that is sent from Amsterdam. Ibidem, pp. 7-8, 138-39, 146-49, 152-58, 162-63, 182, 193, 207-10, 225-27, 234-35. Boxhorn visited The Hague, Flushing, and Zierikzee, and possibly also Utrecht and Harderwijk. For The Hague, see Boxhorn's letter to Pontanus, dated July 16, 1631. Ibidem, p. 11. 'Amplissimus vir, & amicus tuus, Adrianus Pauwius, superioribus diebus Hagam me evocavit, communicavitque plurima, ex patriae archivis deprompta, quae urbi Hollandicarum antiquitatem, & immunitates spectant.' Adriaen Pauw (1585-1653) was grand-pensionary of Holland between 1631-36 and 1651-53. For Flushing, see Boxhorn's letter to Adriaen Hoffer, January 1640. Ibidem, p. 157. 'Vlissingae blanditiis amicorum per dies aliquot distentus, & tandem Middelburgum reversus postremas tuas rectè accipi.' For Zierikzee, see Meertens, *Letterkundig leven in Zeeland in de zestiende en eerste helft der zeventiende eeuw*, p. 364. For Utrecht, see Boxhorn's letter to Pontanus, dated december 19, 1635, in which Boxhorn announces to Pontanus that he will go to Utrecht in the upcoming week where he will see Pontanus's son-in-law, Antonius Matthaëus. Ibidem, p. 67. 'Proxima septimanâ ultrajectum cogito, ibique Cl. Matthaëum videbo.' For Harderwijk, see Boxhorn's letter to Pontanus, dated July 15, 1638. In this letter Boxhorn writes to Pontanus that he and Scriverius have decided to visit him. At that time Pontanus lived in Harderwijk. Ibidem, p. 112. 'Sub finem Augusti & Scriverius, & ego ad te excurrere decrevimus.'

¹⁸⁸ Boxhorn wrote a letter to Adriaen Hoffer from Lillo on September 23, 1638. In that year Boxhorn's nephew, Jacobus Zuerius (1638-1710 or later), a son of his brother Hendrik, was born at fort Lillo. Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, pp. 115-18. Van Lieburg, *Repertorium van Nederlandse hervormde predikanten tot 1816*, Vol. 1, p. 243. Lambertus Barlaeus teaches us that Boxhorn's brother Hendrik was a minister at Lillo. Barlaeus, "Oratio funebris In Excessum Clarissimi Viri, Marci Zuerii Boxhornii ...", p. 147. 'Ex hac tam nobili stirpe Brabantica prodiit Jacobus Zuerius Defuncti nostri pater, Ecclesiae Bergopzomianae, dum vixit, Pastor insignis, qui cum uxorem duxisset Annam Henrici Boxhornii jam memorati filiam lectissimam, geminos ex ea suscepit filios, Marcum Zuerium Boxhornium, cujus praesentia exequias celebramus, & Henricum Zuerium Ecclesiae Lilloënsis in ripa Scaldis, Praefectum, Juvenem egregium, non Latine modo Graeceque doctum, sed & Orientalium linguarum, ut multorum fama est, peritissimum.'

¹⁸⁹ Barlaeus, "Oratio funebris In Excessum Clarissimi Viri, Marci Zuerii Boxhornii ...", p. 150. 'Imo in tanto habebatur apud exteros pretio, ut evocatus fuerit à Suecorum apud Ordines Foederatos Legato, Reginae & Procerum nomine ad amplissimas dignitates in Sueciam, sed amorem patriae suae Septentrionum illis filiis praetulit, & Attalidis conditionibus animum tunc sua sorte contentum.'

¹⁹⁰ See Barlaeus, "Oratio funebris In Excessum Clarissimi Viri, Marci Zuerii Boxhornii ...", pp. 149-50. See also Baselius, "Historia vitae & obitus", xi-xii. 'Adeo non acutè modo, sed & graviter & tanquam alter Cicero (cui ut praenomine & caeterorum nominum numero, uterque enim trinominis fuit, ita & facundiâ similis fuisse audivit, adeoque & multis non Marcus Zuerius Boxhornius, sed Marcus Tullius

himself entirely familiar with Tacitus – ‘in succum et sanguinem’ – and often used Tacitean words and phrases to express himself.¹⁹¹ Boxhorn’s works show that he indeed tried to imitate Tacitus’s difficult varied style and that he was prepared to take great stylistic risks in order to achieve, for example, Tacitus’s brevity (*brevitas*). One example will suffice to illustrate where Boxhorn’s attempt to imitate Tacitus’s brevity could lead to. The example is a fragment from a lecture Boxhorn held on Tacitus after he had been given the task to give public lectures on history in 1648.

Alios plerosque praeterita tradentes qui legunt, in foro quasi tantum, & compitis aut trivio, & apud vulgus, quod eventa fere tantum notat & intelligit[, *versari sibi videntur*]; qui [*legunt*] vero hunc, in ipso Senatu, in Sacratio ipsorum Caesarum, inter consilia ipsa, quantumvis abdita aut abstrusa, versari, atque adeo ipsa regnatricis domus, & principis, & imperii, & dominationis, ut passim ipse loquitur, arcana penitus introspicere sibi videntur.¹⁹²

However, despite his efforts to imitate the style of Tacitus, Boxhorn’s style is less ‘Tacitean’ than that of his patron Heinsius.¹⁹³

Boxhorn admired both Tacitus’s style and the didactic value of the Roman historian’s work.¹⁹⁴ Yet despite his admiration of Tacitus and his use of examples from the Greek and Roman past in his works, Boxhorn also looked beyond the horizon of antiquity. In the inaugural oration with which he started his new

Cicero vocatus) disserebat, & argumenta objecta, non distinctionibus philosophicis, quas, ut dixi, ob barbariem odio habebat, praescindebat, ut ille nodum Gordium, sed libero discursu labefactabat, solvebat & plane evertibat.’ For a discussion of Boxhorn’s funeral oration on the death of William II, see chapter 5.

¹⁹¹ Baselius, “Historia vitae & obitus”, ix. ‘Haec ergo frequentia habebat, tum numero tum auditoribus, maximam partem in Cornelium Tacitum, quem delicias suas vocare solebat, & sic sibi familiarem reddiderat, ut in succum & sanguinem, quod dicunt eundem versum habens ejus verbis & phrasibus saepe loqueretur, saepius item scriberet.’

¹⁹² Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn, “Oratio, cum Corneli Taciti Interpretationem aggredereetur”, in idem, *Orationes, Varii Argumenti. Series singularum & argumentum statim in ipso aditu leguntur* (Johannes Janssonius; Amsterdam, 1651), XIII, pp. 385-86 [391-92]. The diagonal words between the brackets are left out by Boxhorn. The translation reads: ‘If you read most other authors who have written about the past, it seems that you are in the forum, and among the people who hang around on street corners or on the street, and among the common people, who generally notice and observe only the news facts. However, if you read Tacitus, it seems that you are in the Senate itself, in the most private rooms of the Caesars themselves; it seems that you are present at their actual deliberations, however secluded and concealed they are. And that indeed you get a close look at the secrets of the imperial house, of the emperor, of the realm, and of the despotic use of power, as Tacitus himself says at several places.’ I would like to thank Jan Waszink for helping me with this text.

¹⁹³ I owe this observation to Adrie van der Laan. Heinsius tried to imitate Tacitus’s style in his history of the siege of ’s-Hertogenbosch. Ter Horst, *Daniel Heinsius (1580-1655)*, p. 105.

¹⁹⁴ The latter will become clear further on in this thesis, especially in chapter 7.

task of giving public lectures on history Boxhorn tells his audience that ‘it is of the greatest importance to you that our history is just as much shown to you as Roman and Greek history’.¹⁹⁵ Leaving aside here the question of what Boxhorn precisely means with ‘our history’, the least we can say is that it is not Roman or Greek history. Further, in the oration he also expresses the wish that ‘the many changes of Asian and Oriental history after the fall of the Roman Empire shall [also] be learned more closely’, a wish for which he sees Jacob Golius, professor of Arabic and mathematics, as the main candidate to fulfil it.¹⁹⁶ Clearly, then, for Boxhorn that part of history that was useful and important to know was not limited to antiquity. If Boxhorn himself actually taught ‘our history’ after he was given the task to give public lectures on history is unsure, at least to this author. What can be said for certain is that in 1652 Boxhorn published a world history that covered the period from the birth of Jesus Christ to the year 1650. In this work he had ‘recorded some [matters] from Africa and America, many [matters] from Asia, but mostly [matters] from Europe’.¹⁹⁷

Concerning politics, Boxhorn taught both ‘the common and familiar politica, which consists of precepts only’ and ‘practical politica’.¹⁹⁸ He did this, at least partially, in an exemplary manner. In the *Disquisitiones politicae*, for example, Boxhorn discusses political problems on the basis of historical examples.¹⁹⁹ These examples were drawn from both classical history and medieval

¹⁹⁵ Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn, *Oratio inauguralis, dicta in Illustri Batavorum Academia, cum, Ex auctoritate publica, historiarum professionem aggredetur. Habita Anno MDCXLVIII* (David Lopez de Haro; Leiden, 1649), p. 14. ‘Quoties ego illud longi temporis spatium cogito (cogito autem saepissime) quod inter sextum aerae Christianae saeculum & decimum intercedit, omni propemodum rerum tunc gestarum memoria viduatam, aut solis fabulis corruptum, totum illud pene periisse nobis intelligo. Quae jactura tanto major est, Auditores, quia illa haec sunt tempora, quibus jacta constat plerorumque regnorum ac Rerumpub, quae per Europam nunc omnem praecipua & florentissima celebrantur, prima quasi fundamenta. Neque tamen animum ego hic despondeo, facturus quod illi solent, qui ex modico & partim collecto aere tandem ingentem summam conficiunt. Et ex reliquiis gestarum rerum passim sparsis, conjunctisque & excussis diligenter, nonnihil vobis lucis in tam densa eorum temporum caligine audeo polliceri. In quam ego curam tanto alacrior incumbam, quia vestra maxime interest non minus nostrarum vobis rerum, quam Romanarum Graecarumque memoriam representari.’

¹⁹⁶ *Ibidem*, pp. 14-15. ‘Utinam quoque (nam & plura sunt quae desidero) Asiae ac Orientis rerum tot, post Romani imperii occasum, mutationes propius cognoscerentur? Qua de re cogitanti nunc mihi, tu potissimum hic te offers, Iacobe Goli; cum quo habitos toties privatos ea de re sermones, publicos nunc, sed pace tua, facio. Quem totius Orientis non linguarum modo, sed & rerum ingressum possessionem, ac opibus ejus omnibus, quae huc faciunt, instructum, ex publici desiderii lege, ut eidem, cui jam pridem favet, satisfaciat etiam, quantis possum precibus jam rogo.’ For an elaborate discussion of Boxhorn’s inaugural oration and his views on history, see chapter 7.

¹⁹⁷ Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn, “Dedication to the States of Holland”, in *idem, Historia universalis*, iii. ‘Africae & Americae nonnulla, plura Asiae, plurima autem Europae prodidimus ...’

¹⁹⁸ See footnote 201 below.

¹⁹⁹ Otterspeer, *Het bolwerk van de vrijheid*, pp. 401-2. Willem Otterspeer speaks of Boxhorn’s exemplary manner of teaching in a rather general sense, but illustrates it by discussing the procedure followed in the *Disquisitiones politicae*. He bases himself on Wansink, *Politieke wetenschappen aan de Leidse universiteit*. See Otterspeer, *Het bolwerk van de vrijheid*, p. 465, footnote 36, for the reference.

and modern history.²⁰⁰ In both the *Institutiones politicae* and the *Disquisitiones politicae*, Boxhorn's two main political works, we can see that Boxhorn did not confine himself to Roman or Greek history, but also used medieval, modern, and even contemporary history in his teaching of politics.²⁰¹

Boxhorn's students came from the Dutch Republic, France, Sweden, Brandenburg, Pomerania, and Prussia.²⁰² Johan de la Court, the Dutch political thinker and Leiden merchant son, and Johan de Witt (1625-1672), who would become grand-pensionary of Holland, are said to have been students of Boxhorn.²⁰³ Boxhorn gave both public and private lectures, of which the latter attracted many people.²⁰⁴ Private lectures (*collegia privata*) served as a

²⁰⁰ For a more elaborate discussion of the *Disquisitiones politicae*, see chapter 9.

²⁰¹ For a more elaborate discussion of the *Institutiones politicae*, see chapter 8. Both the *Institutiones politicae* and the *Disquisitiones politicae* derive from Boxhorn's teachings on politics. Baselius, "Historia vitae & obitus", ix-x. 'Sed & Politicam discipulos suos docebat: non vulgarem modo & tritam, nudis praeceptis consistentem (quam à se conscriptam suis tradebat, & cujus libri duo nuper in Germania editi & Lugduni Batavorum recusi sunt) sed & ex Historiis desumptam adeoque practicam, imo παραδειγματικήν. Hinc natae disquisitiones Politicae, postmodum juris publici factae, sed tacito authoris nomine, quae & saepius recusae sunt.'

²⁰² See G.O. van de Klashorst, H.W. Blom and E.O.G. Haitsma Mulier, *Bibliography of Dutch Seventeenth Century Political Thought: An Annotated Inventory, 1581-1700* (APA/Holland University Press; Amsterdam/Maarssen, 1986), pp. 42-43, 65. Boxhorn was especially popular among the youth of Sweden's high-ranking nobility. For Boxhorn's good relations with Sweden's noble youth, see Wrangel, *De betrekkingen tusschen Zweden en de Nederlanden op het gebied van letteren en wetenschap*, pp. 134-35, 143, 163-73.

²⁰³ For Boxhorn as the professor of Johan de la Court, see Kossmann, *Political Thought in the Dutch Republic*, p. 42, and Noel Malcolm, "Hobbes and Spinoza", in Burns (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Political Thought*, p. 547, with reference there. For Boxhorn as the professor of Johan de Witt, see J.D.M. Cornelissen, "Johan de Witt en de vrijheid", in idem, *Eendracht van het land*, pp. 134, 136. Johan de la Court enrolled as a student at Leiden University on October 5, 1641. Johan de Witt enrolled nineteen days later, on October 24, 1641. *Album studiosorum Academiae Lugduno-batavae MDCCCLXXV-MCMXXXV*, p. 327. I hereby correct the information given in my article in the volume *Public Offices, Private Demands*, where I claimed, with reference to the same works referred to in this footnote, that Boxhorn was also the professor of Johan's brother Pieter de la Court. The works referred to, both in this footnote and in my article in the volume *Public Offices, Private Demands*, do not corroborate such a claim. See Jaap Nieuwstraten, "Why the Wealthy should rule: Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn's Defence of Holland's Aristocratic Mercantile Regime", in Hartman, Nieuwstraten and Reinders (eds.), *Public Offices, Personal Demands*, pp. 126-27, there footnote 3.

²⁰⁴ Baselius, "Historia vitae & obitus", xiii-ix. 'Caeterum praeter publicas etiam privatas [orationes-JN] à studiosis sub ipso habitas, tibi Hofferè Amplissime, non minus constat quam mihi, qui & illorum magna pars fuisti. Quibus, ut item non ignoras, ad artis normam componendis discipulis suis in privatis collegiis certis diebus describendas ad calamum dictare solebat, orationum Ideas, quas vocabat, easque argumenti varii, ut maximam partem politici, ita ex historia veteri desumptas ... Tempus est ut de lectionibus ejus publicis aliquid dicam sicut & de privatis collegiis. De quibus cum jam dicere coeperim prius pergam. Haec ergo frequentia habebat, tum numero tum auditoribus ...' The 'orationum Ideas' (*Ideas of Orations*) were published. Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn, *Orationum ideae, è selectiori materia moderni status politici desumptae* (Christian Kirchner; Leipzig, 1661). According to the catalogue in the *Epistolae et poemata* (iv) this work was first printed in Leiden in 1657. For Boxhorn giving private lectures, see also Barlaeus, "Oratio funebris In Excessum Clarissimi Viri, Marci Zuerii Boxhornii ...", p. 150. 'Nec vulgare modo discipulos habebat & sectatores, sed plerosque optimatum filios, florem Belgicae & Germanicae nobilitatis. Qui omnes tanti viri gratia & eruditione pellecti, saepe ipsum adibant, de quaestionibus variis, ut Apollinem alterum consulabant, collegia privata sub eo habebant. Ita ut de domo ejus dici possit, quod de Isocratis Rhetoris domo scriptum legitur, ex ea, tanquam ex equo Trojano complures prodidisse disertissimos juvenes, & in historiis omnique literarum genere versatissimos.' Reference to Cicero, *De*

supplement to public lectures.²⁰⁵ They also provided the Leiden professors with a welcome extra source of income as students had to pay the professors to attend their private lectures. The money involved made private lectures an increasingly popular teaching method during the seventeenth century. The downside of their popularity was that students stayed away from public lectures. To protect public lectures against total neglect the curators repeatedly tried to keep the size and frequency of private lectures in check, but to no avail.²⁰⁶ In 1650, after years of warnings and interventions, Boxhorn, who himself gave or had given private lectures, still complained to the curators that thanks to the private lectures other professors tended to hold 'from sunrise to sunset' students ignored his public lectures on history.²⁰⁷

Besides the private lectures of other professors that affected the amount of students that attended his public lectures on history, another problem Boxhorn had to deal with in his professional life was that he got involved in the conflicts between his patron Heinsius and Salmasius. Huet says that Boxhorn 'had a severe enmity with Salmasius, and he had defamed him with violent writings and speeches, like Heinsius had done also, whose faction Boxhorn openly favored'.²⁰⁸ However, in his analysis of Boxhorn's contribution to the debate on usury, the *De trapezitis vulgo Longobardis* (*On Money-Dealers, generally called Lombards*, 1640), a work Boxhorn had written against Salmasius, the more modern observer Jakob Veegens says that the *De trapezitis* was 'put even against Salmasius in the most polite terms'.²⁰⁹ Be that as it may, this did

oratore libri tres, II.22.94, p. 274. 'Ecce tibi est exortus Isocrates, [magister istorum omnium,] cuius e ludo tamquam ex equo Troiano meri principes exierunt; sed eorum partim in pompa, partim in acie inlustres esse voluerunt.' Isocrates (436-338 BC) was a famous Greek orator, who taught eloquence at Athens.

²⁰⁵ The procedure followed at public lectures was often too tedious and time-consuming for students to obtain a clear overview of all the ins and outs of their subjects. To get a more thorough and comprehensive knowledge of their fields of study they were dependent on private lectures. For the procedure followed at public lectures at the universities of early modern Europe, see Brockliss, "Curricula", p. 565.

²⁰⁶ Wansink, *Politieke wetenschappen aan de Leidse universiteit*, pp. 27-31, and Otterspeer, *Het bolwerk van de vrijheid*, pp. 231-33.

²⁰⁷ Molhuysen, *Bronnen tot de geschiedenis der Leidsche Universiteit*, Vol. 3, p. 46. 'Naer dat gelesen was de schriftelicke remonstratie van den Professor Boxhorn, by welcke hy klaecht dat door de menichvuldige ende frequente collegia privata, ende sonderlingh van eenighe Professoren inde Rechten, die van den opganck tot den onderganck der sonnen toe werden gehouden, hy by naer geen toehoorders meer en heeft van de publycque lessen, die by hem in de Historien werden gedaen, ende versouckt daer tegens behoorlicke voorsieninge ...'

²⁰⁸ Huet, *Commentarius de rebus ad eum pertinentibus*, p. 125. 'Graves ille gerebat inimicitias cum Salmasio, acribusque eum scriptis & sermonibus proscederat, uti factum quoque fuerat ab Heinsio, cujus partibus palam favebat Boxhornius.'

²⁰⁹ J.D. Veegens, *De banken van leening in Noord-Nederland tot het einde der achttiende eeuw* (J. van Baalen en zonen; Rotterdam, 1869), p. 143. 'Dit boek, in den meest humanen toon en zelfs tegenover SALMASIUS in de meest eerbiedige bewoordingen gesteld, is een van die geschriften die het meeste gewicht tegen de Lombarden in de schaal leggen.' Salmasius had participated in the usury-debate with several works and had contended that the Bible did not speak out against interest. According to Boxhorn, the magistrates did not approve of banks that lend out money at interest, but tolerated them out of neces-

not prevent that Salmasius felt compelled to reply Boxhorn's work on usury which the Frenchman saw as an attack from Heinsius.²¹⁰

Boxhorn's conflict with his patron's nemesis might have brought him into physical danger. Huet reports that some young Germans, who were 'very devoted to the reputation of Salmasius', once tried to push Boxhorn in a canal after having stumbled upon him in an alley. If Huet's story is true, then Boxhorn found himself in a potentially life-threatening situation during that encounter, since he could not swim.²¹¹

In the course of time relations between Boxhorn and Salmasius somewhat normalised. In 1644 a truce was established between Heinsius and Salmasius.²¹² There was also a reconciliation between the Frenchman and Boxhorn. In Augustus 1645 Boxhorn writes Salmasius a flattering letter, in which he talks about Salmasius's 'incomparable erudition' and 'incomparable kindness', and praises the Frenchman's work on the Roman dramatist Plautus (c. 254-184 BC).²¹³ In his letters to André Rivet (1572-1651), professor of theology at Leiden University, Salmasius makes no mention of Boxhorn after April 23, 1645.²¹⁴ At the end of both their lives Boxhorn and Salmasius had normal scholarly contact.²¹⁵

sity. Veegens, *De banken van leening in Noord-Nederland tot het einde der achttiende eeuw*, pp. 137-44, esp. pp. 138-39, and pp. 143-44. For a short, more modern discussion, see Droixhe, "Boxhorn's Bad Reputation", pp. 364-66. In a letter to Adriaen Hoffer, January 28, 1641, Boxhorn writes that he has a stronger case than his opponent 'by the verdict of the politicians and the theologians'. Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, p. 172. 'Prodit tandem dissertatio haec nostra de Trapezitis, quam & veritati, & mihi debere me existimavi. Quid ab adversario mihi exspectandum sit, facile divino. Sed qui in calumniis, & maledicentia tantum praesidium ponit, eo ipso apud aequos arbitros caussa cadit. Hactenus saltim, Politicorum & Theologorum iudicio, & modestia, & argumenti veritate ac fide. . . . major sum.' The name of Boxhorn's opponent is left blank, but is probably Salmasius. For the fact that Boxhorn wrote his work on the Lombards against Salmasius, see Boxhorn's letter to Adriaen Hoffer, November 23, 1640, in *ibidem*, p. 170. 'Salmasius in Galliam nuper delatus est. Ego meam causam contra eum tuto sum aggressus, & publico scripto ostendi, qui de Trapezitis nostratibus, sive Longobardis, ex ipsa Magistratum sententia, sit statuendum.'

²¹⁰ Droixhe, "Boxhorn's Bad Reputation", p. 365.

²¹¹ Huet, *Commentarius de rebus ad eum pertinentibus*, p. 125. 'Hunc aliquando in angiportu deambulanti adorti adolescentes Germani, Salmasiani nominis valde studiosi, Tu-ne, inquit, homo impure scribere ausus es adversus magnum Salmasium? correptumque in profluentem canalis aquam dejicere conati sunt.' For Boxhorn's inability to swim, see his letter to Adriaen Hoffer, September 23, 1638. Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, p. 117. 'Natare non possum, qui fors litteras novi.'

²¹² Despite this peace, the battle between Heinsius and Salmasius never died. Sellin, *Daniel Heinsius and Stuart England*, pp. 49-51, and Otterspeer, *Het bolwerk van de vrijheid*, p. 337.

²¹³ Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, pp. 234-35. 'Sed oneravi, primum quia nullum aut praesentius, aut sanctius oraculum erat, quod consulerem; deinde quia & eruditione & humanitate pariter incomparabili promptum esse te non ignorabam . . . Plautus tandem ipse tibi se nunc sistit, ope imprimis tuam multo quam ante emendatior ac illustrior, & simul quicquid ad eum boni malive ut ex aliis selegimus, vel ipsi scripsimus.' In 1645 Boxhorn published an edition of Plautus that contained the comments of different scholars on the Roman author's text. Among those scholars was Salmasius.

²¹⁴ This concerns Salmasius's letters written between 1632 and 1648. Claude Salmasius and André Rivet, *Correspondance échangée entre 1632 et 1648. Publiée et annotée par Pierre Leroy & Hans Bots avec la collaboration de Els Peters* (APA/Holland University Press; Amsterdam/Maarssen, 1987), pp. 419-559.

²¹⁵ This can be deduced from a letter of Boxhorn to Paulus Terhaar, dated December 19, 1652. Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, pp. 315-16.

4. Position on social issues and 'religious-political' persuasion

Although Boxhorn came from an orthodox Calvinist background, in social issues he took a moderate position. Constantijn Huygens, for example, convinced Boxhorn of the permissibility of the use of organs in Dutch churches.²¹⁶ Huygens's opinion, however, went against 'the traditional standpoint of the Calvinists ... that the organ and other musical instruments were heathen products, and that they should not be used during church services'.²¹⁷ Boxhorn also took a moderate position in the so-called 'hairy war' of the 1640s, a public debate about the correctness of the wearing of long hair. Boxhorn participated in this debate with two treatises. In the first treatise he explained that in Holland and Zeeland men had been wearing long hair for centuries.²¹⁸ In the second treatise he set out to demonstrate that the wearing of short hair, on the other hand, was a recent phenomenon, introduced 'both by strangers, mainly Spaniards and Italians, and by natives, visiting Spain and Italy'.²¹⁹ We may wonder how well the opponents of the wearing of long hair took it that Boxhorn drew a connection between the alternative, the wearing of short hair, and the arch-enemies of the Dutch, the Spaniards.

In his first treatise in the 'hairy war' Boxhorn takes an historical approach to the subject. He also avoids a theological discussion.²²⁰ These two characteristics can also more or less be detected in the *De trapezitis*, Boxhorn's contribu-

²¹⁶ Boxhorn to Constantijn Huygens, Februari 20, 1641. Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, pp. 173-74. 'Jam verò id cer[t]issimum est, quod de Musicorum in Ecclesia instrumentum usu, publico elegantissimo scripto adseruisti, Vir nobilissime. Quidni enim tam illustri beneficio ita gratias tibi agam, qui & sic debeo, & aliter non possum? Nec enim hujus argumenti tui sententiam ad me transmittere tantum dignatus es, sed etiam, quod meritò pluris facio, ipsam persuasisti.' The work Boxhorn is referring to is C.H., *Gebruyck of ongebruyck van 't orgel, in de kercken der Vereenighde Nederlanden* (Bonaventura and Abraham Elzevier; Leiden, 1641).

²¹⁷ Wouter Kalkman, "Constantijn Huygens en de Haagse orgelstrijd", in *Tijdschrift van de Vereniging voor Nederlandse Muziekgeschiedenis*, Vol. 31, No. 2 (1981), p. 174. See also Frijhoff and Spies, *Hard-Won Unity*, pp. 587-88.

²¹⁸ Boxhorn, *Spiegeltien, Vertoonende 't lanck hayr ende hayrlocken, By de oude Hollanders ende Zeelanders gedragen*.

²¹⁹ Idem, *Spiegeltien Vertoonende 't corte hayr, By de Hollanders ende Zeelanders jonest ghedragen, ende van vreemde ontleent* (Jaques Fierens; Middelburg, 1644), with quote there on pp. 9-10. 'Dus vinde ick my genootsaect met dit tweede Spiegeltien voor den dach te comen, om daer in duydelijck af te beelden, dat noch geen hondert jaer geleden soo door vreemde, voornaementlijc Spaenjaerts ende Italiaenen, als door ingeboorne, Spanien ende Italien versoekende, ende by haer leerende het veranderen van de manieren ende drachten van haer vaederlandt, het draegen van cort hayr hier te lande, niet sonder groote opspraecke van die welcke slecht ende recht het met de oude vvet hielden, ingevoert is ghe worden ...' For the 'hairy war' and the contributions of several Leiden scholars, among whom those of Boxhorn, to this debate, see Otterspeer, *Het bolwerk van de vrijheid*, pp. 320-21.

²²⁰ Idem, *Spiegeltien, Vertoonende 't lanck hayr ende hayrlocken, By de oude Hollanders ende Zeelanders gedragen*, p. 7. 'Wat belanght Godts wille, sijn gebodt, ofte verbodt ontrent het lanck hayr van de mannen, daer van hebbe ick voorgenomen t'hans niet te spreken; als sulcs laetende aen den Godtsgeleerden, ende connende daer van gelesen werden de schriften van verstandiger ende versochter mannen, die gereets in het licht sijn gecomen.'

tion to the debate that was held in the Dutch Republic during the seventeenth century on usury. In this work Boxhorn pays attention to history, but 'is ... absolutely not active in the field of the Bible'.²²¹ Boxhorn's avoidance of a theological discussion in both works has perhaps something to do with the fear of getting into trouble. In a letter to Pontanus, Boxhorn writes concerning Salmasius's *De usuris* (*On Usury*, 1638), one of the contributions the Frenchman made to the usury-debate, the following: 'It seems that his opinion hardly meets with the approval of the theologians. You know how dangerous it is to deploy one's intellect in this sort of subjects, especially when it goes against the opinion that is accepted by all, and leads to another and new opinion.'²²² In public debates it was prudent not to go against the grain of the wrong people, especially not of the theologians, some of whose meddling Boxhorn could not always appreciate.²²³

Finally, at the end of this biography one more theme should be discussed. That is Boxhorn's position in the religious-political divide between Remonstrants and Counter-Remonstrants, and between Orangists and supporters of the so-called 'States Party'.²²⁴ I have not made an inquiry into Boxhorn's religious beliefs. Considering Boxhorn's family background and circle of friends it is tempting to place Boxhorn in the Counter-Remonstrant camp.²²⁵ Another

²²¹ Veegens, *De banken van leening in Noord-Nederland tot het einde der achttiende eeuw*, p. 143. 'Gelijk SALMASIUS ook in zijn werken zijn hoedanigheid van litterator aan den dag legde, zoo verloochent BOXHORN hier zijn historische studiën niet, maar deelt belangrijke bijzonderheden over de geschiedenis der tafelhouders mede. Het onderwerp wordt niet uitgeput: BOXHORN beweegt zich bijv. volstrekt niet op Bijbelsch terrein ...'

²²² Boxhorn to Pontanus, July 15, 1638. Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, p. 112. 'Salmasii de Usuris librum vidisse te opinor. Theologis sententiam suam vix probasse videtur. Nosti quam periculosum sit in ejusmodi argumentis ingenium exercere; praesertim cum contra receptam ab omnibus sententiam in aliam, & novam itur.'

²²³ See chapter 6.

²²⁴ Making a division between Orangists, on the one hand, and supporters of the States Party, on the other, can be questioned. I am still inclined to follow this division, if only for convenience sake. By Orangists I mean people who supported the prince of Orange and attributed an important role to the office of the stadholder for the good functioning of government and the well-being of the Dutch Republic and its constituent parts. The supporters of the States Party were persons who opposed the House of Orange and diminished the importance of the office of the stadholder for the good functioning of government and the well-being of the Dutch Republic and its constituent parts or even opposed the institution of the stadholderate as such.

That Remonstrants cannot automatically be equated with supporters of the States Party or Counter-Remonstrants with Orangists is best demonstrated by the example of Oldenbarnevelt, whose religious beliefs would put him in the camp of the Counter-Remonstrants, but whose political choices would make him a supporter of the States Party.

²²⁵ Boxhorn came from a family of ministers. Besides his grandfather Hendrik, uncle Marcus, father Jacobus, and brother Hendrik, Boxhorn's cousin Marcus Zuerius (c.1600-1653) and nephew Jacobus Zuerius were also both Reformed ministers. Van Lieburg, *Repertorium van Nederlandse hervormde predikanten tot 1816*, Vol. 1, p. 243. As has been said above, Boxhorn's grandfather Hendrik Boxhorn was a leading figure in the Calvinist offensive to suppress and drive back the influence of Catholicism at Breda. His brother Hendrik served as a minister in the forts of the Dutch Republic in the Southern Netherlands. Both these men, then, were in the front line in the battle between Protestantism and Catholi-

possible argument to place Boxhorn in the Counter-Remonstrant camp can be found in a report of the French doctor Samuel Sorbière (1615-1670) about a visit he had paid to Boxhorn around 1642/43.²²⁶ Sorbière tells us that

Boxhorn seemed not really well-disposed towards the very well-known Grotius. For as the conversation gradually, as is usual, advanced to the questions which were then discussed amongst the learned and to the recent writings, he not only admitted that he disagreed [with Grotius-JN] (what many people do who are sympathetic and well-disposed towards Grotius) about beginning a sort of union and attributing too much authority to the Pope, but he also accused Grotius, together with the other Remonstrants, about political matters of the fatherland.²²⁷

Sorbière comes up with two arguments ‘with which I could excuse Boxhorn’.

Or because he, when he was younger, had heard what had happened from other unreliable witnesses. Or because he, holding the office of professor, believed that he was hired by the Calvinists, whose favour, because they govern the commonwealth, it not belongs to a man, who seeks to govern his private assets well, to lose.²²⁸

cism. During the Truce Controversies, Pontanus, a relative of Boxhorn by marriage, had written three epigrams ‘in which he argues against the Remonstrants on the question of predestination’. Skovgaard-Petersen, *Historiography at the Court of Christian IV (1588-1648)*, p. 42, there footnote 9. Heinsius, ‘a cultured and enlightened but consistently orthodox member of the Reformed Church’, was ‘Secretary of the Lay Commissioners at the Synod of Dort’. Sellin, *Daniel Heinsius and Stuart England*, pp. 21, 29. Adriaen Hoffer was sent by the ‘ultra-Gomarist inclined churches of Zeeland’ as a deputy to the Synod of Dort and is called by Meertens ‘an orthodox Calvinist’. Meertens, *Letterkundig leven in Zeeland in de zestiende en eerste helft der zeventiende eeuw*, pp. 326, 329. Scriverius, however, belonged to a family which had a ‘Remonstrant background’. Langereis, *Geschiedenis als ambacht*, p. 106.

²²⁶ According to Sorbière, he had ‘visited Boxhorn, a thirty-year old man ...’. Samuel Sorbière, *Sorberiana, ou bons mots, rencontres agreables, pensees judicieuses, et observations curieuses* (Sebastien Mabre-Cramoisy; Paris, 1694), p. 44. ‘Invisi Boxhornium juvenem annorum triginta ...’ Since Boxhorn was born on August 28, 1612, this places Sorbière’s meeting with Boxhorn somewhere between the end of August 1642 and the end of August 1643. Sorbière had moved to Holland in 1642, where he stayed for a number of years. See the entry ‘Sorbière, Samuel (1615-70)’, in Luc Foisneau (gen. ed.), *The Dictionary of Seventeenth-Century French Philosophers*, Vol. 2 (Thoemmes Continuum; London, 2008), p. 1186.

²²⁷ I here follow the version given by the French philosopher Pierre Bayle (1647-1706) in his *Dictionnaire historique et critique. Cinquième édition de 1740. Revue, corrigée et augmentée*, Vol. 4 (Slatkine Reprints; Geneva, 1995), p. 562, (N). ‘Is visus est τό πάνν Grotio minus amicus; nam sensim procedente, ut fit, sermone ad quaestiones tunc temporis volitantes docta per ora virum & nupera scripta, non solum dissentire (quod faciunt multi boni & amici Grotio) se fassus est circa initium conciliationis modum & tributam nimiam Rom. Pontifici auctoritatem, sed ipsum insimulatus est circa politica patriae negotia, unà cum caeteris Remonstrantibus.’ Bayle follows here the *Sorberiana* printed by George Gallet in Amsterdam in 1694. The 1694 Paris edition reads ‘initium’ instead of ‘initum’ and ‘ipsam’ instead of ‘ipsum’. I would like to thank Henk Nellen for his help with this text.

²²⁸ Ibidem. ‘Quaerens apud me rationem qua excusarem Boxhornium; aut quia junior res gestas audierat ab aliis non probatae fidei testibus: aut quia professorium munus exercens conductum mercede se putabat à Calvinii-

The picture that can be distilled from Sorbière's story is that Boxhorn opposed or at least disagreed with the Remonstrants and one of their 'stars', Grotius, and that he did so out of bad intelligence or self-interest.²²⁹

However, if Boxhorn indeed belonged to the Counter-Remonstrant camp he was definitely not a religious zealot.²³⁰ This can be deduced from the moderate position he took in social issues.²³¹ Furthermore, as we shall see, Boxhorn held political ideas about religion that would not have been appreciated by orthodox Calvinists.²³²

Concerning the question where Boxhorn stood in the divide between Orangists and supporters of the States Party modern scholars have vented different views. Ernst Kossmann has claimed that Boxhorn was not an Orangist.²³³ In his discussion of Boxhorn's *Institutiones politicae* Harm Wansink has stated that 'if one would apply his ideas to the political relationships in Holland, then the impression is made that a moderate States Party writer is speaking here'.²³⁴ Richard Tuck, on the other hand, has described Boxhorn as a 'pro-Orange' writer,²³⁵ while Charles-Edouard Levillain has put Boxhorn forward as the leading example of the Orangist vision that liberty and personal rule can co-exist.²³⁶

As this thesis will demonstrate, Boxhorn certainly did not oppose the princes of Orange. Nor was he against the office of stadholder. On the other hand, Boxhorn also made it clear that the stadholder is a subordinate who owes obedience to his superiors, the provincial States. All in all, however, Boxhorn can more easily be rated among the Orangists than among the supporters of the States Party.

anis, quorum excidere gratia, clavum Reipubl. tenentium, non est hominis bene rem familiarem gerere quaerentis.'

²²⁹ For his part, 'Grotius distrusted fellow scholars like Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn ... because they maintained close connections with Heinsius'. Nellen, *Hugo de Groot*, p. 561.

²³⁰ If Boxhorn was indeed a Counter-Remonstrant, then Ernst Kossmann, who claimed that Boxhorn was not a Counter-Remonstrant, was wrong. Kossmann, *Political Thought in the Dutch Republic*, p. 43.

²³¹ This does not mean that the positions Boxhorn took in social issues were always or sometimes in opposition to Boxhorn being a religious man. According to Droixhe, 'Boxhorn's position on usury would tally with the convictions of the religious man – son and grand-son of ministers – described by his biographers'. Droixhe, "Boxhorn's Bad Reputation", pp. 365-66.

²³² See chapter 8.

²³³ According to Ernst Kossmann, this can be deduced from Boxhorn's *Commentariolus*. Kossmann, *Political Thought in the Dutch Republic*, p. 43.

²³⁴ '... een gematigd staatsgezinde schrijver ...' Harm Wansink remarks that Boxhorn's view that monarchy is the best form of government argues against Boxhorn being a moderate States Party writer. Yet, he immediately denounces the importance of Boxhorn's view that monarchy is the best form of government, claiming that it 'appears a typical academic stand, to which he [i.e. Boxhorn-JN] himself seems to attach not that much value.' Wansink, *Politieke wetenschappen aan de Leidse universiteit*, p. 176.

²³⁵ Tuck, *Philosophy and Government*, pp. 252-53.

²³⁶ Charles-Edouard Levillain, "William III's Military and Political Career in Neo-Roman Context, 1672-1702", in *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 48, No. 2 (2005), pp. 331-32. Both Levillain and Tuck refer to Boxhorn's commentaries on Tacitus, in which Boxhorn explained that 'in every form of command, even in a principate, there is freedom ...'. See chapter 8, footnote 105, for a full citation and the Latin original.

Conclusion

Boxhorn, born and partly raised in Brabant, partly raised in Leiden where he also studied at the town's university, was a talented child. However, he was not a child prodigy like Grotius. At a young age he showed to possess a certain knowledge and certain skills, and he was deemed worthy enough to hold an office at Leiden University where he had a steady, though not spectacular career. His contemporaries thought of Boxhorn as a gifted and eloquent speaker. Following in the footsteps of Heinsius, Boxhorn tried to imitate the style of the Roman historian Tacitus whom he admired. An industrious scholar, Boxhorn also made mistakes in his works.²³⁷ He occupied himself with different subjects, ranging from Roman history to the wearing of long hair. Boxhorn's scholarly works contain editions of classical authors, works in the field of linguistics, and historical and political works.²³⁸

Boxhorn did his scholarly activities against the background of a personal life that was not free of tribulations. In 1640 he lost his twin brother Hendrik, while he also rather frequently struggled with his health. His marriage to a daughter of a *regent* from Middelburg, one of the commercial centres of the Dutch Republic, can be considered a piece of luck and strengthened his ties with Zeeland. His death at the age of forty-one was not only a loss to the University of Leiden, but also made his wife a widow and left his children fatherless.

²³⁷ Besides Boxhorn's edition of the *Historia Augusta* mentioned in footnote 169 above, we can also mention the *De trapezitis*. See Veegens, *De banken van leening in Noord-Nederland tot het einde der achttiende eeuw*, pp. 144, 165-66.

²³⁸ For a short overview of the different 'genres' Boxhorn's works cover, see the entry "Boxhorn, Marcus Zuerius (1612-53)", in Van Bunge et al. (eds.), *The Dictionary of Seventeenth and Eighteenth-Century Dutch Philosophers*, Vol. 1, p. 146.

Chapter 4

Times of success.

Defending the fatherland

The 1630s and 1640s saw the conclusion of the war the Dutch had been fighting with the king of Spain since the late 1560s and the definitive establishment and official recognition of the Dutch Republic as an independent and sovereign state. The victorious emergence of the seven united Dutch provinces from this struggle as an economic powerhouse that dominated European trade and commerce stunned the contemporary. So did the Republic's complex, confused, and multi-layered structure of decision-making that, although it went against the tide of the centralisation and the concentration of power that was visible everywhere else in Europe, seemed to have worked, at least to seventeenth-century standards, amazingly well and efficient.¹

When Boxhorn just started his academic career in the early 1630s the outcome of the Dutch struggle with the king of Spain was still uncertain. Although the Dutch were on the offensive, the Spanish enemy proved to be a resilient opponent who would not easily be beaten into surrender. Furthermore, the seven Dutch provinces were surrounded by ambitious kings and princes whose interests sometimes diametrically opposed those of the Dutch. Thus, the Dutch always had to be on the watch, prepared and ready to respond, with diplomatic means or with arms, to defend their freedom and interests against external aggressors.

In this chapter we will look at several of Boxhorn's works that appeared in the 1630s and 1640s in which Boxhorn defended and explained the actions of the Dutch both for a national and international public. What are the themes he addresses? With whom does he take issue? What kind of arguments does he use? In what terms does he describe the Dutch war with the king of Spain? As a professor of eloquence it was a part of Boxhorn's job to exalt Dutch war efforts and to legitimise or at least to excuse Dutch actions. However, there is

¹ Maarten Prak holds that the Republic's loose state structure was one of the most important pillars under its economic and political success. Prak, *The Dutch Republic in the Seventeenth Century*, p. 272. In his *History of the Dutch-Speaking Peoples* Pieter Geyl had already made some suggestions pointing in that direction. Pieter Geyl, *History of the Dutch-Speaking Peoples, 1555-1648* (Phoenix Press; London, 1st ed. 1932-1936, 2001), pp. 413, 417-18.

a certain consistency in his works that suggests that their content transgresses the boundaries of mere rhetoric. Indeed, some of his works even contain critical remarks about what the Dutch had achieved and regrets about what not. This chapter, then, will not only bring forward the threats that preoccupied the Dutch in what was to be the final phase of their war with Spain, but also how they saw themselves and tried to explain a war that had begun more than six decades earlier and that had divided the Netherlands into two opposing blocs.

Why we may fish. Boxhorn's defence of Dutch navigation and fishery

1. Boxhorn's analysis of war and trade

Maritime activities such as fishing and overseas commerce were of great importance for the economy and prosperity of the Dutch Republic. Especially in Holland, financially the Republic's most important province by far, fishing, navigation, and overseas commerce constituted vital and integral parts of the overall economic system.

The importance of these maritime activities for the Dutch economy was noted by contemporary observers, both foreign and domestic.² It also comes to the fore in Boxhorn's works. In the *Theatrum*, for example, Boxhorn calls the capture of herring 'the particular foundation of Holland's wealth'. What made the capture of herring so significant was that it provided the inhabitants of Holland who were 'of smaller fortune' with work and an income. Furthermore, these salutary effects were not confined to the herring fishery alone, but also 'radiated' to related industries. 'It is hard to believe how many thousands of men earn a living in this manner' [i.e. the capture of herring-JN]. Because besides the fishermen themselves, whose number would be hard to estimate, also those who bind barrels and casks together, who build ships, and who fabricate other things that are necessary to equip these ships, make a considerable profit.³

² Erik S. Reinert, "Emulating Success: Contemporary Views of the Dutch Economy before 1800", in Oscar Gelderblom (ed.), *The Political Economy of the Dutch Republic* (Ashgate; Farnham/Burlington, 2009), pp. 27, 31-32.

³ Boxhorn, *Theatrum*, p. 48. 'Incolarum alij, & quidem tenuioris fortunae, halecum capturae studium atque operam suam impendunt. Hae, intestinis evulsis, in cadis salsamentarijs magno numero quotannis condiuntur. Pisces sunt palmae fere magnitudine. Hic praecipuus fundus opum Hollandicarum. Incredibile dictu est, quot hominum Chiliades hac ratione alantur. Praeter enim piscatores ipsos, quorum

Another maritime activity that Boxhorn mentions in the *Theatrum* are voyages to far off regions. The people who undertook these voyages were not ‘those of smaller fortune’, but Holland’s ‘fairly rich and powerful citizens’ whose wealth enabled them to fit out ‘outstanding warships’ with which they sailed to almost all the corners of the world. Boxhorn emphasises the voyages to the East and West Indies; from the Indies a copious stream of ‘precious stones and pearls, gold, silver, and ivory’ flowed into ‘Holland’s bosom’. Boxhorn also observes that in Holland ‘there are even outstanding warships that are equipped by private individuals against the common enemies of the fatherland, for the sole reason of price and booty’.⁴ It is here, perhaps for the first time, that we come across in Boxhorn’s works the convergence of that what is public and that what is private, in this particular case the fight ‘against the common enemies of the fatherland’ executed by private individuals who took on the fight out of what can be interpreted as an egocentric motive, ‘price and booty’.

The convergence of the public and the private can also be observed in the discussion of the Dutch East and West India Companies in Boxhorn’s *Commentariolus de statu confoederatarum provinciarum Belgii* (*Commentary on the Condition of the United Provinces of the Netherlands*), a work that was published for the first time in 1649, but whose intellectual conception can be traced back to the early 1640s, a time of war and expansion, both for Boxhorn personally – he was involved in the feud between Heinsius and Salmasius and witnessed the birth of his first child – and the Dutch in general, with the war against the king of

numerus difficile foret inire, & hi quoque, qui vasa & cados compingunt, & naves fabricant, aliaque conficiunt, quae instruendis his sunt necessaria, quaestum capiunt haud contemnendum.’ Maybe somewhat exaggeratedly formulated, the observation is probably not so far from the truth; according to one modern estimation, it is possible that around 1630 some 6.000 to 7.000 fishermen alone worked in Holland’s herring fishery. De Vries and Van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, p. 250. For the ‘radiation effects’ of the herring fishery and fishery in general on the economy of Holland, see Van Tielhof, “Een open economie, in voor- en tegenspoed: de economische ontwikkeling van Holland”, pp. 150-51, with quote on p. 150.

⁴ Ibidem, p. 49. ‘Civium Hollandicorum ditiores potentiores, cujusmodi plures sunt, susceptis in remotas Regiones navigationibus, rem suam haud mediocriter auxere, et etiamnum augent ... Collegia plerumque instituunt, et suis sumtibus naves bellicas praestantissimas adornant; quarum aliae Norwegian & Groenlandiam, aliae Galliam, Angliam, Italiam, Hispaniam, & omnes fere Europae, Asiae, Africae, & Americae Regiones frequentant. Sunt etiam quae in communes Patriae hostes à privatissimis arman- tur, solius praedae causâ. Sed ante alias memorandae nobis sunt celeberrimae illae in Orientalem et Occidentalem Indiam Navigationes; quibus istarum Regionum vastae & diu ignoratae opes, gemmae margaritaeque, aurum, argentum, atque ebur in Hollandiae sinum ubertim derivantur. Indiae Orientalis Societas jam longe est florentissima. Occidentalis optimam spem de se dedit. Capta enim divite illa Hispanorum classe, & Pernambuco, insigni opido, nuper expugnato ad hanc Regionem certissimus aditus patefactus est. Atque hinc illa opum vis, & potentia Hollandorum, quaeque hanc consequi solet, nominis virtutisque suae apud alios autoritas & reverentia. Sic quodam quasi aestu & torrente felicitatis in hanc gloriam excreverunt; ipsi, quamvis omnibus pene destituti, hujus tam laetae & excelsae fortunae suae strenui fabricatores.’

Spain still raging and a further expansion of the Dutch overseas empire in both the eastern and western hemisphere.⁵ In the *Commentariolus* Boxhorn describes the Dutch East and West India Companies as ‘nothing else than companies of certain private individuals’. They were set up by the public authorities, which granted these companies of private individuals, for a fixed period of time, the sole privilege of sailing to their respective designated areas. However, the private individuals who formed these companies had to pay for the soldiers and the ships necessary to meet the companies’s objectives. These objectives were to drive the Spaniards out of the Indies, thereby depriving ‘the common Spanish enemy’ of his resources, ‘to enter into alliances with the peoples of the Indies not yet subjugated by the Spaniards, and to trade all kinds of matter with them’.⁶

Furthermore, Dutch subjects were invited to invest in the companies. In the case of the Dutch United East India Company or VOC (Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie) some did so ‘out of love for the commonwealth’, others because they were ‘lured by a dead certain expectation of profit’.⁷ Profit or money can also be seen as an incentive behind the activities of the Dutch West India Company or WIC (West-Indische Compagnie). Commenting, in his history of the siege of Breda, on the events of the year 1637, Boxhorn also pays attention to the WIC and its recent successes against the Spaniards in Brasil. The Dutch united in the WIC – Boxhorn once again uses the term ‘private individuals’ – were concerned with the riches that could be won there. Expenses had been made ‘according to each one’s expectation or desire. Because from damaging the enemy or from taking spoils, both the commonwealth and individuals benefit’.⁸

⁵ Marcus Zuernius Boxhorn, *Commentariolus de statu confoederatarum provinciarum Belgii* (Johannes Verhoeve; The Hague, 1649). For a further discussion of the *Commentariolus* and the context of its conception, see chapter 5.

⁶ *Ibidem*, VIII.2, pp. 110-11. ‘Collegia illa haud aliud sunt, quam quorundam privatorum societates, auspiciis publicis institutae ac confirmatae, quibus fit ut solis illis privatis, aliis omnibus exclusis, integrum sit suis sumptibus militem conducere, naves adornare, denique idoneas classes instituere, ad communem hostem Hispanum opibus Vtriusque Indiae tot per annos incubantem possessionibus suis jure belli exturbandum, ac ex gentium insuper jure cum Indorum nationibus ab Hispanis nondum subjugatis, Foedera ineunda & commercia quaelibet exercenda.’

⁷ *Ibidem*, VIII.8, p. 115. ‘Sic factum est ut alii amore Reipublicae capti, alii certissimâ spe lucri allecti, pro suis quivis opibus eam pecuniae vim certatim contulerint, ex qua summa sexaginta sex tonnarum auri conficeretur.’

⁸ Boxhorn, *Historia obsidionis Bredae*, p. 31. ‘Ejusdem anni [i.e. 1637-JN] initio, ad Occidentem Indiae, qua Brasilia est, Foederatorum res tum quoque strenue promotae. Quo Hispani maxime adflicti, tentatis ditionibus, ex quibus vis ipsi & opes. Namque aurum ibi atque argentum, pretium victoriae. Privatorum haec inter Batavos cura, qui publici nominis auspiciis, Societatis titulo, exsequendis rebus in unum coiere; prout spes cuique, aut libitum, impensis oblati. Fracto enim hoste, aut acceptis spoliis, respub. et singuli juvantur.’

If we combine what we have thus far discussed with other observations in Boxhorn's works some explanations can be given why the activities of the VOC and WIC helped the Dutch Republic in more than one way. First, and perhaps most obvious, by attacking the Spaniards and driving them out of the Indies, the VOC and WIC deprived the 'common Spanish enemy' of his most important resources, thereby weakening the common enemy's financial strength and his ability to wage war.⁹ Second, the voyages to the East and West Indies, the spoils captured and the trade conducted by the Dutch brought them great personal wealth.¹⁰

It is the acquisition and possession of wealth by private individuals that Boxhorn deems beneficial for the Dutch Republic. For Boxhorn private individuals with wealth are a valuable asset for the commonwealth to possess. Their wealth can provide the commonwealth with an important source of income. Boxhorn divides the resources of the commonwealth into two possible categories. The first category includes, amongst others, natural resources, such as mines or forests. The second category consists of resources that 'are obtained from the property of private individuals',¹¹ which is done 'by means of levies and taxes'.¹²

Taxation is necessary. The need for taxation is intimately connected with the responsibilities of government. A primary task of rulers is to protect the commonwealth and its inhabitants and their goods against external aggression.¹³ Protection involves troops. And, as Boxhorn speaks through the words of the Roman historian Tacitus, 'you cannot have troops without pay; and you cannot raise pay without taxation'.¹⁴

⁹ See, besides the above, for example, *Commentariolus*, VIII.36, p. 131. 'Cui sub initium turbandae, duodecennales inducias Rex Hispanorum à Foederatis Belgis petiit & obtinuit, quod nimirum intelligeret, in Indici argenti ditissimis mercibus omnem rerum suarum cardinem versari.' See also Boxhorn's funeral oration on the death of William II in chapter 5.

¹⁰ For the Hollanders, see, for example, footnote 4.

¹¹ Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I.10.2, p. 143. 'Opes autem omnes Reipublicae, aut cum Republica natae sunt, aut ex privatorum fortunis colliguntur.

¹² *Ibidem*, I.10.11, p. 146. 'Caeterum, cum ista, auctis necessitatibus, plerumque non sufficiant, opes aliae quaedam supersunt, & inventae sunt, quae per tributa & vectigalia ex privatorum opibus colliguntur. Quae quidem, ut majores, & facilius possint obtineri, ad curam publicam maxime pertinere existimamus opes privatorum, quantum liceat, tueri ac augere.'

¹³ Boxhorn, *Commentariolus*, I.12, pp. 180-208, and *idem*, *Disquisitiones politicae. Id est, Sexaginta casus politici Ex omni historiâ selecti. Vbi De singulis variae sententiae, ac decreta, variique eventus proponuntur; & exactum de iis iudicium fertur* (Johannes Verhoeve; The Hague, 1650), VI, pp. 26-32; VIII, pp. 40-43; XVI, pp. 74-78; XXIII, pp. 101-3; XXV-XXVI, pp. 109-16; XXX, pp. 132-40; XXXI, pp. 192-98.

¹⁴ *Iidem*, *Institutiones politicae*, I.10, p. 156. 'Necessitatem porro tributorum expressit Tac. 4. *Hist.* 74. 2. dum inquit: neque quies gentium sine armis, neque arma sine stipendiis, neque stipendia sine tributis haberi queunt.' See also, *ibidem*, I.9, pp. 132-33; Boxhorn, *Commentariolus*, XII.1, p. 170; *idem*, *Nederlantsche historie ...* (Cornelis Banheining; Leiden, 1649), pp. 207-8. The quote is from Tacitus, *The Histories*. Translated by W.H. Fyfe. Revised and edited by D.S. Levene (Oxford University Press; Oxford, 1st ed. 1997, 2008), IV.74.1-2, p. 223. Unless stated otherwise, in this thesis all references to, and quota-

Thus, the importance of private individuals or ‘subjects’ with wealth to the commonwealth consists of this that from them the resources can be collected that are necessary to pay for the means, which, on their turn, are necessary to protect and defend the commonwealth against its enemies.¹⁵ The more private individuals with wealth a commonwealth has, or the more wealth the subjects of a commonwealth possess, the larger the potential reservoir from which, through levies and taxes, resources can be obtained. The Dutch, as Boxhorn makes clear, possess great personal wealth. Indeed, if we must believe what Boxhorn says in the *Commentariolus*, the wealth of private individuals living under Dutch rule was ‘almost incalculable’.¹⁶ That means, at least in theory, that in the Dutch Republic, where the resources of the public treasury, as Boxhorn reveals, were exhausted, there was a huge amount of private wealth that could be called upon by means of taxation to help amass money that could be used to pay for the means necessary to defend the Republic. In the seventeenth century Dutch public authorities indeed turned to the wealth of private individuals to collect the money they needed to pay for the defence of the Republic. For example, excises on the sale of commodities like beer, wine or salt – indirect taxes – constituted an important source of income for the province of Holland, the province that paid the largest share of the Republic’s military expenditure, which in the mid-1630s had risen to more than twenty million guilders a year.¹⁷ In the 1630s and 1640s Dutch military expenditure

tions from, *The Histories* of Tacitus refer to, and are quoted from, this edition.

¹⁵ For the term ‘subjects’ in this context, see idem, *Institutiones politicae*, I.10.13, p. 146. ‘Per leges sumptuarias, rectus opum usus inter privatos; per monetariae rei, ponderum & mensurarum rationem, pretium rerum, & res pretio adaequatae; per commercia denique, & opificia florentia, rerum omnium abundantia obtinetur. Et ita auctis quidem subditorum opibus, & conservatis, tributa possunt imponi.’ Ibidem, I.10, p. 153. ‘Ut autem pares sint subditi ad conferendum, rationem privatorum habendam esse diximus ...’

¹⁶ Idem, *Commentariolus*, IX.14, p. 148. ‘Quod incredibile ac penè immensi hic sint sumptus bellorum, & publici aerarii attritae opes. Responderim vero, sed & hostium opes esse etiam attritas, itaque foederatos & foederatorum hostes hac ratione esse pares, in eo interim impares & dissimiles, quod exhaustae apud hostes sint privatorum etiam opes, quae sub Foederatorum Imperio longè amplissimae & propè inaestimabiles inveniuntur.’ For the Hollanders, see, for example, footnote 10.

¹⁷ In the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic the military expenditure took up 80% of the Generality’s total amount of expenditure. It was financed primarily through a system of ‘funded debt’ that was made up of taxes and loans raised by the provincial governments. Idem, *Commentariolus*, V, pp. 69-77. Between 1602 and 1609 military expenditure amounted to nine million guilders a year. After the Twelve Years’ Truce annual military expenditure exploded and rose to more than twenty million guilders around 1635. The bulk of that money came out of the coffers of the province of Holland, by far the richest province, whose greatest source of income was taxes on consumer goods. Holland’s tax revenues (some eleven million guilders a year in the 1630s), however, were not sufficient to finance the expenditure on war. Loans were needed to fill the gaps. In 1640 the public debt of Holland had risen to a staggering 95 million guilders. Yearly six and half million guilders alone were needed to the pay the rent; that amounted to some 60% of Holland’s yearly tax revenue. De Vries and Van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, pp. 100-3, 115, and Geoffrey Parker, *The Military Revolution: Military Innovation and the Rise of the West, 1500-1800* (Cambridge University Press; Cambridge, 1st ed. 1988, 2001), pp. 63-64. See also Thomas Munck, *Seventeenth-Century Europe: State, Conflict and the Social Order in Europe*,

allowed the Dutch Republic, which at the beginning of the seventeenth century had a population somewhere between 1 million and 1.4 million inhabitants, to field an army of about 60.000 men in effective strength. To compare: during the same period France, a country greater in both size and population, fielded an army whose real size was approximately 80.000 men.¹⁸

Besides possessing great personal wealth the Dutch, according to Boxhorn, also worked very hard to acquire wealth. We find this 'Dutch diligence' in one of the reasons Boxhorn gives in the *Commentariolus* why the Dutch Republic will continue to exist. As Boxhorn puts it:

If we also turn our eyes to the domestic resources, because they chiefly rest upon the wealth of private individuals, and because these private individuals labour non-stop and tirelessly to acquire this wealth and to augment it once acquired, this commonwealth shall certainly have hardly any want.¹⁹

Here Boxhorn explicitly connects the pursuit of wealth by private Dutch individuals with the well-being of the Dutch Republic. From what we have discussed above it can be deduced that a possible thought of Boxhorn behind making this connection is that thanks to the efforts of private individuals there will always – or almost always – be private wealth in the Dutch Republic from which the public authorities could collect the resources that could be used to meet the Republic's needs.

Even if this explanation is incorrect, the fact that Boxhorn makes a positive connection between the pursuit of wealth by private individuals and the well-being of the commonwealth distinguishes him, for example, from Lipsius.²⁰ However, Boxhorn was not unaware of the dangers of luxury or prosperity. In one of his early orations we can read that 'great empires often have succumbed to luxury and love'.²¹ And in one of his political dissertations Boxhorn

1598-1700 (Palgrave Macmillan; Basingstoke, 1st ed. 1988, 2005), pp. 35-40, for a broader European perspective.

¹⁸ For the figures of the size of the Dutch population at the beginning of the seventeenth century, see Geoffrey Parker, *Europe in Crisis, 1598-1648* (Blackwell Publishers; Oxford, 1st ed. 1979, 2001), p. 6, and Prak, *The Dutch Republic in the Seventeenth Century*, p. 103. In 1600 France had 14 million inhabitants; in 1650, 18.5 million. Parker, *Europe in Crisis*, p. 6. For the figures of the Dutch and French armies in the 1630s and 1640s, see Olaf van Nimwegen, '*Deser landen krijchsvolck*': *het Staatse leger en de militaire revoluties, 1588-1688* (Uitgeverij Bert Bakker; Amsterdam, 2006), p. 54.

¹⁹ Boxhorn, *Commentariolus*, IX.6, p. 145. 'Si ad domesticas opes oculos quoque convertamus, cum illae praecipuè consistant in opibus privatorum, atque eorundem infinita atque indefessa industria quaedam sit in iis parandis, partisque augendis, nihil certè faciliè huic Reipublicae est defuturum.'

²⁰ See chapter 2.

²¹ Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn, "Oratio de Eversionibus Rerumpub. et Earum caussis. Habita cum

explains the factions that had seen to the destruction of the people in the late Roman Republic by using, not entirely verbatim, the words of the Roman historian Florus: 'The cause of [this] evil was the same which caused all our evils, namely excessive good fortune.'²²

These points being said, in the case of the Dutch Republic Boxhorn takes a more positive approach to the acquisition and possession of wealth. One more example: in the *Commentariolus* Boxhorn ranks the VOC and WIC among the 'chief bulwarks of this state, since through them immense wealth flows to this Republic'.²³

To conclude: in Boxhorn's view Dutch maritime activities were of great importance for both the individual Dutchman and the Dutch Republic. The VOC and WIC, but also the herring fishery all did their bit towards the great economic prosperity the Dutch enjoyed, and through them, towards the military prowess of the Dutch Republic. In what follows we will take a closer look at the intellectual contribution Boxhorn made to the defence of Dutch maritime interests.

2. *The Apologia and the Magnus Intercursus*

On April 15, 1636, king Charles I of England issued a proclamation that forbade the 'importing, buying, selling, or publishing any forraine edition of Mare clausum', the book that the English lawyer, historian, and politician John Selden (1584-1654) had published December the year before with the king's special blessings.²⁴ The reason for this ban was that 'some persons ...

Troades Senecae interpretaretur", in *Poetae satyrici minores, De Corrupto Reipublicae statu*. Marcus Zuerius Boxhornius recensuit, & commentariis illustravit. Accedit ejusdem *Oratio de Eversionibus Rerump*. (Isaac Commelinus; Leiden, 1633), p. 9. 'Saepe luxuriae, et amori magna imperia succubere.'

²² Idem, "De mutatione Reipub. et initiis Monarchiae Caesarum, sive C. Julius Caesar", in idem, *Emblemata politica: accedunt dissertationes politicae de Romanorum Imperio et quaedamaliae* (Johannes Janssonius; Amsterdam, 1651), XIV.4, p. 315. 'Causa mali, ut recte Florus lib. iv. cap. ii. eadem, quae omnium, nimia felicitas.' Florus reads: 'Causa tantae calamitatis eadem quae omnium, nimia felicitas.' ('The cause of this great calamity was the same which caused all our calamities, namely, excessive good fortune.') The Latin text and English translation are taken from Florus, *Epitome of Roman History*. Translated by Edward Seymour Forster (Harvard University Press; Cambridge/London, 1st ed. 1929, 2005), II.13, pp. 268-69. For a more elaborate discussion of Boxhorn's view on the fall of the Roman Republic, see chapter 7.

²³ Idem, *Commentariolus*, VIII.1, p. 110. 'De Collegiis utriusque hujus Societatis opportunus sese offert hic dicendi locus, partim quia inter hujus Imperii praecipua sunt munimenta, ut quibus immensae opes in hanc Rempublicam derivantur, partim quia istae societates non unius hic ditionis propriae, sed omnibus foederatis ditionibus sunt communes.'

²⁴ Selden had written the original version of *Mare Clausum* in 1619, at the request of king James I (1566-1625), who was in need of powerful arguments that could refute the Dutch stands, so forcefully put forward by Hugo Grotius, that the seas were free for all to navigate and to fish and that therefore the king of England could not assert that he possessed sovereign rights over the seas surrounding his territories. However, after seeing the manuscript, the king did not order the work to be published because

have caused the same Booke to be printed in some place beyond the Seas, and to the same impression haue added some other things, as if they were parts of that which was first printed here by Our command'.²⁵ The most likely suspect that matches that description is the pirate edition of Selden's *Mare Clausum* (*The Closed Sea*, 1635) that had appeared in the Dutch Republic in 1636 and to which an anonymous printer, probably from Amsterdam or Leiden, had attached a work of Boxhorn called the *Apologia pro Navigationibus Hollandorum* (*Defense of the Navigations of the Hollanders*) and a copy, from Boxhorn's library, of the *Magnus Intercursus* (*Great Treaty*), the famous treaty that the English king Henry VII (1457-1509) and Philip the Fair (1478-1506), lord of the Habsburg Netherlands, had signed on February 24, 1496.²⁶ Both Boxhorn's *Apologia* and his copy of the *Magnus Intercursus* had previously been published in one tome together with Grotius's *Mare Liberum* and the *De Maribus* (*On the Seas*, 1633) of Paulus Merula (1558-1607), professor of history at Leiden University, and it is easy to see why.²⁷ For they produced evidence that supported Dutch claims that the Dutch held ancient rights to fish freely and undisturbed in the seas surrounding the British Isles and that the Dutch had explored and were accustomed to navigate and fish in the Northern seas. These claims diametrically opposed Charles I's own claims to lordship over the seas that adjoined

he feared that 'that part of the work which dealt with the northern seas might offend his brother-in-law', king Christian IV of Denmark, whose sister Anne (1574-1619) James had married in 1589 and 'who also claimed sovereignty over the same waters and to whom James was in debt'. In 1635 Charles I asked Selden to rewrite the original version to add weight to his claims that the king of England was sovereign over the seas surrounding the British Isles and that he therefore could legally license the, predominantly Dutch, herring fleets fishing in those waters. Christianson, *Discourse on History, Law, and Governance in the Public Career of John Selden*, pp. 246-51, and Helen Thornton, "John Selden's Response to Hugo Grotius: The Argument for Closed Seas", in *International Journal of Maritime History*, Vol. 18, No. 2 (2006), pp. 107-8, with quotes on p. 107.

²⁵ Quotations taken from Peter J. Lucas, "Printing Anglo-Saxon in Holland and John Selden's *Mare Clausum seu de Dominio Maris*", in *Quaerendo*, Vol. 31, No. 2 (2001), pp. 125-26.

²⁶ *Ibidem*. The title page of the Boxhorn pirate edition reads: 'Ioannis Seldeni Mare Clavsvm sev de Dominio Maris Libri Duo ... Accedunt Marci Zverii Boxhornii Apologia Pro navigationibus Hollandorum adversus Pontum Heuterum, et Tractatus Mvtvi Commercii & navigationis inter Henricvm VII. Regem Angliae & Philippvm Archiduceum Austriae'. According to the title page, the book was printed by William Stanesby in London in 1636. The Boxhorn edition was one of three pirate editions of *Mare Clausum* that appeared in the Dutch Republic in 1636, indicating the great interest in Selden's book immediately after its publication. In a letter to Pontanus, June 14, 1636, Boxhorn informed Pontanus that in Leiden it was not possible to get a hold of a copy of *Mare Clausum* that was printed in England. Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, p. 70. 'Exemplaria Maris Clausi, quae in Anglia excusa, apud nos non possunt haberi.'

²⁷ Hugo Grotius, *De mari libero et P. Merula de Maribus. Marci Zuerii Boxhornii Apologia pro Navigationibus Hollandorum adversus Pontum Heuterum. Qua praecedentium saeculorum navigationes, earumque jura & instituta, ex tabulis praesetim publicis asseruntur. Tractatus pacis et mutui commercii, sive intercursus mercium, conclusus Londini Anno 1495 die Februarii XXIV inter Henricum Septimum Angliae regem, & Philippum Archiduceum Austriae, Burgundiae, &c. Ex Bibliotheca Marci Zuerii Boxhornii.* (Elzevier; Leiden, 1633). Three editions had appeared that same year. Boxhorn had dedicated the *Apologia* to Willem de Bont, the bailiff of Leiden. For De Bont, see chapter 3. In this thesis all page references to the *Apologia* and the *Tractatus* refer to their editions in the edition of Grotius's *De mari libero* of 1633.

his domains and to his right to license every ship that came to fish in those waters. It is no wonder then, that Charles I was not very pleased to find out that the book that was meant to defend the claims of the English monarch for an international public was now being tarred with additives that undermined the book's very purpose. The publication of Selden's *Mare Clausum* and Charles I's prohibition signalled a new round of discussion in the ongoing debate about the freedom of the sea.

When Boxhorn's *Apologia* got published for the first time in 1633 together with Grotius's *Mare Liberum*, the debate about the freedom of the sea was already well under way. It was of course the work of the great Dutch scholar himself that had done much to trigger the debate. Originally Grotius had written *Mare Liberum* as chapter twelve of the *De iure praedae* (*On the Law of Prize and Booty*), a work that he had constructed, probably between 1604 and 1608, at the instigation of the Amsterdam directors of the VOC to legitimise the Company's aggressive actions in the East Indies. In November 1608 Grotius had decided to rewrite and publish the twelfth chapter of the *De iure praedae* to reassure the VOC's interests during the truce negotiations that were then going on between the Dutch Republic and Spain, but, complying to the request of Oldenbarnevelt, who was the main driving force behind the negotiations, he had postponed the publication until after the truce was concluded (April 9, 1609).²⁸

Although *Mare Liberum* specifically targeted the Spanish/Portuguese pretensions of a lordship over the world's oceans, it was almost immediately understood by the English that Grotius's passionate plea that the seas should be free to all also constituted a direct threat to James I's aspiration to the dominion over the seas surrounding the British Isles. The king's answer was not long in coming. On May 16, 1609, James I issued a proclamation ordering

²⁸ During the negotiations Dutch access to the Asian trade markets had been one of the most important points of debate. Initially, the Spaniards had demanded that they would only recognise Dutch independence if Catholics would officially be tolerated in the Dutch Republic and if the Dutch would stay out of the Spanish/Portuguese trade monopolies outside Europe. In the end, the Spaniards had given up on both points, but it had been vital for Oldenbarnevelt not to agitate the Spaniards too much during these negotiations. Grotius's *Mare Liberum* would only have added fuel to the flames and would have seriously hampered a successful conclusion of the truce negotiations. C.G. Roelofsen, "Grotius and the International Politics of the Seventeenth Century", in Hedley Bull, Benedict Kingsbury and Adam Roberts (eds.), *Hugo Grotius and International Relations* (Clarendon Press; Oxford, 1990), pp. 104-12; idem, "Hugo de Groot en de VOC", in H.J.M. Nellen and J. Trapman (eds.), *De Hollandse jaren van Hugo de Groot (1583-1621): lezingen van het colloquium ter gelegenheid van de 350-ste sterfdag van Hugo de Groot (Uitgeverij Verloren; Hilversum, 1996)*, pp. 57-66; Richard Tuck, *The Rights of War and Peace: Political Thought and the International Order from Grotius to Kant* (Oxford University Press; Oxford, 1999), pp. 79-81; Martine Julia van Ittersum, "Mare Liberum Versus The Propriety of the Seas? The Debate between Hugo Grotius (1583-1645) and William Welwood (1552-1624) and its Impact on Anglo-Scotto-Dutch Fishery Disputes in the Second Decade of the Seventeenth Century", in *Edinburgh Law Review*, Vol. 10, No. 2 (2006), pp. 240, 243-44.

all foreign fishermen to buy a license if they wanted to fish in the seas surrounding the British Isles. This step, meant to assert the sovereignty and jurisdiction of the English monarch in the British seas and at the same time to fill the king's empty coffers, was especially directed against the large Dutch herring fleets that were accustomed to fish off the coast of Scotland and England. The States General, fearing that a vital sector of the Dutch economy would suffer great damage, responded immediately by sending an embassy to London.²⁹ The embassy set the tone for future Anglo-Dutch negotiations about maritime disputes between the two countries. Although the Dutch managed to persuade James I that it was in his and the Dutch mutual interest that the king would postpone the placate, they did not manage to convince James I that he should give up his claims to the sovereignty of the sea. On the contrary, every time new maritime disputes arose or old ones were revived James I, and later his son Charles I, would buttress their demands and sanctify English actions at sea by pointing out to their royal prerogatives and their dominion over the seas.³⁰

Anglo-Dutch maritime disputes in the first half of the seventeenth century evolved around three major issues: the Dutch herring fishery off the coast of Scotland and England, whaling in the waters surrounding Spitzbergen, and English access to the Asian markets in the East Indies. In the first two cases it were the Dutch that saw themselves forced to oppose British claims to a *dominium maris*. In the last case, the situation was precisely the other way around; now it were the English who pleaded freedom to navigate and to trade against the VOC's monopolistic policy.³¹ In the case of the Spitzbergen whale fishery the Dutch also encountered opposition from the Danish king

²⁹ For the importance of the Dutch herring fishery for Dutch trade and the Dutch economy, see James D. Tracy, "Herring Wars: The Habsburg Netherlands and the Struggle for Control of the North Sea, ca. 1520-1560", in *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, Vol. 24, No. 2 (1993), pp. 252-54; De Vries and Van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, pp. 243-54; Christiaan van Bochove, "De Hollandse haringvisserij tijdens de vroegmoderne tijd", in *Tijdschrift voor sociale en economische geschiedenis*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (2004), pp. 3-27.

³⁰ The best and most elaborate accounts on Anglo-Dutch maritime rivalry during the first half of the seventeenth century remain Samuel Muller Fz., *Mare Clausum: bijdrage tot de geschiedenis der rivaliteit van Engeland en Nederland in de zeventiende eeuw* (Frederik Muller; Amsterdam, 1872); George Edmundson, *Anglo-Dutch Rivalry during the First Half of the Seventeenth Century* (Clarendon Press; Oxford, 1911); and Thomas Wemyss Fulton, *The Sovereignty of the Sea: An Historical Account of the Claims of England to the Dominion of the British Seas, and of the Evolution of the Territorial Waters, With Special Reference to the Rights of Fishing and the Naval Salute* (William Blackwood and sons; Edinburgh/London, 1911), esp. pp. 339-77.

³¹ During the Anglo-Dutch conference of 1613, which was held to solve the outstanding maritime disputes between the two countries, the English used some of the arguments Grotius had put forward in *Mare Liberum* against its author who, as one of the Dutch negotiators, now had to defend the interests and the monopoly of the VOC in the East Indies. Roelofsen, "Hugo de Groot en de VOC", p. 64. See for this turn of Grotius also I.J.A. Nijenhuis, "De ontwikkeling van het politiek-economische vrijheidsbegrip in de Republiek", in E.O.G. Haitsma Mulier and W.R.E. Velema (eds.), *Vrijheid: een geschiedenis van de vijftiende tot de twintigste eeuw* (Amsterdam University Press; Amsterdam, 1999), pp. 237-38.

Christian IV, who, just like his English relatives, also claimed to hold exclusive rights on navigation and fishing in the Northern seas.³² A greater threat to Dutch maritime interests, however, was Christian IV's mercantilist policy that aimed at crippling Dutch supremacy in the Baltic. Christian IV tried to accomplish this by raising extra toll in the Sont and by banning Dutch shipping to Sweden and Finland. In 1614, by closing alliances with the Hanseatic League and Sweden, Oldenbarnevelt had forced Christian IV to abandon this path of economic warfare. But after 1630, when he had made his peace with Spain, Christian IV returned to his aggressive mercantilist policy and once again threatened to deliver a severe blow to Dutch shipping and trade.³³

Against this background of international tensions and maritime disputes the republication of Grotius's *Mare Liberum* in 1633 makes sense as a powerful reminder of the Dutch claim to the freedom of the seas. Grotius's eloquently phrased argument that the sea was by its very nature free because it could not be permanently occupied nor enclosed with an increase of utility as a positive result was a powerful argument that could be used against the pretensions of both Charles I and Christian IV. The more so, since Grotius had provided the Dutch with an array of examples and quotations taken from the Bible, the classics, and modern jurists like the Spaniard Fernando Vázquez de Menchaca (1512-1569) to use as rhetorical weapons with whom they could bombard their opponents.³⁴

Boxhorn's *Apologia* and the copy of the *Magnus Intercursus* supplied the Dutch with another kind of weapon to defend their maritime interests: historical documentation. Boxhorn's defence of Dutch maritime interests comes in the form of a refutation of the Dutch historian Pontus Heuterus (1535-1602).³⁵

³² When Spitsbergen was first discovered it was assumed that it was a part of Greenland. From this the king of Denmark had concluded to call himself lord of Spitsbergen because Greenland was of old a part of the dominion belonging to the crown of Norway that had been unified with the crown of Denmark since the Union of Kalmar (1394). Samuel Muller Fz., *Geschiedenis der Noordsche Compagnie* (Provinciaal Utrechtsch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen; Utrecht, 1874), p. 236.

³³ Ibidem, pp. 236-84, and Jonathan I. Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade, 1585-1740* (Clarendon Press; Oxford, 1989), pp. 94-95, 111-12, 146-49. In 1636 the value of the Baltic trade represented 41% of the value of the total Dutch import from Europe. Simon Groenveld and Huib L. Ph. Leeuwenberg, *De bruid in de schuit: de consolodatie van de Republiek, 1609-1650* (Walburg Pers; Zutphen, 1985), pp. 160-61.

³⁴ Both Vázquez's *Controversiarum illustrium usuque frequentium libri tres* (1564) and the famous lectures on the Indies (*De Indis*, 1539) by the Spanish Dominican friar Francisco de Vitoria (c.1492-1546) were important sources for Grotius. For the theoretical background of Grotius's argument in *Mare Liberum*, see, amongst others, Tuck, *Philosophy and Government*, pp. 169-79; idem, *The Rights of War and Peace*, pp. 79-108, esp. pp. 90-94, 103-8; Mónica Brito Vieira, "Mare Liberum vs. Mare Clausum: Grotius, Freitas, and Selden's Debate on Dominion over the Seas", in *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 64, No. 3 (2003), pp. 361-77.

³⁵ Born at Delft, Heuterus was a Catholic royalist and humanist. After escaping the massacre of Gorcum (1572) where he had been the chapter's estate agent, he fled to the Southern Netherlands. Later he became a canon at Deventer, only to flee to the Southern Netherlands again after prince Maurits had taken the town in 1592. He wrote several works on the history of the Netherlands that were published

In his history of the Netherlands during the rule of the House of Habsburg Heuterus had claimed that until the end of the fifteenth century the Hollanders had had hardly any experience with long distance overseas travel. Because they had been continuously plagued by domestic quarrels, so Heuterus had explained, the Hollanders had been forced to stay close to the shores of Friesland and Saxony, leaving international seaborne trade in the hands of the Flemish. The peoples of far away regions, like the Baltic or Russia, the Hollanders had only known 'from hearsay'.³⁶

To 'avenge the glory of the Hollanders against such insults', Boxhorn set out to prove that the Hollanders had been sailing the far seas and travelling to, and fishing in the Baltic since at least the eleventh century.³⁷ What was at stake here was ancienity and continuity, the two historical attributes that counted the most in the seventeenth century.³⁸ It is therefore no surprise that Boxhorn begins by tracing the foundations of Holland's maritime prowess back to ancient times, to Tacitus's description of the island of the Batavians, the legendary ancestors of the Hollanders, which the ancient Romans had selected as their point of departure for their campaign against the German tribes because of the island's 'easy landings' and because the island was 'favorable for the reception of forces and to transport the war [i.e. to transport forces for the war-JN]'.³⁹ The participation of the Hollanders in the crusades showed this

together under the title *Opera Historica Omnia Burgundica, Austriaca, Belgica* (Judocus Coppenius; Louvain, 1643). Huberts, Elberts and Van den Branden, *Biographisch woordenboek der Noord- en Zuidnederlandsche letterkunde*, p. 214, and Haitisma Mulier and Van der Lem, *Repertorium van geschiedschrijvers in Nederland*, pp. 184-85.

³⁶ Boxhorn, *Apologia*, pp. 186-87. 'Brugenses, inquit, ac Slusani opibus ac mercatura eo tempore florentes, re nautica vicinos omnes facile superabant, imprimis Zelandos Hollandosque navium multitudine navigandique audacia praecedebant. Nec longe post: Hollandi, inquit, ultra Angliam Scotiamque tentare ad occidentem & septentrionem maria ausi nondum fuerant, nec tam audacter Amsterdamii, Enchusii, eorumque vicini (intestinis tantum seditionibus, iisque continuis dediti, ac proinde Frisiae Saxoniaeque tantum maritima legere assueti) ad orientem vela converterant. Cymbricam Chersonesum, Dacos, Gothos, Suecos, Islandos, Norvegos, Prutenos, Moschos ex auditu tantum noverant, halecum capturam plane ignorabant, maiores asellos (Cabeliau vocant) in proprium usum leviter siccabant, aut aëre ac vento saliebant, qui nunc hyeme capti saleque conditi per universam Europam distribuuntur, & c.' The text of Heuterus that Boxhorn quotes here can be found in Pontus Heuterus, *Rerum Austriacarum libri XV*, in idem, *Opera historica omnia; Burgundica, Avstriaca, Belgica* (Judocus Coppenius; Louvain, 1649), IV.8, p. 114. There, the verbs 'siccabant' and 'saliebant' are switched, which makes for a more logical reading.

³⁷ Ibidem, p. 187. 'Mearum partium esse putavi gloriam Hollandorum ab ejusmodi injuria vindicare. Celebriores & remotiores eorum Zelendorumque navigationes ante illa tempora fuisse liquido ostendam, annalium, & veterum tabularum fidem per omnia sequutus.'

³⁸ See chapter 7.

³⁹ Boxhorn, *Apologia*, p. 187. 'Ac primum quidem, si Romana tempora videmus, terra simul, marique virtutem suam Batavi prodidere. Ac Tacitus quidem 2. Annalium, ubi insulam Batavorum describit non obscure innuit, eam ultro citroque navigantium commerciis floruisse, ob faciles appulsus, & quod accipiendis copiis transmittendisque ad bellum esset opportuna.' English translation taken from Tacitus, *The Annals*. Translated, with an Introduction and Notes, by A.J. Woodman (Hackett Publishing Company; Indianapolis/Cambridge, 2004), II.6.3, p. 44. In this thesis all references to, and quotations from, *The Annals* of Tacitus refer to, and are quoted from, this edition.

analysis of Tacitus to be true. Both in the first crusade (1095-99) and in the fifth crusade (1217-21) many Hollanders had travelled per ship to the Mediterranean and the Holy Land, where they had stood out because of their vigilance at sea. Boxhorn recalls the Damietta legend of Haarlem that tells how during the fifth crusade the capture of Damietta, a port located at the estuary of the Nile, was indebted to the citizens of Haarlem, who 'with their unique diligence' had constructed iron saws under the rumps of their ships with which they had cut through the iron chain that had protected the town's harbour.⁴⁰

A similar mythical element can be found in a passage taken from the *Gesta hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum* (*Deeds of the Bishops of the Hamburg Church*) written by the German chronicler and clergyman Adam of Bremen (before 1050-c.1081/85) that Boxhorn quotes at length. The passage tells the story of a Frisian naval expedition to the Arctic, far beyond Iceland, where the Frisians, after miraculously having survived a whirlpool, stumbled upon an island that was inhabited by giant dogs and aggressive cyclops. The Frisians had to row for their lives.⁴¹ Clearly this is the stuff legends are made of. But that is beside the point. What matters is that this passage by Von Bremen, who functions here as a contemporary eyewitness, proved that the Frisians had already been travelling to Britain, Iceland, and beyond during the high Middle Ages. More importantly, and here we see a glimpse of Boxhorn's philological-historical approach, because in the Middle Ages all the people who inhabited the coastal regions between the rivers Ems and the Scheldt were commonly called Frisians, this passage also proved that the Hollanders had been accustomed to explore northern searoutes long before the sixteenth century.⁴²

⁴⁰ Ibidem, p. 189. 'Hoc certe in confesso est: Harlemenses, qui una cum legionibus Christianorum, ductu Frederici Barbarossae, Imperatoris Romani, in Terram sanctam ad subigendum Pelusium transmiserant, catenas illas ferreas, quae circum aquas ductae invictam arcem fecerant, navibus, quae singulari industria serris ferreis acutissimis subtus erant adstructae, vento admodum impellente, feliciter perrupisse atque penetrasse.' See D. Hogenelst and H.B. van der Weel, "Letterkunde en muziek", in Geziene F. van der Ree-Scholtens (ed.), *Deugd boven geweld: een geschiedenis van Haarlem, 1245-1995* (Uitgeverij Verloren; Hilversum, 1995), pp. 99-102. To support his case that the Hollanders had played an important role during the fifth crusade, Boxhorn quoted from the *Greater Chronicle* of the English chronicler and Benedictine monk Matthew Paris (c.1200-1259). Boxhorn, *Apologia*, pp. 189-90. See Matthew Paris, *Historia major, a Guilielmo Conquaeatore ad ultimos annos Henrici III* (Christopher Froschauer; Zurich, 1589), p. 288.

⁴¹ Ibidem, pp. 200-3. See Adam of Bremen, *History of the Archbishops of Hamburg-Bremen* (Columbia University Press; New York, 1959), IV.39-40, pp. 220-21.

⁴² Ibidem, pp. 202-4. 'Satis superque ex historia hac comparet, Fresones ad aquilonem navigiis contendisse, Daniam, Britanniam, Orcades, Islandiam, aliaque remotiora & ignota tunc temporis loca visitasse. Sed dicat aliquis, Parum haec ad Hollandos facere, quae de Fresonibus narrantur. Imo vero, quam maxime. Nemini enim, qui historiam illorum temporum vel à limine tantum salutavit, ignotum esse potest, Fresiae nomen latius se olim, quam hodie, extendisse.' After which follows a list of rivers, territories, and towns that medieval sources describe as 'Frisian', but that are clearly located in the province of Holland. 'Adeo ut quivis facile jam videat, non sine causa ad Hollandos etiam illa à nobis deduci, quae de Fresonibus, apud vetustioris paullo aevi Scriptores memorantur. Non quod solis Hollandis

Boxhorn's defence against Heuterus's accusation, however, was not only made up of juicy, half legendary stories with a tinge of philological exercise. The main part of the *Apologia* consists of the reproductions of five privileges granted to the inhabitants of the northern Dutch provinces (or to particular towns of these provinces) that stipulated certain rights concerning Dutch trade with the dominions of the king of Denmark and the navigation and fishing in the waters adjoining these dominions, and the conditions on which these activities should take place. Four of these privileges had been granted by the kings of Denmark themselves and, taken together, they testified to the presence and the naval activities of the Dutch in the Northern seas and in the Baltic.

Of special importance was the privilege that duke Albrecht of Bavaria (1336-1404), count of Holland, had granted to the town of Amsterdam, for it proved that 'about the year 1391, the herring fishery among the people of Scania was under the complete control of the Hollanders, among whom there were many people from Amsterdam', a position that the Hollanders 'owed to the king of Denmark'.⁴³ Because of Scania's geographical position on the most southern tip of the Scandinavian peninsula, this implied that the Dutch had been accustomed to cross the Danish straits since at least the fourteenth century. From the other privileges it can be gathered that that had indeed been the case and that the Dutch had done so with the special blessing and under the protection of the kings of Denmark. For example, the privilege that king Valdemar III (1314-1364) had granted to the citizens of Harderwijk in 1324 confirmed that they had the right to travel freely and unmolested to all the cities under the dominion of the king of Denmark and to offload their cargo without being hindered by the king's officials.⁴⁴ Valdemar III's successors had

adscribi haec velim, sed ut ostendam, in partem remotiorum ad boreales illos tractus navigationum, antiquis temporibus, cum vicinis gentibus Hollandos etiam venisse.'

⁴³ Ibidem, pp. 194-95. 'Circa annum mcccxcī admodum celebris fuit Hollandorum, interque eos Amstelodamensium frequentia, piscatio Halecaria apud Scanienses. Fidem ejus rei fecerit diploma Alberti, quo potestatem, praefectum eo in Scaniae tractu, quem Danorum Regis beneficio habent, constituendi indulsit.' This privilege can also be found in Boxhorn's discussion of the history of Amsterdam in his *Theatrum*. Boxhorn, *Theatrum*, pp. 248-49. Boxhorn had copied this privilege from Pontanus's chorography of Amsterdam, in which Pontanus had already taken issue with Heuterus's claim that until the end of the fifteenth century the Hollanders had had hardly any experience with long distance seavoyages. Johannes Isacius Pontanus, *Rerum et urbis Amstelodamensium historia* (Jodocus Hondius; Amsterdam, 1611), I.7, p. 18. See also Boxhorn, *Theatrum*, pp. 248-52. Of old Scania had been a province of the kingdom of Denmark. After a devastating defeat during the Northern Wars (1655-1661), king Frederick III (1609-1670) of Denmark was forced to sign the Treaty of Roskilde (March 8, 1658) in which he agreed to cede Scania, together with certain other Danish territories on the Scandinavian peninsula, to Charles X Gustav (1622-1660), the king of Sweden. Robert I. Frost, *The Northern Wars: War, State and Society in Northeastern Europe, 1558-1721* (Longman; Harlow, 2000), pp. 180-82.

⁴⁴ Ibidem, pp. 195-200, with the following quote on pp. 195-96. 'Waldenarus Dei Gratia Danorum Slavorumque Rex & c. ... Constare volumus universis tam praesentibus quam futuris, quod nos discretos viros

confirmed and augmented these and other privileges granted to the Dutch, showing a real concern for Dutch interests.⁴⁵ Clearly then, Christian IV, who did his best to obstruct and hinder Dutch trade as much as he could, was the odd man out.

The *Apologia*, concentrating as it does on the privileges of the Danish kings, can therefore not only be seen as a refutation of Heuterus's wrong allegation, but also as a somewhat tacit defence put forward to counter the pretensions of Christian IV.⁴⁶ It did so not by questioning Christian IV's pretended right to the lordship over the seas adjoining his dominions, but by showing that the policy of the latest king of Denmark stood in stark contrast with that of his predecessors who had for centuries been kindly disposed towards the Dutch whose activities at sea had carried them to the Baltic and the far ends of the world.

A salient detail is that Boxhorn had copied the five privileges that he quotes in the *Apologia* from Pontanus's *History of Denmark*.⁴⁷ Pontanus had written the work, which was published in Amsterdam in 1631, at the request of Christian IV who wanted to add a scholarly flavour to his worldly ambitions.⁴⁸ In the *History of Denmark* Pontanus had depicted Denmark as the modern centre of Northern European trade and the Danes as vigilant conquerors and traders, a picture that he gave colour with a batch of quotations taken from classical authors and primary sources such as the privileges just mentioned.⁴⁹ In the *Apologia*, however, these privileges are presented to serve an opposite cause;

praesentium exhibitores Burgenses de Harderwiick regnum nostrum cum suis mercimoni[i]s visitantes, sub nostra pace suspicimus, & protectione specialiter defendendos ... vid. quandocumque & quotiescumque alicubi in Regno nostro in Skanor vel alibi cum navibus suis applicuerint, naves possint secure exonerare & bona sua sive in sale sive in pannis laneis vel lineis aut in cera in vario opere fuerint, seu in aliis mercimoniis quibuscumque quocumque nomine censeantur ad terram & suas bodas vel hospitium pro suae libitu voluntatis libere deducere, & non debeant per advocatos nostros ... nec per aliquos alios impediri.' The date could be miss read. Valdemar III was king of Denmark between 1326 and 1329.

⁴⁵ Ibidem, p. 208. 'Litteras etiam, ut notat Clarissimus, Doctissimusque Pontanus, cognatus & amicus noster lib. x. rerum Danicarum, anno millesimo, & supra quadringentesimum quadragesimo septimo Christophorus ejus nominis tertius Daniae Rex, non unas vulgari curavit, quibus populorum vicinorum immunitates ac privilegia voluit asserta. In his Hollandiae Zelandiaeque, Frisiaeque incolis, qui Balticum mare, hasque Boreae oras navigationibus, suisque commerciis adirent, libere ire, ac redire, suae exercere negotia, ac omnibus, quas à majoribus ipsis accepissent, praerogativis ac privilegiis, uti, frui, idque ob merita, quibus iidem indigenae atque incolae sibi jam dicta regna saepe numero devinxissent, inque posterum suis officiis demereri, ac sibi devincere possent, clementer concessit.' Reference to Johannes Isacius Pontanus, *Rerum Danicarum historia libris X* (Johannes Janssonius; Amsterdam, 1631), X, p. 623.

⁴⁶ The text of the *Apologia* counts 29 pages; more than seven pages of the *Apologia* are dedicated to privileges granted to, or mentioning, Dutch towns and/or citizens of Dutch towns.

⁴⁷ Following the sequence as they appear in the *Apologia*, the five privileges can be found at respectively Pontanus, *Rerum Danicarum historia*, VIII, p. 499; IX, p. 522; VII, pp. 442-44; X, pp. 629-30; X, p. 623.

⁴⁸ Skovgaard-Petersen, *Historiography at the Court of Christian IV*, pp. 9-10, 25-32.

⁴⁹ Ibidem, pp. 144-49. Pontanus's chronological account of the history of Denmark runs up to the year 1448. It counts 638 pages, of which quotations take up about 130 pages. Ibidem, p. 133.

instead of buttressing Christian IV's pretensions against Swedish and Dutch pressure, Boxhorn used them to give strength to Dutch interests in the Baltic and the Northern seas.

Yet the dispute about navigating and fishing in the Northern seas was not so clear cut. As Boxhorn had to admit, some of the Danish privileges explicitly stated that Iceland 'and the neighbouring islands' were forbidden territory for the Dutch, a fact that Selden, in the only reference he made to Boxhorn's *Apologia in Mare Clausum*, did not fail to point out.⁵⁰ However, since these 'neighbouring islands' remained unidentified, the territories to which they referred were a matter of debate. Christian IV held that all territories to the north and west of Iceland belonged to the king of Denmark, but that claim was disputed by both the Dutch and the English.

Moreover, in the Northern seas the Dutch not only had to take on the Danes but also the English Muscovy Company.⁵¹ The Muscovy Company, backed by both James I and Charles I who saw the Company as an excellent mean to enhance their pretended sovereignty of the sea in the northern hemisphere, was far more aggressive towards the Dutch than the Danes had ever been, eager as it was to defend what it held to be its exclusive right. The Muscovy Company based its exclusive right to fish in the seas around Spitzbergen on English expeditions in the Northern seas and the final discovery of the island by Sir Hugh Willoughby (†1554).⁵² Although not entirely free from mythical fabrication, the passage of Von Bremen that Boxhorn quotes in the *Apologia* showed that the Dutch could present similar arguments and back them up with historical evidence.

But the most serious threat to Dutch maritime interests came from the pretensions of James I and Charles I to the dominion over large parts of the North Sea.⁵³ To counter these pretensions the Dutch followed two lines of argumentation simultaneously: they stuck to the principle of the freedom of the sea on the grounds of the law of nature and the law of nations, and they pointed out that James I's and Charles I's pretensions were novel and went against the

⁵⁰ John Selden, *Mare Clausum seu de Domino Maris Libri Duo* (William Stanesby; London, 1635), II.32, p. 297. 'Etiam Christophorus Rex Daniae & Norwegiae anno MCCCCXLV indulsit, Ziriczeensibus in Zelandia liberam in regnum suum Navigationibus, *exceptis Islandia aliisque inuicem Insulis prohibitis* quae diplomatis verba sunt.' Reference to Pontanus, *Rerum Danicarum historia*, X, p. 623, and Boxhorn, *Apologia*, p. 211, where this grant by Christopher III (1418-1448) is reproduced.

⁵¹ Indeed, in the Northern seas the English were a far greater threat to the Dutch than the Danes. See Muller, *Geschiedenis der Noordsche Compagnie*, pp. 197-284.

⁵² Willoughby had actually crossed the Barentsz Sea and had reached Novaya Zemlya.

⁵³ Selden held that the *dominium* of the English monarchs stretched from the coast of the British Isles to the shores of the countries bordering the seas over whom the English monarchs claimed to possess lordship.

content and intent of the many mutual agreements that the rulers of England and the Netherlands had signed in the past centuries.⁵⁴ Their hobbyhorse to substantiate their second line of argumentation was the *Magnus Intercursus*, whom the Dutch time and again went off on.⁵⁵ Signed by Henry VII and Philip the Fair at the end of the fifteenth century, the *Magnus Intercursus* had regulated 'the commercial relations between England and the Netherlands during the whole of the Tudor period, and was still in force in 1609', when James I, breaking with tradition, decided that all foreign fishermen should buy a licence in order to fish in the seas surrounding the British Isles.⁵⁶ Especially article XIV of the *Magnus Intercursus* proved to be of great value for the Dutch: it stipulated that fishermen from both countries 'could go everywhere, could sail, [and] could fish in safety the entire sea, without any hinderance, license or safe-conduct'.⁵⁷ Indeed, the attraction of the *Magnus Intercursus* was so great that right up until the outbreak of the First Anglo-Dutch War (1652-1654) the Dutch tried to convince their English counterparts that the *Magnus Intercursus* was the most solid foundation upon which Anglo-Dutch relations should be grounded.⁵⁸

⁵⁴ As Thomas Hamilton (1563-1637), secretary of the Scottish Privy Council and probably involved in the Anglo-Dutch negotiations in the years 1617 and 1618, noticed there were internal contradictions in the Dutch arguments. If, as the Dutch claimed, the seas were free by nature and that therefore they had the right to fish, why did the Dutch feel the need to produce documents that could prove that they had a 'title' to fish, granted to them by the English monarchs themselves? Grotius had tried to solve this problem by asserting that the treaties 'between the rulers of Holland and Zeeland on the one hand, and the kings of England and Scotland on the other hand' to solve maritime disputes 'had always been in harmony with the law of nations'. Thus in Grotius's view, the *Magnus Intercursus* merely recognised a right that the Dutch according to the law of nations already possessed. Ittersum, "*Mare Liberum Versus The Propriety of the Seas?*", pp. 255, 264.

⁵⁵ Muller, *Mare Clausum*, pp. 29-30, 42-43.

⁵⁶ Edmundson, *Anglo-Dutch Rivalry*, p. 21. At the basis of the *Magnus Intercursus* stood the Anglo-Habsburg friendship at the end of the fifteenth and first half of the sixteenth century that was dictated by fear of French aspirations at sea. However, this did not stop Henry VII to force Philip the Fair to sign the *Intercursus Malus*, a commercial treaty advantageous to the English but detrimental to the Dutch, when, in 1506, Philip and his wife, queen Joan of Castile (1479-1555), caught by a storm on their way to Spain, were forced to dock at Southampton to carry out repairs to some broken masts. Louis Sicking, *Neptune and the Netherlands: State, Economy, and War at Sea in the Renaissance* (Brill; Leiden/Boston, 2004), pp. 316, 325-26.

⁵⁷ 'Piscatoribus utriusque Principis subditis tam per Mare quam terra liberum commeatum fore', in *Tractatus pacis et mutui commercii, sive intercursus mercium*, XIV, p. 235. 'Item, Conventum est ut supra, Quod Piscatores utriusque partis partium praedictarum cujuscunque Conditionis existant, poterunt ubique ire, navigare, per mare secure piscari, absque aliquo impedimento, licentia, seu salvo conductu.' See also Edmundson, *Anglo-Dutch Rivalry*, p. 21.

⁵⁸ Edmundson, *Anglo-Dutch Rivalry*, pp. 154-55; Fulton, *The Sovereignty of the Sea*, pp. 386, 394; Simon Groenveld, "The English Civil Wars as a Cause of the First Anglo-Dutch War, 1640-1652", in *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 30, No. 3 (1987), p. 554; idem, "'Als by het huwelyck van man ende wyff": puriteinse voorstellen voor een Nederlands-Engelse unie, 1642-1652", in Klaas Grootes and J. den Haan (eds.), *Geschiedenis, godsdiens, letterkunde* (Nehalennia; Roden, 1989), pp. 151-54. Walter Strickland (c.1598-1671) and Oliver St. John (c.1598-1673), the Commonwealth's ambassadors in The Hague, complained that the Dutch profited from the *Magnus Intercursus*, but that they did not stick to their end of the agreement, violating articles IV-VI that guaranteed aid against, and expulsion of, rebels of either

The *Magnus Intercursus* was not only important because of what it said, but also because of what it was: a historical document, physical proof that the Dutch could present every time the English would trouble them with their maritime pretensions. This became especially important after the publication of *Mare Clausum*, of which Selden had devoted the entire second book to prove 'that the Dominion of the British Sea, or that which incompasseth the Isle of Great Britain, is, and ever hath been, a Part or Appendant of the Empire of that Island'.⁵⁹ Thus, when in 1636 and 1637 the Dutch ambassador in London Cornelis van Beveren (1591-1663) argued for free trade between England and the Dutch Republic, he claimed that he could not find any argument in Selden's *Mare Clausum* that refuted article XIV of the *Magnus Intercursus*.⁶⁰ In a letter to Pontanus of June 14, 1636, Boxhorn expressed even harsher criticism. 'I have read Selden's work repeately with attention. Of all the arguments that he has inserted in book two, where he takes up the task to examine the case that is under discussion, not even one good or valid argument can be vetchted.'⁶¹

The exaggeration should not detract us of what was at stake here. For Selden there existed a strong interrelationship between the 'facts', the evidence obtained from historical documentation that showed that the kings of England had exercised dominion over the sea in the past, and his 'theory'

country. Steven C.A. Pincus, *Protestantism and Patriotism: Ideologies and the Making of English Foreign Policy, 1650-1668* (Cambridge University Press; Cambridge, 1st ed. 1996, 2002), pp. 34-35, 45, 50.

⁵⁹ John Selden, *Of the Dominion, or Ownership of the Sea. Two Books. In the First is shew'd that the Sea, by the Law of Nature, or Nations, is not common to all men, but capable of Private Dominion, or Propriette, as well as the Land. In the Second is proved, that the Dominion of the British Sea, or that which incompasseth the Isle of Great Britain, is, and ever hath been, a Part or Appendant of the Empire of that Island*. Written at first in Latin, and Entituled, *Mare Clausum seu, De Dominio Maris*, by John Selden, Esquire. Translated into English; and set forth with som *Additional Evidences* and Discourses by Marchimont Nedham (William Dugard; London, 1652).

⁶⁰ Muller, *Mare Clausum*, pp. 42-43.

⁶¹ Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, p. 71. 'Diligenter Seldenum iterum atque iterum legi. Ex omnibus argumentis, quae inseruit lib. 2. ubi quaestionem facti excutiendam suscepit, ne unum quidem bonum, et validum erui potest.' Fulton comes to a similar negative conclusion. About Selden's claim that license had usually been granted to foreign fisherman by the English king and that the protection that the English kings gave to foreigners proofs the maritime dominion of the English kings, Fulton remarks that 'the cases adduced in support of that contention are singularly few and unconvincing'. Fulton, *The Sovereignty of the Sea*, p. 62. Likewise, Fulton holds that 'the defects of the work are scarcely less apparent. There is no ground to suppose that Selden was guilty of the offence attributed to him by some of his foreign critics, of inventing part of the evidence he cites. But the interpretation he placed upon much of it was strained or erroneous. Great conclusions were drawn from things which referred soley to English subjects were improperly extended to include foreigners; the bearing of many records was misrepresented, others were passed over in silence, or, as with the "Burgundy" treaties, referred to in such a way as to distort their plain meaning'. Thus, Fulton maintained that 'a great deal of the evidence' that Selden has adduced in *Mare Clausum*, was 'irrelevant'. Ibidem, pp. 370-73. However, it must be remembered that almost all the works that appeared in defence or refutation of the freedom of the sea were lawyers's briefs. Therefore, to measure them on their historical accuracy would be missing the point. Historical accuracy was never the objective; convincing the intended audience was. If this meant twisting and presenting the historical evidence in such a way as to stengthen one's own case, this was considered admissible.

that it was possible for the king of England to exercise dominion over the sea.⁶² Both the *Apologia* and the copy of the *Magnus Intercursus* that had been attached to the pirate edition of *Mare Clausum* that had appeared in the Dutch Republic in 1636 did not straightforwardly attack the theoretical possibility that the king of England could indeed exercise dominion over the sea. But they did offer an alternative historical reading to some of the ‘facts’ Selden had put forward in *Mare Clausum* to defend his thesis, thereby undermining the credibility of Selden’s account.

There is no evidence that Boxhorn was behind the pirate edition of 1636 that contained his *Apologia* and his copy of the *Magnus Intercursus*. But his correspondence with Pontanus shows that he kept himself informed of the attempts that were made to defend ‘the dignity of our commonwealth’ against Selden’s work.⁶³ Boxhorn had high hopes that the States General would allow the treatise that his colleague Theodor Graswinckel (1601-1666) had prepared on their instruction to be published.⁶⁴ But in the end the States General backed down; bounded hand and foot to their war with Spain and with tensions running high in the Baltic, the Dutch did not dare to challenge the English so openly, afraid that this would drive Charles I into the arms of Spain.⁶⁵

⁶² Christianson, *Discourse on History, Law, and Governance in the Public Career of John Selden*, p. 250. See also Fulton, *The Sovereignty of the Sea*, p. 273. ‘It was, however, the second book of *Mare Clausum* which gave it its chief political importance. It was appropriate and necessary that the claims of Charles should be justified in the domain of law and custom; it was still more necessary that they should be supported by weighty precedents existing in the history of England – that some of his predecessors had been styled Lords of the Sea, and had exercised sovereign jurisdiction over foreigners even on their own coasts.’

⁶³ Boxhorn in a letter to Pontanus, March 21, 1637. Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, p. 88. ‘Clarissime Cognate, ex litteris tuis libens admodum intelligo parata jam illa omnia quae Seldenius Claudio Mari feliciter opponere oporteret. Doleo tamen, (quod indicare magis, quam scribere voluisti) honestos conatus tuos prohiberi. Caussam hercle non video. Cur enim improbarentur eruditorum inter se de tam illustri argumento velitationes? Nec enim malae in reip. artes sunt ejusmodi laudata semper exercitia ingeniorum. Nihil etiam aut adversus serenissimi Britanniarum Regis Majestatem, aut reipubl. nostrae decus scripto tuo, si rectè novi prudentiam tuam, inseruisti. Sed quid omnino aut tibi, aut libro tuo factum sit scire velim. Imo exemplar ejus ad me curare non dedignaberis.’

⁶⁴ Boxhorn in a letter to Pontanus, April 29, 1637. *Ibidem*, pp. 90-91. ‘Et tu vero, vir clarissime, ita reserasti clausum pridem Mare, ut hactenus non videam quomodo illud denuò à Seldeno possit recludi. Non possum quin apud te deponam versiculos, quos nuper hujus scribere volunti occasione effudi; *libera nunc igitur tolerabit, vincula Thetis? Quid mare, quid faciles quid meruistis aquae? Qui vos infami conclusit carcere nuper, Hoc meruit, quod vos non meruistis aquae.* Certè tuum erat ostendere, quemadmodum luculenter satis ostendisti, quantum non tam eruditioni suae, quae summa est, quam vel ingenio, vel adulationi indulserit vir magnus. Habent profecto quo nomine & serenissimus Rex vester, & haec Respubl. tibi debeant. Librum tuum nonnulli Ordinum nostrorum, quos compellere mihi licuit, diligenter excusere, & imprimis placere intellexi. De edendo Graswinckelii opere, quod ejusdem argumenti, etiamnum dubitatur. Futurum tamen existimo, ut tandem prodeat. Erit etiam in eo haud dubie quod non displicebit.’ Boxhorn in a letter to Pontanus, July 8, 1637. *Ibidem*, p. 95. ‘De editione operis Graswinckeliani nihil certi adhuc ab Ordinibus statutum. Quin tamen proditutum sit tandem, nullus ambigo.’

⁶⁵ Initially the States of Holland had ordered Cunaeus to assess Selden’s book and to advise them on the best way to react. After examining Cunaeus’s advise (April 10, 1636) the States of Holland decided that *Mare Clausum* should be judged as ‘the work of a private person’ (‘voor niets anders aen te sien als voor een Werck van een particulier Persoon’). Therefore, no official answer was in order. The States General, how-

Hard-won unity or sealed discord? The road to Münster

Much to the relief of the Dutch, Charles I and Christian IV had a hard time to enforce their claims. Christian IV did make a serious attempt. After 1630 he returned to his aggressive mercantilist policy, steadily raising the Sound dues and imposing new ones at Glückstad at the Elbe estuary. He also teamed up with Spain, concluding several maritime treaties with that country that were specifically directed against the Dutch. The States General objected, but could not respond with force to make their objections hard, unwilling to divert men and resources while the war with Spain was still in a crucial phase. When in 1645 they finally did flex their muscles, Christian IV, who had just suffered some severe blows by the hands of the Swedes, quickly gave in. That same year he signed the Treaty of Christianopol; it contained a large number of concessions that secured Dutch maritime interests in the Baltic.⁶⁶

While Christian IV in the end proved to be much talk but no show, Charles I found himself in an equally weak position to really trouble the Dutch at sea. The most profound example of English maritime powerlessness came on October 21, 1639, when Maarten Tromp (1598-1653), lieutenant-admiral of Holland, destroyed a great Spanish fleet that had taken shelter in the Downs, an anchorage between Dover and Deal, while an English naval squadron stood by and watched.⁶⁷ Charles I was deeply offended by this clear violation of English neutrality in waters over which he claimed sovereignty. But he was unable to react, too hampered by a chronic shortage of money and too distracted by the unfolding political crisis in his own kingdoms.⁶⁸ Some three

ever, thought differently and on April 28, 1636, they ordered Graswinckel to deliver a response to Selden's work. Graswinckel took his time; almost a year later (April 4, 1637) did the States General receive his reply to *Mare Clausum*. The States General discussed Graswinckel's response, but gave the book to a commission for further examination. The commission stalled their report which in the end never came. Graswinckel's treatise remained unpublished. Muller, *Mare Clausum*, pp. 283-84. Grotius, himself unable to respond to Selden's work because he now served the interests of the Swedish crown, which claimed to possess a *dominium maris* in the Baltic, 'followed its fortunes and the attacks on it with close attention'. The States General's decision to forbid Graswinckel's treatise to be published (the States General had paid Graswinckel a pension of 500 florins on the condition that the work would remain unpublished) disappointed him. Gerald J. Toomer, "John Selden, the Levant and the Netherlands in the History of Scholarship", in Alastair Hamilton, Maurits H. van den Boogert and Bart Westerweel (eds.), *Intersections: Yearbook for Early Modern Studies*, Vol. 5: *The Republic of Letters and the Levant* (Brill; Leiden/Boston, 2005), pp. 70-72. With the outbreak of the First Anglo-Dutch War there was a new demand for a scholarly refutation of English maritime pretensions. A work written by Graswinckel appeared, called the *Maris liberi Vindiciae adversus Petrum Baptistam Bur-gum Ligustici Maritimi Dominii Assertotem* (Adrian Vlacq; The Hague, 1652). Graswinckel's main arguments against Selden can be found in this treatise. For an analysis of Graswinckel's treatise, see G.J. Liesker, *Die Staatswissenschaftlichen Anschauungen Dirck Graswinckel's* (Gebrüder Fragnière; Freiburg, 1901), pp. 224-41.

⁶⁶ Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade*, pp. 146-49, and Frost, *The Northern Wars*, pp. 137-38.

⁶⁷ Edmundson, *Anglo-Dutch Rivalry*, p. 123, and Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, p. 537.

⁶⁸ These two issues were closely interrelated. Although Charles I managed to raise an army to put

years later civil war broke out in England, diminishing the threat the English posed to Dutch navigation and fishing for almost the rest of the 1640s.⁶⁹

The naval victory at the Downs was one of the few military successes the Dutch booked in the late 1630s. In 1636 Frederik Hendrik managed to recapture Schenckenschans, an important fortress strategically situated on an island in the Rhine, just below the Dutch-German frontier, that the Spaniards had captured the year before. Its recapture was of crucial importance for the Dutch because its possession would have given the Spaniards unobstructed access into Gelderland and Utrecht and endangered trade on the Rhine.⁷⁰ The next year the Dutch captured Breda, thereby stopping the gap in Holland's outer line of defence between Geertruidenberg and Bergen op Zoom, although the Spaniards compensated their loss by taking Venlo and Roermond in Upper Gelderland. Thereafter, however, business was going through a rough patch.

In the States of Holland opposition grew against new land offensives. Now that Holland was sufficiently shielded from Spanish incursions by the capture of Breda, a growing number of towns, headed by Amsterdam, favoured peace and pleaded that if the war should be continued, its main emphasis should lie on sea, not on land.⁷¹ The prince of Orange did not oppose peace on principle. But he first wanted to complete the Republic's outer line of defence and, if possible, to capture Antwerp, reasoning that by keeping the enemy under high military pressure more concessions could be extracted from him at the negotiating table. With the capture of Sas van Gent (1644) and Hulst (1645) in Flanders, Frederik Hendrik succeeded in the former, creating a defensive ring with a buffer zone that stretched from Bourtange in the north east to Sluis in the south west. But Antwerp, his main target, remained out of reach.⁷²

By now a majority in the States of Holland and the States General were preparing the road for an enduring peace agreement with Spain. On April 4, 1645, the provincial deputies in the States General reached a verbal agreement about the three principle pillars upon which the future, post-war cooperation of the seven united Dutch provinces should rest: the union, religion, and

down the rebellion of the Scottish Covenanters, the negative outcome of the English military campaigns and his empty coffers forced Charles I to summon a parliament twice to come to his and the country's rescue. The first parliament the king summoned (the so-called 'Short Parliament') was a failure, the second parliament (the so-called 'Long Parliament') would turn out to be his undoing. Mark Kishlansky, *A Monarchy Transformed: Britain, 1603-1714* (Penguin Books; London, 1996), pp. 138-41.

⁶⁹ Muller, *Mare Clausum*, pp. 313-18; Edmundson, *Anglo-Dutch Rivalry*, p. 129; Groenveld, "The English Civil Wars as a Cause of the First Anglo-Dutch War, 1640-1652", pp. 545-50.

⁷⁰ Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, pp. 529-32, and C.M. Schulten, *Met vliegende vaandels en slaande trom: oorlog in de Lage Landen, 1559-1659* (De Bataafsche Leeuw; Amsterdam, 2005), pp. 208-10.

⁷¹ Groenveld and Leeuwenberg, *De bruid in de schuit*, pp. 99-107.

⁷² Schulten, *Met vliegende vaandels en slaande trom*, pp. 215-28, and Van Nimwegen, *'Deser landen crijchsvolck'*, pp. 204-41.

the militia. By the time this statement of principles was confirmed in writing (November 16, 1646) Dutch envoys at Münster had already reached a provisional agreement with the Spaniards, who had given in to almost all Dutch demands, hard pressed as they were by revolts in Portugal and Catalonia and their ongoing war with France.⁷³ Matters moved quickly, and on January 30, 1648, despite stubborn opposition from Zeeland and objections raised by France, the peace was signed. The war was over.⁷⁴

As professor of eloquence Boxhorn had the duty to hold clamouring speeches whenever important events called for it. The capture of Breda, the town where he had spent his youth and which he had had to leave after Spinola had captured it in 1625, send Boxhorn into ecstasy.⁷⁵ It showed, according to Boxhorn, 'that the decision of Heaven puts the greatest fortune in the way of those, who to justify their cause come out with the protection of their freedom'.⁷⁶ The capture of the town was crucial for the Dutch, since it 'guaranteed the welfare of these lands' and 'secured the freedom of this commonwealth'.⁷⁷ This great blessing had been made possible by the prosperity of the recent years, the help of France, and the weakness of the Spanish enemy.⁷⁸ Boxhorn

⁷³ For the desperate state of the Spanish crown in the 1640s, see John Elliott, *Imperial Spain, 1469-1716* (Penguin Books; London, 1st ed. 1963, 2002), pp. 341-55.

⁷⁴ Simon Groenveld, "Unie, religie en militie: binnenlandse verhoudingen in de Nederlandse Republiek voor en na de Munsterse Vrede", in Hugo de Schepper et al. (eds.), *1648: de Vrede van Munster ...* (Uitgeverij Verloren; Hilversum, 1997), pp. 67-87, esp. pp. 71-72, and Maurits Ebben, "Twee wegen naar Munster: de besluitvorming over de Vrede van Munster in de Republiek en Spanje", in Dennis Bos, Maurits Ebben and Henk te Velde (eds.), *Harmonie in Holland: het poldermodel van 1500 tot nu* (Uitgeverij Bert Bakker; Amsterdam, 2007), pp. 61-69. Zeeland opposed a peace with Spain mainly for economic reasons: it feared that its trade position would severely deteriorate if the Dutch blockade of the Flemish coast would be lifted, as had happened during the Twelve Years' Truce. The French objected that according to the alliance France and the Dutch Republic had entered with each other in 1635 neither the French nor the Dutch could sign a separate peace with Spain without the permission of the other. The Dutch justified their actions by pointing out that the French were deliberately obstructing the peace negotiations and were unwilling to come to terms with Spain. Under such circumstances, the Dutch argued, they were not obligated to await France's approval. Groenveld and Leeuwenberg, *De bruid in de schuit*, pp. 120-24.

⁷⁵ According to Jonathan Israel, the 'Prince's capture of Breda ... met with a muted response in the Republic, which showed that his exploits were no longer being applauded by any principal segment of Dutch opinion'. Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, p. 534. The capture of Breda had also little political or military value. Olaf van Nimwegen holds that it 'was nothing more than a consolation prize' after the Dutch and the French failed to capture Dunkirk, a town whose possession held far more economic and strategic advantages than Breda. Van Nimwegen, *'Deser landen crijchsvolck'*, pp. 212-13.

⁷⁶ Marcus Zuërius Boxhorn, *Oratie. Tot lof van sijn Hoogheyt, Frederic Henric, Prince van Orangien, Aengaende de Veroveringhe vande gheweldige Stadt Breda* (Willem Christiaens van der Boxe; Leiden, 1637), p. 4. 'Soo dat het blijkt, dat het besluyt van den Hemel, het hooghste gheluck stelt in de handen van dien, die tot de rechtvaerdigheyt van haer saecke, by brengen de bescherminghe van hare Vryheyt, die wel eenmael bedrukt is gheweest, maer noyt verloren.'

⁷⁷ *Ibidem*. 'Het gheene verseeckert heeft den welstandt deser Landen, het gheene vast ghemaect heeft de vryheyt van desen Staet het geene ons gheheele Vaderlandt gheset heeft op den hooghsten top van vergenoegingen ende vreughde, sal ick nu by u uytspreeken ... Breda is gevallen in onse handen, ende wy hebben de grootste reden om onse vreugde op te setten voor de gheheele weerelt.'

⁷⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 5. 'Waer toe oorsaek ghegheven hebben de voorspoet van de voorleden jaren, ende

also gives great praise to Frederik Hendrik, the prince of Orange and captain-general of the States army, who had been a source of inspiration for his troops not only because of his 'masculine bravery and luck', but also because of his modesty.⁷⁹ Boxhorn showers the prince with honours: Frederik Hendrik is 'a great Alexander',⁸⁰ a Gideon, protected by angels send from above.⁸¹ He is like a father and the Dutch are his children. But, as Boxhorn reminds Frederik Hendrik, 'you are ours and should therefore surrender yourself completely to us'.⁸² Yes, the prince of Orange is a hero, but an obedient one.

Besides the lavish praise which one can expect in an oration that exalts the merits of a victorious army commander, another striking feature is the way in which Boxhorn depicts the capture of Breda not as an act of conquest but as an act of liberation. Almost at the end of his oration Boxhorn directly addresses the citizens of Breda, of whom many 'have heard me crying in the cradle and have taken part in the joy and sweetness of my childhood', to congratulate them with their 'regained freedom' and their liberation from slavery. He acknowledges the great suffering and destruction the citizens of Breda had to endure during the siege. However, 'believe me, you have been conquered at the right time. But without a doubt I express myself wrongly in these words, that call you conquered and that do not understand the happiness and salvation of this new condition of yours'.⁸³ That condition is one of freedom and self-determination.

de wapenen van Vranckrijck ghescherpt teghen Hispanien, ende de onghelgheit van de kleyne macht, daer onse Vyanden in staken.'

⁷⁹ Ibidem, p. 7. 'Doch in teghendeel hebben de onse vast gheset haren moedt, ende opgheponct hare hope, de mannelijcke dapperheyt ende het gheluck van haeren Veldoverste, afmetende uyt den voorspoet van de verleden jaren.' Ibidem, p. 9. 'De ooghen van uwen vyandt ende van u volck waren op u gheslaegen. Uwen vyandt sach een ongeachte wooninghe, in de welcke nochtans die sich liet vinden, onder den welcken hy most buyghen; ende uwe soldaten oprichteden haren moedt door uwe nedrigheyt.'

⁸⁰ Ibidem, p. 27. 'Ghy zijt dat korte en volmaecte begriip van alle Krijgshelden, een groote Alexander in der daet, ghelijcker te vooren een is gheweest van name, een stalen muer voor u volck, en eenen schrick voor die die u haten ...'

⁸¹ Ibidem, p. 17. 'Den Hemel zy bekent ons wenschen en onse ghebeden, uytgestort op die tijdt als wy met onse lichamen u niet helpen en konden. Den Hemel heeft wacht ghehouden om u te bewaren, ende de Engelen sijn ghesonden om u te beschutten.' Ibidem, p. 21. 'Daer wierden uytghesproken vyerighe en door den Hemel dringende ghebeden; ziel en lichaem wierden bevolen aen den Herder en Schutter van Israel; soo dat een yeder vol van Godt, vol van den Hemel, vol van moedt en synen Prince, onbeschroomt en vrymoedich tradt naer het perck of van sijn doot of van sijn leven. Daer was dan het swaerd van Godt, ende van Gedeon; daer wierde wel gheleef en wel ghestorven.'

⁸² Ibidem, p. 16. 'Wy zijn uwe kinderen, wy zijn de uwe, ende spreekken u oversulcx aen als onse vader. Ghy zijt den onsen, ende moet daerom gheheel u selven aen ons overgeven.'

⁸³ Ibidem, pp. 23-24. 'Wy alle vinden ons bedroeft over die ongheneuchten, daer in ghy gheduerende de beleggheringh hebt gesteken. Wy hebben ghesien den deerlijcken val van soo veel treffelijcke huysen ... Echter nochtans, ghelooft my, die veele van u in de wieghe hebben hooren schreyen, en veele deelachtich zijn geweest van het spel en soetichheit van mijne kindtsche jonckheit ... ghelooft my, ghy zijt te bequamer tijdt overwonnen. Maer sonder twijffel ick misgripte my in dese woorden, die u overwonnen noemen en verstaen niet het gheluck ende heyl van desen uwen nieuwen staet ... Ick wensche

The liberation of, and reunion with the Dutch living in the south, 'our kinsmen', as an important impetus behind the Dutch war efforts is a returning theme in Boxhorn's orations and works from the mid-1630s right up to the peace of Münster in 1648. In the *Historia obsidionis Bredae* (*History of the Siege of Breda*, 1640), a more serious and critical work, Boxhorn lets Frederik Hendrik explain his actions in a letter the prince had drafted and distributed among the Dutch in Brabant when on campaign there. The letter reads that the prince 'did not only act on behalf of the freedom of the confederated Dutch, but also on behalf of the freedom of all the Dutch. Everybody who longed for freedom had absolutely nothing to dread from its defender'. The letter, however, did hardly sort any effect; no Dutchman from the south rallied to the prince 'as long as most people preferred the present and slavery above the future and freedom'.⁸⁴

More passionate of tone is Boxhorn in his *Oratio ad Belgas, Hispano adhuc parentes* (*Speech to the Dutch, Who hitherto obeyed the Spaniard*), an oration he delivered on the occasion of the capture of the Flemish town Sas van Gent in 1644.⁸⁵ 'Once you [i.e. the Dutch living in the south-JN] were our kinsmen and relatives, because you were born of the same forefathers; once you were [our] brothers and friends, either when we individually recognised [our own] separate princes or when we all together recognised the same prince, because we were united by [our] love for freedom. Now, however, we fight each other as enemies, in an internal and external war that already lasts some seventy years, because of the unheard of stubbornness, especially from your side, among them, [whose] natural disposition, and personal relationships and mutual interests commanded them that they are very closely related. And everywhere we stain [our] common fatherland with blood, but we do

uw dan gheluck met u weder verkregen vryheyt, u meynick, dien de gheghehenteyt tot noch toe niet toeghelaten heeft te verplaetsen. Ghy zijt nu gheheel uws selfs, die te vooren diende onder slaven.'

⁸⁴ Boxhorn, *Historia obsidionis Bredae*, p. 14. 'A quo sparsae passim litterae & vulgatae; "Non Foederatorum modo, sed Belgarum omnium libertatis causam a se agi; cujus vindicem haud metueret, quisquis eam vellet. Nec cuiquam noxae futurum hoc bellum, qui, odiis postpositis, causam ejus probaret." Quibus tamen haud multum effectum; dum plerique praesentia & servitatem, quam futura & libertatem mallent. Ad quae vix promittenti fides. quam qui sibi tantum habent, saepe aliorum suo cum damno postponunt.' Boxhorn paraphrases in this piece of text a passage from Tacitus, in which the Roman historian explains that after the battle of Actium Augustus's rise to absolute power went unopposed, 'since the most defiant had fallen in the battle line or by proscription and the rest of the nobles ... preferred the protection of the present to the perils of old.' Tacitus, *The Annals*, I.2.1, p. 2. For the Latin text, see Tacitus, *Annalium ab excessu divi Avgvsti libri*. Recognovit brevique adnotatione critica instrvxit C.D. Fisher (Clarendon Press; Oxford, 1st ed. 1906, 1973), I.2. '... cum ferocissimi per acies aut proscriptione cecidissent, ceteri nobilium, quanto quis servitio promptior, opibus et honoribus extollerentur ac novis ex rebus aucti tuta et praesentia quam vetera et periculosa mallent.'

⁸⁵ Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn, "Oratio ad Belgas, Hispano adhuc parentes, Sassa Gandanvensi, auspiciis Foederati Belgii Ordinum, Ductu Frederici Henrici, Arausionensium Principis, expugnatâ. foederati et liberi Belgae loquuntur", in idem, *Orationes, Varii Argumenti*, IV, pp. 62 [68]-103.

so against our will. [And] you will once again be our brothers and friends, if, what the blood relationship we share with you prescribes to us, and necessity prescribes to you, our very noble and for the entire area where the Dutch command surely beneficial prayers are answered.⁸⁶

The goal of the Dutch from the north is ‘that we not only show you, who have been hit by many and great disasters, and who by now surely stand on the verge of total ruin, the example of our good fortune, but that we also invite you to make use of it. Nor do we only offer you hope of safety, but we also give you very great certainty about it, and we invite you to our peace and alliance, by driving away the yoke from your necks’.⁸⁷ The Dutch from the south, however, were not convinced. The atrocities committed by the combined Franco-Dutch armies in the late 1630s and the early 1640s and the oppression of Catholicism in the areas conquered by their Dutch brethren from the north made it clear to them that nothing better was to be expected from their self-proclaimed ‘liberators’ than from their so-called Spanish oppressor. Why rejoice over the liberation from Spanish tyranny if it only meant getting caught in the stranglehold of the Beggar?⁸⁸

The peace of Münster, therefore, was greeted in the south with the same enthusiasm as in the north. It meant the end to years of continuous siege warfare that had ruined towns and had laid waste to the countryside, especially in Brabant. For Boxhorn the peace was a moment of both joy and sorrow. In his *Oratio panegyrica de Belgarum pace* (*Celebratory Oration on the Peace of the Dutch*), which he held at Leiden somewhere in the summer of 1648, both sentiments can be detected. The peace was to be celebrated for finally, after years of bloodshed, the Dutch had secured their freedom with an everlasting and unbreakable peace, ‘the greatest happiness in human affairs’.⁸⁹ The war was ended ‘by peace, and the recognition of our freedom’.⁹⁰ That freedom and its

⁸⁶ Ibidem, pp. 62-63 [68-69]. ‘Consanguineos nostros & Cognatos, ut iisdem majoribus ortos; Fratres olim & Amicos, cum aut diversos singuli principes, aut eundem omnes, iisdem pro libertate studiis conjunctis, agnovimus; nunc contra hostes, dum septuaginta fere annorum intestino pariter ac externo bello, inaudita inter eos contumacia, quos & natura, & caussa, & mutua commoda esse jubebant conjunctissimos, maxime autem vestra, collidimur: & communem patriam quaqua, sed nos inviti, cruentamus: Fratres iterum nostros & Amicos, si, quod nobis idem vobiscum sanguis, necessitas vobis praescribunt, pulcherrima & toti Belgarum imperio haud dubie profutura vota nostra audiuntur.’

⁸⁷ Ibidem, pp. 70-71. ‘... sed, quod innocentiam hujus imperii nostri imprimis decet ac sanctitatem, & jam totius prope saeculi nobis votum est, diuturnique hujus belli finis semper fuit, ut multis magnisque tempestatibus afflictos vos, & in ultimam perniciem haud dubie jam vergentes, ad felicitatis nostrae exemplum non modo, sed etiam usum, neque ac spem, sed certissimam salutis fiduciam, pacem societatemque nostram, tristissima servitute à cervicibus vestris depulsa, vocaremus.’

⁸⁸ Schulten, *Met vliegende vaandels en slaande trom*, pp. 207-8, 218-19, 228.

⁸⁹ Boxhorn, “Oratio panegyrica de Belgarum pace”, p. 105. ‘Nunc potissimum magnis laetisque animis nos esse necesse est, & expressa tandem potentissimo hosti, qua nulla major est gentium gloria, libertatis nostrae confessione, & quae in hominum rebus felicitas summa est, pace simul data.’

⁹⁰ Ibidem, p. 106. ‘Totius ergo prope saeculi, dubium Belgarumne illud Hispanorumque, an Europae propemodum omnis bellum appellandum ... majore pro libertate animo, quam potentia instructum, varia

defence had been the primary cause of the Dutch armed struggle with the king of Spain.⁹¹ In the beginning of the war the Dutch had had to fight themselves 'with no other means than that spirit, which they had received from [their] ancestors, and which had grown by the harshness of times, to life in freedom or to die before slavery' for 'no other reward than freedom'.⁹²

During the war the Dutch had taken on the king of Spain, the most formidable enemy imaginable. But while the war had exhausted the Spanish treasury and steadily dwindled Spanish power, the Dutch had become stronger day after day, expanding their territory in the East and the West under the guidance of their military leaders, William of Orange, Maurits, and Frederik Hendrik, who had served the Dutch cause with 'an unheard of courage, consistency, and loyalty towards us'.⁹³ Indeed, the war had been so successful and Spanish power had by 1648 so far weakened that a continuation of the war would have been more profitable for the Dutch. However, as Boxhorn explains, the Dutch had 'only waged war for the sake of peace'.⁹⁴ To prefer peace above war was a matter of principle for the Dutch, although in Boxhorn's case it could also be inspired by personal experience.⁹⁵

fortuna, sed plerumque libertati aequiore, gestum pace & agnita nostra libertate extinctum est, Auditores.'

⁹¹ Ibidem, p. 107. 'Bellum, cujus eadem majoribus nostris causae fuere, quae [majoribus-JN] ipsis innocentiae & libertatis; saeva principum jussa, aut eorum, qui, pro repertis juratisque pro libertate nostra legibus, dominationem quae sine fine est, & sic suam suadebant; inde continuae accusationes, pernicies innocentium, & laesae Dei ac Principum majestatis unicum eorum crimen, quibus tot rogos, tot cruces struxit qui crimine vacabant.'

⁹² Ibidem, pp. 107-9. 'Bellum, cujus primo non alia addicentia majoribus nostris auspicia fuere, quam innocentiae; neque ductus alius, quam ultimae necessitatis; neque opes aliae, quam à majoribus acceptus, & iniquitate temporum magis magisque auctus animus, sive vivendi in libertate, sive moriendi ante servitutem ... Bellum, in quo primo non mercenarius miles, qui ad vulnera conductus & mortem denis, aut paucioribus, in diem assibus animam & corpus patitur aestimari, sed rudes & inexperti, nisi quae species legum domi fecerat, bellorum cives, nullo alio quam libertatis pretio vocati ad signa, inusita & qualia tantum Heroum sunt, facinora edidere ...' Boxhorn could be alluding to the encouragements, found in Tacitus, which the ancient German leader Arminius and the other German aristocrats gave to their troops before one of their battles with the Roman army. See Tacitus, *Annalium ab excessu divi Augusti libri*, II.15. 'meminissent modo avaritiae, crudelitatis, superbiae: aliud sibi reliquum quam tenere libertatem aut mori ante servitium?'

⁹³ Ibidem, pp. 109-10. 'Bellum ... quo trium ingentium Nassavorum Principum Guiljelmi, Maurittii, Frederici, inaudita virtute, constantia pro nobis ac fide, & rara felicitate, imperio hoc longe lateque, & sub alio etiam sole, promoti, quot fere militiae annos, tot, inter pauca adversa, nobilissimas victorias & triumphos numeramus quorum magnitudinem data tandem à potentissimo Rege, & finem, accepta nobis pax ostendit.'

⁹⁴ Ibidem, p. 110. 'Quippe res nostras circumspicientibus nobis, quaqua distracto jam & afflicto hoste, majora quidem bello capere posse incrementa, sed non necessaria nobis, & injusta bella, quia jam non necessaria, damnatis quae ambitiosorum tantum sunt consiliis, innocentiae nostrae videbantur. Et sane pacis tantum causa bellum gerebamus.'

⁹⁵ As he had done in his oration on the capture of Breda by Frederik Hendrik in 1637, Boxhorn recalls in the *Oratio panegyrica de Belgarum pace* how he as a young boy had personally witnessed the horrors of war, how he had fought 'against the sword and hunger', and how that had made him to hate war and to love peace. Ibidem, pp. 105-6. 'Ego etiam, velut in castris, inter classica natus & eductus, & per horum bellorum injurias cum ferro ac fame luctatus obsessus puer, & ingentium cladum calamitatumque, vastationum ac solitudinum, quas haec bella fecere, & ad quarum memoriam etiam nunc

Despite the fact that a continuation of the war would have been more profitable, peace also brought great benefits. It made the roads and rivers safe to travel again, thus making commerce between the north and the south more easy and attractive.⁹⁶ It also saw the return of the rule of law,⁹⁷ and meant a stimulans for the arts and sciences.⁹⁸ Since the peace also extended to the world's oceans, it made navigations to Asia, Africa, and other European countries more safe.⁹⁹ More importantly, the peace ended a war that had ripped the Dutch apart, thereby reuniting families and kinsmen.¹⁰⁰ 'Finally, add that this Netherlands or Germany of ours, that was once peaceful under several princes, or at war, but in brief hostilities and wars, [and] that was joined together and united in one commanding body under those of Burgundy and Austria, [and] that was once again teared apart by a civil or external war, or by a mixture of both, is now not subjected to the command of one lord, but happily subjected to the command of peace and the law.'¹⁰¹

percellitur animus, spectator aut pars ipse, & odisse jam pridem bellum didici, & pacis bona aestimare.' Boxhorn's personal feelings offer an explanation why he dared to hold such a celebratory oration on peace in Leiden, the town that had vigorously opposed the peace talks in the States of Holland, afraid of the damage that a renewed competition with towns from the south could do to its cloth industry. Simon Groenveld, "Visies op de vrede: meningen over de Vrede van Munster, 1648-1998", in idem (ed.), *De vrede van Munster: veranderende grenzen in Europa* (Atlantische Commissie; The Hague, 1998), p. 13. Thus, just like in Zeeland, there were no formal festivities in Leiden on June 5, 1648, the day that the States General had selected to officially celebrate the peace throughout the Dutch Republic. Groenveld and Leeuwenberg, *De bruid in de schuit*, p. 124. In this particular case Boxhorn seems to be at variance with the people he was most closely connected to. For example, Constantijn Huygens also opposed the peace. Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, p. 595. However, if Boxhorn really supported the peace can be doubted. In general he supported the war against Spain, which he depicted as a war to liberate the Southern Netherlands. See further chapter 10.

⁹⁶ Ibidem, p. 114.

⁹⁷ Ibidem, pp. 116-17. 'Addite ... nec alios, quam quos ipsae praescribunt leges, acquirendi rerum dominii modos ...; nec alios iudices, quam leges.'

⁹⁸ Ibidem, p. 118.

⁹⁹ Ibidem, p. 119.

¹⁰⁰ Ibidem, p. 114. 'Addite, affinitates, cognationes, propinquitates Belgarum, hactenus laceras, divisas, divulgatas, ac pene ignotas & sublatas, nunc conjunctas ...'

¹⁰¹ Ibidem, pp. 119-20. 'Addite denique, Belgicam aut Germaniam hanc nostram, olim sub diversis principibus aut pacatam, aut, sed brevibus odiis ac bellis, discordem, sub Burgundis & Austriacis in unius imperii corpus coalescentem ac conjunctam, civili aut externo, aut ex utroque mixto iterum divulgatas, unius nunc non domini, sed pacis imperio ac legibus feliciter subjectam, & inter tot aliorum contumacia certamina ac odia, qui satis superque cruentati adhuc tamen se cruentant, quod rarissimum & inexpertum plerisque gentibus, nullos jam nostros hostes.' In a Dutch translation of his oration the passage '... Belgicam aut Germaniam hanc nostram' reads: '... dit ons lieve Nederlandt' ('... this our beloved Netherlands'). Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn, *Oratie van de vrede tusschen de Hooghmachtighe Philippe de IV, Coninck van Hispanien, ende de Staeten der Vrye Vereenichde Nederlanden, besloten in den jaere 1648* (Cornelis Banheining; Leiden, 1648), p. 21. Knuttel 5740. The use of the word 'Belgica' as a geographical term for the contemporary political unity of the Netherlands was first introduced in Dutch historiography by Reinier Snoy (c.1477-1537), a doctor from Gouda, in his chronicle *De rebus Batavicus libri tredecim* (*Thirteen Books about the History of the Batavians*), which was finished in 1519, but only published in the seventeenth century. Karin Tilmans, "De ontwikkeling van een vaderland-begrip in de laat-middeleeuwse en vroeg-moderne geschiedschrijving van de Nederlanden", in N.C.F. van Sas (ed.), *Vaderland: een geschiedenis vanaf de vijftiende eeuw tot 1940* (Amsterdam University Press; Amsterdam, 1999), pp. 22, 32-33, 50, and Haitsma Mulier, "De humanistische vorm", p. 31.

But the newly won peace not only filled Boxhorn with joy. He laments the deplorable condition of the south, devastated and ruined by years of continuous warfare on its soil. He thereby also points the finger at the Dutch from the north, finding them equally guilty to the fact that a great part of Europe now laid to waste.¹⁰²

Furthermore, the recent peace also carried some dangers with it. 'Because it also often happens that that sweetness of tranquility or peace weakens and deprives people of vigor, who have never been conquered or weakened by war', Boxhorn prays to God 'that the spirit and judgement of our ancestors, who have given us the most pleasant of times with the greatest perseverance, foresight, and loyalty, shall stay and remain with us, and shall pass to our children and grandchildren'.¹⁰³ Vigilance is needed 'in these times, that are full of religions and barren of piety', an abundance and infertility that cause men to 'run eagerly to the opinions and madness or fabrications of men, as if to new battle standards and new legions, even with arms, that already destroy the most prosperous and powerful people'. Times, in which people, who have immense ambition and who only act out of self-interest, pretend to defend God's cause. Therefore, Boxhorn hopes that the Dutch shall keep visiting 'our churches and altars', for it is upon them that 'the eternity of her peace' rests.¹⁰⁴

Another danger that Boxhorn detects is the possibility of the eruption of civil discord. Here Boxhorn agrees with the Roman historian Sallust (86-34 BC), who had blamed the loss of an external threat for the disintegration of Rome into warring factions. 'Because often, when an external war, or the dread of an external war is taken away ... a completely bad lust, greed, ambition, contests over the power to command between powerful men, the discretion of men, and men rather than the laws can assume power', leading to 'a discord between citizens, that is more harmful than any war whatsoever, and which those vices drag with them'.¹⁰⁵ As can be deduced from the above,

¹⁰² Ibidem, p. 111. 'Debebamus quoque, & ut tanto augustior esset hujus belli finis, Europae, in qua provinciae omnes, regna, maria, terraeque aspera aut fessa bellis jam sunt, primi, quo nullum magis nunc necessarium est, exemplum, posse gravissima etiam & diu tracta gentium odia aut bella pacis, si quidem ejus desiderium sit & amor, dulcedine ac opulentia mutari.'

¹⁰³ Ibidem, p. 123. 'Vt, cum plerumque etiam invictas neque fractas bello gentes exuat atque enervet sive otii sive pacis illa dulcedo, maneat nobis, ac duret, & in posteros nostros nepotesque transeat animus ac judicium majorum, qui constantia summa, providentia ac fide, laetissima haec nobis tempora dedere ...'

¹⁰⁴ Ibidem, pp. 123-24. 'Vt hac tempestate, quae faecunda religionum est & sterilis pietatis, qua opiniones hominum & deliria aut commenta, tanquam ad nova signa novasque aquilas certatim, armis etiam, quibus florentissimae validissimaeque jam excinduntur gentes, concurrunt; qua causam Dei agere videri volunt, qui agunt immensae ambitionis & suam; aris nostris & altaribus, quae pro hoc datae pacis beneficio grati quotidie obsidebimus, pax sua immota, aeterna consistat.'

¹⁰⁵ Ibidem, p. 124. 'Ut, cum plerumque amoto externo bello, aut externi metu, (tamquam vitia facilius aut scelera pax ferat, quam bellum, cum tamen minus ferat) mala omnis libido, avaritia, ambitio,

the possibility that civil discord would erupt is especially present where religious pluriformity and religious factions offer ambitious men the opportunity to usurp political power under the pretence of religious arguments. To prevent this from happening, Boxhorn hopes that the Dutch would find in their ancient virtues, in 'our modesty, ... consistency, and loyalty, the soldiers, the artillery, the weapons, and, so to speak, the instruments of every war, not only to preserve the eternity of this peace for us, but also to bequeath it to our offspring'.¹⁰⁶

Internal discord was not the only matter that threatened to shatter the still fragile peace. The *Oratio panegyrica de Belgarum pace* shows that Boxhorn's awareness that the endurance of the peace depended on what happened in the international arena.¹⁰⁷ There, matters were not looking good. France was still officially at war with Spain and the emperor, while on the British Isles the ongoing war between Charles I and his subjects headed into a new phase. In his oration Boxhorn admits that it is 'God's judgement and very just stewardship' that allow people to suffer the punishments of wars.¹⁰⁸ Yet he still hopes that Louis XIV (1638-1715) would remember that the French and the Germans descended from the same ancestors and would come to terms with the emperor, and he prays that God would reconcile Charles I with his parliament and his subjects and unite them in a unbreakable peace.¹⁰⁹ His first

potentiorum de imperio certamina, arbitrium potius hominum & homines quam leges, imperent (felicium fere mala, quae turbant inprimis domi pacem ac convellunt) quovis bello nocentiorum, & quam ista post se vitia trahunt, civium discordiam arceat.' See Sallust, *The Jugurthine War*, XLI.1-5, p. 83. 'The custom of parties and factions and, then, of all evil practices arose at Rome a few years before from inactivity and an abundance of those things which mortals consider to be priorities. For before the destruction of Carthage the Roman people and senate managed the commonwealth placidly and restrainedly between them. There was no struggle amongst the citizens either for glory or for domination: dread of an enemy maintained the community in its good practices. But, when that source of alarm left their minds, recklessness and haughtiness – things, to be sure, which favourable circumstances attract – made their entrance. So the inactivity which in adverse circumstances they had craved was, once acquired, more harsh and bitter. For the nobility began to turn their rank and the people their freedom, into matters of whim: every man for himself appropriated, looted and seized. So the whole was split into two parties, and the commonwealth, which had been neutral, was rent apart.'

¹⁰⁶ Ibidem, pp. 125-26. 'Ut in nostra domi modestia, in ipsa hostium (quanquam nec jam hostium) & nostrorum constantia ac fide (de quibus publice ac magnifice pronunciatum Romae olim, Nullam Gentem Fide Esse Ante Germanos) miles, tormenta, arma, & omnis velut belli apparatus sint, pro conservanda non nobis tantum, sed & tradenda posteris nostris, pacis hujus aeternitate.' The quotation is from Tacitus, *The Annals*, XIII.54.3.

¹⁰⁷ Simon Groenveld, "Achtergronden en betekenis van de Vrede van Westfalen", in Jan Melissen (ed.), *Europese diplomatie: in de schaduw van Westfalen* (Van Gorcum; Assen, 2000), p. 63.

¹⁰⁸ Boxhorn, "Oratio panegyrica de Belgarum pace", p. 128. '... idem numen, cujus non improvidentia aut neglectu, sed justitia, sed judicio, sed aequissima dispensatione haec immitti gentibus mala agnoscimus.'

¹⁰⁹ Ibidem, pp. 132-33. 'Vt denique, si quas jam Europae gentes trahant intestina, pejora longe externis, & quae nullos triumphos habent, bella ac depascant, imprimis proximam & reginam insularum Britanniam, illam tot jam per annos, & inter ipsa statim horum, quae nunc finiuntur, bellorum initia amicam nostram & sociam, domi forisque hactenus invictam, sed nunc hostem sibi, & suorum tantum sanguine madentem, reges proceresque ac subjectos regibus, inprimis Carolum, principem augustis-

prayer would be answered; his second prayer would not, with far-reaching consequences for the future of the peace the Dutch had just acquired.

Conclusion

From the beginning of his academic career Boxhorn set out to defend what he believed to be the interests of his fellow Dutchmen. In the case of his dispute with Heuterus it was the economic interests of the Dutch, especially of the Hollanders and Zeelanders, at sea. In his orations it was the political interests of the Dutch on land. In both cases Boxhorn always appealed to a higher cause. Boxhorn's refutation of Heuterus's accusation that the Hollanders had had hardly any experience with long distance overseas travel before the sixteenth century was really directed against English and Danish claims to a lordship over the sea that threatened Dutch maritime interests, especially in the Baltic and the Northern seas. The historical documentation Boxhorn put forward made clear that the behaviour of Christian IV did not correspond with that of his predecessors, while the copy of the *Magnus Intercursus* served as an argument against Charles I's maritime policy.

In his orations Boxhorn made an appeal to a national sentiment of Dutch brotherhood that transgressed the provincial boundaries. What the Dutch had in common was their love for freedom, and it was to defend their freedom and to restore it to the Dutch still living under the Spanish yoke that the Dutch from the north campaigned in the south. The goal of the Dutch struggle with the king of Spain was the liberation and reunification of the Netherlands, the common fatherland. It was this goal that in Boxhorn's opinion legitimised the Republic's conquest and expansion in the southern Dutch provinces.

The peace of Münster, therefore, was only half a success. Although it brought reconciliation between the north and the south, it also meant that the Dutch agreed to accept the political status quo, thus agreeing to the division of the Netherlands in a northern part under the guidance of the States General, and a southern part under the lordship of the king of Spain. For Boxhorn this was a bad break. In his orations Boxhorn, like most exiles from Brabant and Flanders, 'who were keener than anyone else to continue the Revolt until the Spanish Netherlands were "liberated"', time and again depicted the war against Spain as a war of liberation. The Dutch from the north had only one goal: to liberate the Dutch, 'our kinsmen ... born of the same forefathers', who were living

simum, cum suis pace conjungat.'

in the southern parts of 'our common fatherland', 'this Netherlands of ours', from the dark forces of tyranny.¹¹⁰ However, by signing the peace of Münster the Dutch from the north officially agreed to abandon their quest to liberate the southern provinces, ending any hopes on reunification. The Dutch *patria* (fatherland), once 'joined together and united in one commanding body under those of Burgundy and Austria', was no more.¹¹¹ For Boxhorn the end of the war with Spain and the official recognition of the sovereignty and independence of the Dutch Republic by the king of Spain did not mean a 'hard-won unity', nor a 'sealed discord', but a hard-won peace at the expense of a ruptured fatherland.¹¹²

Another negative aspect of the peace was the possible dangers it contained. Boxhorn's fear that peace could lead to internal discord, especially in the religious and subsequently in the political realm, clearly shows that he had not forgotten the dramatic events of the Twelve Years' Truce. In a Dutch translation of Boxhorn's *Oratio panegyrica de Belgarum pace*, published in 1648, a little additive, inserted at the place where the Latin original refers to the Twelve

¹¹⁰ Judith Pollmann, "'Brabanters do fairly resemble Spaniards after all': Memory, Propaganda and Identity in the Twelve Years' Truce", in Judith Pollmann and Andrew Spicer (eds.), *Public Opinion and Changing Identities in the Early Modern Netherlands*. Essays in Honour of Alastair Duke (Brill; Leiden/Boston, 2007), p. 227. The picture that Boxhorn draws in his orations of the Dutch struggle against Spain fits very well with Judith Pollmann's analysis that 'early seventeenth-century popular histories, plays and poems that evoked the Revolt did not recognize grey areas. The Revolt had not been a civil war, in which many people had had to make uncomfortable decisions; in the image of the past that the Dutch created for themselves, a choice for Revolt was the only option open to a people doomed to perennial slavery under a Spanish regime. The reason for this was that efforts to keep the memories of the Revolt alive were not inspired by the personal need for remembrance alone. The emphasis on a common Netherlandisch struggle helped to integrate the Flemish and Brabant exiles into the host population, for instance; as fellow-Netherlanders, they had suffered the same plight as Hollanders and Zeelanders.' *Ibidem*, p. 221. In their contributions to the collection of articles about the concept 'fatherland' published in the History of Concepts series of the University of Amsterdam, both Simon Groenveld and Guido de Bruin emphasise that in the Dutch Republic feelings of solidarity and unity between the Northern and Southern provinces were 'strictly kept alive by refugees from the Southern provinces' and that the 'fiction of a common fatherland had died with William of Orange'. Simon Groenveld, "'Natie' en 'patria' bij de zestiende-eeuwse Nederlanders", in Van Sas (ed.), *Vaderland*, pp. 75-77, and Guido de Bruin, "Het begrip 'vaderland' in de pamfletliteratuur ten tijde van de Republiek, 1600-1750", in *ibidem*, pp. 151-52.

¹¹¹ According to Groenveld, most Dutchmen living in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries held a particular small conception of their *patria*; the small geographical area of the village or town they lived in. Only the political elites, government officials, artisans, and the clergy conceived a province or that conglomerate of seventeen provinces that was known as 'de Nederlanden' (the Netherlands or Low Countries, sometimes also indicated with the singular 'het Nederland') as their *patria*. Therefore, most Dutchmen did not see the peace as a rupture of the seventeen Dutch provinces, since they never had conceived the seventeen provinces as belonging to one body or forming one *patria*. Groenveld, "Achtergronden en betekenis van de Vrede van Westfalen", pp. 48-49, 68-69. For a more extensive discussion of these topics, see Simon Groenveld, *Verlopend getij: de Nederlandse Republiek en de Engelse Burgeroorlog, 1640-1646* (De Bataafsche Leeuw; Dieren, 1984), pp. 15-22, 55-66, and *idem*, "'Natie' en 'patria' bij de zestiende-eeuwse Nederlanders", pp. 55-81.

¹¹² Frijhoff and Spies, *Hard-Won Unity*, pp. 139-41, and Anton van der Lem, "Bevochten eendracht? Beklonken tweespalt!", in *Bijdragen en mededelingen betreffende de geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, Vol. 117, No. 4 (2002), pp. 467-70, 565.

Years' Truce, confirms this reading. It reads that king Philip III of Spain (1578-1621) had concluded the Twelve Years' Truce 'for no other reason, like the outcome has taught, than to injure our unity and peace at home'.¹¹³ In other words, the peace of Münster did not mean that the Dutch could rest on their laurels. Watchfulness was required to protect the peace against external foes and internal disturbances. In the last five years of his life Boxhorn would indeed find out how fragile the recently won peace really was.

¹¹³ Boxhorn, *Oratie van de vrede*, p. 12. '... zijnde maer eenmael door den Treves ghegeven eene twaelfjaerige ruste tot geenem anderen einde, gelijk de uytkomste wel geleert heeft, als om onse eenicheydt ende vrede thuyt te krencken, ende machtiger als oit te voren te velde te komen.' Idem, "Oratio panegyrica de Belgicarum pace", pp. 109-10. '... nisi quod duodecim annorum otio dilatatum, ut majus & atrocius resurgeret.' Although not in the Latin original, the disadvantages and inconveniences that the Dutch Republic had suffered because of the Twelve Years' Truce is a topic that frequently recurs in Boxhorn's works. See, for example, Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I.4, pp. 35-36, and I.13, pp. 214-15. In 1609 both Maurits and Oldenbarnevelt had feared that the truce could lead to internal discord, 'anarchy', and 'confusion'. So did Grotius. The outcome would prove these three men right. In this sense, Boxhorn is merely repeating their fears. For Oldenbarnevelt and Maurits, see Groenveld, "'Natie' en 'patria' bij de zestiende-eeuwse Nederlanders", pp. 78-79. For Grotius, see Arthur Eyffinger, "'How Wondrously Moses Goes Along With The House of Orange!': Hugo Grotius' 'De Republica Emendanda' in the Context of the Dutch Revolt", in *Hebraic Political Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (2005), pp. 81-85.

Chapter 5

Times of trouble.

Taking a stand

This chapter focuses on Boxhorn's contribution to the two debates that dominated Dutch political life during the last five years of his life. The first debate concentrated on the political relationship between the Dutch Republic and the new Commonwealth of England. The second debate has as its subjects the nature and structure of the Dutch Republic. This chapter will show that Boxhorn was not only a staunch defender of Dutch interests, but that he was also aware of the Dutch Republic's weaknesses and underlying problems. Furthermore, it will show that Boxhorn, one of the Dutch Republic's leading and most productive scholars in the fields of philology, history, and politics, actively participated in the debates of his time. In these debates Boxhorn took firm positions which he needed to defend against his critics. By examining Boxhorn's more polemic work this chapter will shed new light on how the Dutch thought about their own Republic and on how they used historical and political arguments in public debates that concerned contemporary issues.

For king and country

Across Europe the execution of king Charles I of England on January 30, 1649, led to a great outrage.¹ In the Dutch Republic a flood of pamphlets appeared that portrayed Charles I as a martyr, denounced his execution as regicide, and demanded the succession of prince Charles (1630-1685) to his father's throne.² The execution caused a great shift in Dutch public opinion. During the English civil wars a majority of the Dutch population had sympathised with Par-

¹ C.V. Wedgwood, "European Reaction to the Death of Charles I", in C.H. Carter (ed.), *From the Renaissance to the Counter-Reformation: Essays in Honour of Garrett Mattingly* (Random House; New York, 1965), pp. 401-19. For a more recent view, see Richard Bonney, "The European Reaction to the Trail and Execution of Charles I", in Jason Peacey (ed.), *The Regicides and the Execution of Charles I* (Palgrave Macmillan; Basingstoke, 2001), pp. 247-79. Both Wedgwood and Bonney agree that although almost every European power bewailed the execution of Charles I, hardly anyone was prepared to aid the royalist cause.

² In 1649 there appeared some 214 pamphlets in the Dutch Republic that addressed the events in England. Frijhoff and Spies, *Hard-Won Unity*, p. 70.

liament.³ After the execution, however, most Dutch pamphlets defended the royalist cause, that is, prince Charles's right to the English throne. Boxhorn's *De successione et iure primogenitorum in adeundo principatu, dissertatio* (*Dissertation on Succession and the Right of First-Born Children in inheriting a Principate*) was one of these pro-royalist pamphlets.⁴

What sets Boxhorn's *De successione et iure primogenitorum* apart from all the other pamphlets that appeared in 1649 is that it brought him into a fierce public polemic about the righteousness of the Dutch Revolt with an anonymous law student from the University of Utrecht.⁵ This student, known only to us as I.B., accused Boxhorn of denying the legitimacy of the Dutch Republic.⁶ After all, if, as Boxhorn argues in the *De successione et iure primogenitorum*, the crimes of the father did not invalidate the right of his innocent heirs to succeed to the throne, should not king Philip III of Spain have succeeded his father Philip II as lawful lord in the Low Countries? And if so, was Dutch resistance against the heirs of Philip II, and therefore ultimately the Dutch Republic itself, not illegal and against that right of primogeniture that Boxhorn so eagerly defends in the case of prince Charles?⁷ Furthermore, I.B. wondered, how is it possible that someone, who is raised in a republic and paid by a republican regime, can 'itch and whine for kings?'⁸ In what follows I will explain why in 1649 Boxhorn thought

³ Marika Keblusek, "Nieuwsvorming in de Republiek: de Engelse burgeroorlog in Haagse drukken", in Henk Kleijer, Ad Knotter and Frank van Vree (eds.), *Tekens en teksten: cultuur, communicatie en maatschappelijke veranderingen vanaf de late middeleeuwen* (Amsterdam University Press; Amsterdam, 1992), p. 66.

⁴ Besides Boxhorn, two other Leiden professors relied to the royalist cause, namely Theodor Graswinckel and, most famously, Claude Salmasius. Theodor Graswinckel, *Korte onderrechtighe raeckende De fundamentale Regering van Engelandt, Ende de gherechtigheden soo van den Koningh, als het Parlament* (Anthony Jansz. Tongerlo and Johannes Verhoeve; The Hague, 1649). Knuttel 6375. Claude Salmasius, *Defensio regia, pro Carolo I. ad Serinissimum Magnae Britanniae regem Carolvm II. Filium natu majorem, Heredem & Successorem legitimum* (?; ?, 1649). The following year a Dutch translation of Salmasius's work appeared. Idem, *Koninklijke verdediging, voor Kaarel den I.: aan den doorlichtigsten konink van Groot-Brittanniën Kaarel den II., oudste sone, erfgenaam ende wettelijken naasaat* (Johan van Dalen; Leiden, 1650).

⁵ Boxhorn's pamphlet was not the only work that attracted critical reactions. Both Graswinckel's work and Salmasius's met with opposition. Graswinckel, for example, suffered criticism in an anonymous pamphlet. *Beduncken Op de onderrechtighe raeckende de Fundamentale Regering in Engelandt* (?; ?, 1649). Knuttel 6376. John Milton, of course, rebuked Salmasius. John Milton, *Pro populo Anglicano defensio, contra Clavdii anonymi, alias Salmasii, defensionem regiam* (Du Gardianis; London, 1651). A Dutch translation of Milton's defense appeared that same year. *Joannis Miltons Engelsmans verdedigigh des gemeene Volcks van Engelandt, Tegens Claudius sonder Naem alias Salmasius Konicklijke Verdedigigh* (?; Leiden, 1651).

⁶ Daniël Grosheide suggested the student Johannes Busshoff. Daniël Grosheide, *Cromwell naar het oordeel van zijn Nederlandse tijdgenoten* (Ph.D.-dissertation, Noord-Hollandsche Uitgevers Maatschappij; Amsterdam, 1951), p. 9.

⁷ I.B., *Ad dissertationem Clarissimi Viri D.M.Z.B. De jure primogenitorum, Responsio* (?; ?, 1649). Knuttel 6379.

⁸ I.B., *Mis-verstant Vanden Heer Professor Boxhorn Die meenden gevonden te hebben het secreet Vande Engelsche mis* (?; ?, 1649), A3. Knuttel 6382. Walter Strickland and Oliver St. John, the Commonwealth's ambassadors in The Hague, must have wondered the same thing. When, in 1650, they came to the United Provinces to propose a union between the two Protestant republics, they met with a hostile crowd and became 'subjected to a variety of personal affronts, both physical and verbal'. According to the Dutch historian Lieuwe van Aitzema (1600-1669), 'the English found a general disgust in the

it important to defend the principle of the right of primogeniture. Taking this as our starting point the discussion between Boxhorn and I.B. will be analysed anew.⁹ This procedure will give us a clearer view on how the Dutch understood their own polity before it underwent some changes due to the dramatic events of 1650. Furthermore, it will provide us with a better understanding of how political ideas were employed in contemporary debates.

The cause for the polemic between Boxhorn and I.B. was Boxhorn's 25 pages long pamphlet the *De successione et iure primogenitorum*.¹⁰ Boxhorn published the pamphlet with Willem Christiaens van der Boxe (c.1583-1658) at Leiden under his own name, probably somewhere after March 1649.¹¹ The pam-

people in whose minds the blood of the late king was fresh, calling them rogues and murderers of their king as they passed through the streets.' In Aitzema, 'Selections', Bod. Rawl C734, f72r. Both quotations and reference are taken from Pincus, *Protestantism and Patriotism*, p. 26. Modern scholars have tried to explain this sudden sympathy for the House of Stuart by pointing out that the execution went against the common man's feeling of legitimacy. See Groenveld, *Verlopend getij*, p. 63; idem, "The House of Orange and the House of Stuart, 1639-1650: A Revision", in *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 34, No. 4 (1991), p. 968; Keblusek, "Nieuwsvorming in de Republiek", p. 66. Both Simon Groenveld and Marika Keblusek heavily rely on the work of Grosheide, *Cromwell naar het oordeel van zijn Nederlandse Tijdgenoten*, pp. 8-28.

⁹ The discussion between Boxhorn and I.B. has always merit attention from modern scholars. Most of these scholars have focused their attention on the discussion about the legitimacy of the Dutch Revolt. Kossmann, *Political Thought in the Dutch Republic*, pp. 42-43; Pieter Geyl, *Orange and Stuart* (Phoenix Press; London, 1st ed. 1969, 2001), pp. 47-48; Wansink, *Politieke wetenschappen aan de Leidse universiteit*, pp. 242-45; Tuck, *Philosophy and Government*, pp. 252-53. Hans Blom is the only scholar who has seen that the discussion between Boxhorn and I.B. is a discussion about the balance of power within the political domain. While Boxhorn favours those in power and tries to protect them from the ever-fickle plebs, I.B. warns for the tyranny of rulers and defends the rights of subjects. Connecting it to the Dutch context, Blom labels Boxhorn's defence of the hereditary principle as beneficial for the stadholder. Hans W. Blom, "Les réactions hollandaises à l'exécution de Charles I: 'monarchie' et 'république' dans les Provinces-Unies après 1649", in Yves C. Zarka (ed.), *Monarchie et république au XVII^e siècle* (Presses Universitaires de France; Paris, 2007), pp. 193-211. In this chapter, however, the emphasis lies on the arguments that Boxhorn puts forward to defend the principle of the right of primogeniture.

¹⁰ Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn, *De successione et iure primogenitorum in adeundo principatu, dissertatio. Qua inprimis ad propositam nuper quaestionem; an damnato forte et excuto Principe, cujus hereditarium est regnum, primogenitus ejus ab adeundo Principatu ullo jure possit arceri, respondetur. Ad serenissim et potentissim principem Carolum II, Magnae Britanniae, Franciae, et Hiberniae Regem, Fidei Defensorem* (Willem Christiaens van der Boxe; Leiden, 1649). Knuttel 6377. There also appeared a Dutch version. Idem, *Bedenckingen aengaende de successie, ende het recht der oudstgeborene in het aenvaerden van een erfrijk. Waer in sonderheyt wordt geantwoord op de onlanghvoorgestelde Vrage; of, een vorst veroordeelt en gedoodt sijnde, wiens Rijk een Erfrijk is, sijn oudstgeborene soon met eenich recht mach belet worden het Rijk aen te vaerden? Geschreven aen den doorluchtichsten, grootmachtichsten Prince Karel de tweede, Concink van Groot Britanien, Schotlandt en Yrlandt, beschermer des geloofs. Uit het Latijn overgezet in het Nederduyts door een liefhebber* (Willem Christiaens van der Boxe; Leiden, 1649). Knuttel 6378.

¹¹ In 1632 Boxhorn and Scriverius had bought Van der Boxe's printing office. In this way they assured themselves of the services of one of Leiden's best printers. Paul Hofstijzer, "Het geheim van de uitgever", in *Jaarverslag 2006 van de Koninklijke Brill NV* (Brill; Leiden, 2007), p. 81. Source: <https://openaccess.leidenuniv.nl/handle/1887/15636> (Date: 16/10/2011). It seems likely that the *De successione et iure primogenitorum* was published in reaction to the decision by the House of Commons to abolish the monarchy, since the tract expressly refutes that it is legal, in a hereditary principality, to change the monarchical form of government into an aristocratic or a democratic one. In the first week of February 1649 bills were proposed in the House of Commons to abolish the House of Lords and the monarchy. It took six weeks for these bills to become law; respectively March 17 and March 19. On May 19 England was officially declared a 'Commonwealth and Free State'. See the introduction to *A Declaration of the Parliament of England, Expressing the Grounds of their*

phlet is a revision of a disputation held by one of Boxhorn's students, named Julius Henricus Carer, somewhere during the mid-1640s.¹² The dissertation that Boxhorn published in 1649 is almost identical to the original disputation. However, they differ on two crucial points. These two differences must be addressed first if we want to understand Boxhorn's intentions in defending the principle of the right of primogeniture in 1649.¹³

The first difference concerns a matter of principle. In thesis two of the original disputation we read that 'although it is for those, who look at election and succession from a theoretical standpoint of view, absolutely clear that election must be favoured above succession, these people [the Greeks-JN] did not lack weighty and good reasons to rightfully deem succession better, and more internally consistent with the commonwealth, than election'.¹⁴ In 1649, however, the first part of this sentence is missing. It now simply states that the people that lived in antiquity had good reasons to favour succession above election.¹⁵ Thus, by deliberately leaving out that, theoretically speaking, election should be preferred to succession Boxhorn gives the choice for succession a more radical character.

The second difference concerns the historical cases treated in each version. Obviously, the pamphlet of 1649 has the right of prince Charles to the throne of England as its historical case. In the original disputation, however, the historical case consists of the claim of Charles I Louis (1617-1680), the eldest living son of Frederick V (1596-1632), the former elector of the Palatinate, to the electorate of the Palatinate.¹⁶ The latter case is important, because, as will

late Proceedings, *And of Settling the present Government In the way of A Free State* (Printed for Edward Husband; London, 1649), in *The Struggle for Sovereignty: Seventeenth-Century English Political Tracts*. Edited and with an Introduction by Joyce Lee Malcolm, Vol. 1 (Liberty Fund; Indianapolis, 1999), pp. 370-71; Kishlansky, *A Monarchy Transformed*, p. 193; Frijhoff and Spies, *Hard-Won Unity*, p. 70. Van der Boxe had a keen interest in English affairs. In the 1630s and 1640s he was involved in the translation and/or publication of a number of Puritan tracts. The Royal Library holds 117 books by Van der Boxe; one is printed in the original language, sixteen are translated from the English. Cis van Heertum, "Willem Christiaens van der Boxe's Translation of *The Parliament of Women* (1640)", in Susan Roach (ed.), *Across the Narrow Seas: Studies in the History and Bibliography of Britain and the Low Countries* (British Library; London, 1991), p. 151.

¹² 'De successione et iure primogenitorum in adeundo principatu, Julius Henricus Carer respondus'. It was published together with several other disputations in Boxhorn, *Emblemata politica: accedunt dissertationes politicae de Romanorum Imperio et quaedamaliae*, XVII, pp. 356-82. Also in Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn, *Varii Tractatus Politici* (Caspar Commelinus; Amsterdam, 1663), pp. 533-47.

¹³ Wansink also refers to the original version. However, he fails to point out these differences. Wansink, *Politieke wetenschappen aan de Leidse universiteit*, p. 242.

¹⁴ Boxhorn, *Emblemata politica: accedunt dissertationes politicae de Romanorum Imperio et quaedamaliae*, XVII.2, p. 357. 'Quamquam verò electionem ac successionem extra complexum hujus vel illius Reipub. insipientibus, illa huic haud dubie anteferenda sit, graves tamen idoneaeque rationes iis non defuere, quibus successio potior electione ac Reipub. convenientior merito visa est.'

¹⁵ Boxhorn, *De successione et iure primogenitorum*, p. 6. 'Graves tamen idoneaeque rationes iis non defuerunt, quibus successio potior electione ac Reipublicae convenientior, merito visa est.'

¹⁶ Charles I Louis was the second son of Frederick V and Elizabeth Stuart (1596-1662), daughter of king James I. After the Battle at White Mountain (November 8, 1620) Frederick fled with his family to the United Provinces, where he stayed until his death in 1632. In 1623 he was officially deprived of his

become clear, the arguments that Boxhorn brings forward in *both* versions to defend the principle of the right of primogeniture are closely connected with the German context with which the original disputation is concerned.

Boxhorn gives two ways by which states (*imperia*) can be entrusted to princes: by election or by 'right of blood and order of succession'.¹⁷ The last mode is the most common, and, in the dissertation of 1649, also the most preferred. Succession has several benefits in comparison to election. First, the bravery of past generations of rulers somewhat 'genetically' passes on to the next generation. Second, and rather optimistically, Boxhorn argues that succession provides the security that there will always be successors. Third, it blocks the way for greedy people to obtain power. Fourth, it will induce in rulers a passion to take good care of their heirs' future heritage. Finally, succession avoids the inconveniences that can stem from election or from the nature of the people.¹⁸ These, then, are the general benefits of succession. They do not, however, explain to us the specific advantages of a right of first-born children. For this we must look further.

Boxhorn distinguishes two sorts of states or forms of rule that he connects to two forms of succession: a patrimonial one and a legal one.¹⁹ A patrimonial principate (*principatus patrimonialis*) is the property of its prince. The prince has full rights over his principate and may do with it what he pleases. In such a principate the prince can freely elect his successor according to his own insights.²⁰ This form of succession is a transaction of property, from one owner

territories by an Imperial edict. The Peace of Westphalia restored the Lower Palatinate to his son Charles I Louis. The Upper Palatinate, however, remained in the hands of Frederick William (1620-1688), the elector of Brandenburg. Parker, *Europe in Crisis*, pp. 122-35, 207, and D.E.L. de Boer, *Het oude Duitsland: een geschiedenis van de Duitse landen van 1450 tot 1800* (Uitgeverij Verloren; Hilversum, 2004), pp. 132-35, 159.

¹⁷ Boxhorn, *De successione et iure primogenitorum*, p. 5. 'Imperia quaedam eligentium suffragiis, alia sanguinis jure ac succedendi ordine Principibus deferuntur.'

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 7.

¹⁹ 'Principatus patrimoniales et haereditarii' and 'principatus legitimi'. In the Dutch version of the *De successione et iure primogenitorum* the term 'principatus' is translated as 'rijk' meaning 'empire' or 'state'. But it is also translated as 'heerschappij' meaning 'mastery', 'dominion' or 'rule'. According to the Cromwellian polemicist John Hall (1627-1656), 'the distinction was one of his [i.e. Boxhorn's-JN] own Coyning, never pretended before'. John Hall, *The Grounds and Reasons of Monarchy Considered. In a Review of the Scotch Story, gathered out of Their Best Authours and Records* (?; Edinburgh, 1650), p. 49. As far as I know, this is the only English response to Boxhorn's *De successione et iure primogenitorum*. For John Hall, see Pincus, *Protestantism and Patriotism*, p. 20, and Jason Peacey, "Cromwellian England: A Propaganda State?", in *History*, Vol. 91, No. 302 (2006), pp. 189-93. Hall, however, was mistaken; the distinction that Boxhorn makes between a legal principate and a patrimonial principate shows close resemblance to the distinction Grotius draws in his *De iure belli ac pacis* between kings who 'enjoy the Sovereign power' 'by a full Right of Property', or 'by an usufructuary Right' or 'a temporary Right'. In the commentaries that he attached to his translation of Grotius's work the French scholar Jean Barbeyrac (1674-1744) defined the first case as a patrimonial kingdom and the second case as an usufructuary kingdom. In the former the prince possessed a full right to alienate the crown, in the latter not. See Hugo Grotius, *The Rights of War and Peace*. Edited and with an Introduction by Richard Tuck, Vol. 1 (Liberty Fund; Indianapolis, 2005), I.3.11, p. 280.

²⁰ Boxhorn, *De successione et iure primogenitorum*, p. 8. 'Principatus patrimonialis et haereditarius est, de quo possessor libere et pro arbitrato disponit, et testamentum condit, et imperat legata, et successorem ac haerodem quem vult sibi facit.'

to another and can even take place without a legal document (*ab intestato*). It is a succession by means of 'passing on' (*successio per transmissionem*).²¹

A legal principate (*legitimus principatus*), on the contrary, is not the prince's possession. The prince has the right of *usufructus*, the right of profit and enjoyment. He does not own the principate, he only governs it (*administrare*).²² The legal principate is characterised by the fact that the succession is *per remotionem*, by the force of a treaty.²³ The successor succeeds by the right of kinship or by the right of being first born, *primogenitur*. When the bloodline of a ruling family dies out the people or their magistrates have the right to elect someone new, because succession in a legal principate is accorded by right or custom 'on the strength of mutual consent and first distribution'.²⁴

Thus, in a legal principate the succession of the prince is constituted legally, 'by the force of law'; it does not depend on the will of its former ruler.²⁵ The most common form of legal succession is 'succession in line' (*successio linealis*): 'that form of succession by which, via the closest blood relatives of him, of whose family the people, providence, and the laws of the ancestors once have approved, the state inevitably stays in the hands of that same family, as long as it is kept under those conditions that once has been agreed upon.'²⁶ This form of succession can originate from the people or from a prince.²⁷

²¹ Ibidem, p. 9. 'In illo Patrimoniali successio est, quae dicitur, *Successio per transmissionem*, seu patrimonialis haereditaria ex testamento, vel ab intestato.'

²² Ibidem, p. 10. 'Sequitur, uni familiae, & in ea proximis, ad principatum quaesito jure, principatum non in patrimonio, dominio aut proprietate principis esse sed jure quasi usufructuario, vel potius tanquam administratorem possidere.'

²³ Ibidem, p. 9. 'In hoc autem legitimo, successio, quae dicitur *Successio per remotionem*, seu linealis legitima, vi contractus & legis, à defuncti jure aut dispositione non dependens.'

²⁴ Ibidem, p. 11. 'Non ex dispositione eius, cui succeditur, sed legis et consuetudinis, vi pacti et primae concessionis proximo cuique debita.'

²⁵ Ibidem, p. 8. 'Ex hujus igitur legis, quae proximum succedere voluit, praescripto, non arbitrio ejus, qui proxime gessit principatum, aut testamentali iure fit, ut proximus necessario succedat.' The prince as a minister, whose rule and rights are grounded upon 'mutual consent' and 'first contribution' are important features of what Howell Lloyd has called 'constitutionalism', a term that 'signifies advocacy of a system of checks upon the exercise of political power. Such a system is commonly taken to involve the rule of law, a separation of legislative from executive and from judicial power, and representative institutions to safeguard the individual and collective rights of a people who, while governed, are nonetheless sovereign.' In this chapter, but especially in chapter 8, we will see that Boxhorn indeed adhered to many characteristics of this 'constitutionalism', although we have to keep in mind that, just as Lloyd himself acknowledges, the term 'had no currency in the political thought of the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries'. Howell A. Lloyd, "Constitutionalism", in Burns (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Political Thought*, pp. 254-63.

²⁶ Ibidem, p. 7. 'Illa [successio linealis-JN] hic nobis est, legitimus capessendi imperii modus, quo per sanguine proximis illi, in cujus familiam ut regnaturam populus ac providentia & leges majorum semel consensere, in eâdem, quamdiu superest, iis, in quas conventum est, legibus, imperium necessario continuatur.'

²⁷ In the *Institutiones politicae* Boxhorn explains that succession is the product of 'election' or 'occupation'. Election is typical of the people; occupation is typical of princes and aristocrats, who do so against the people. Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I.3, pp. 17-18. See chapter 8.

A legal mode of succession has two great advantages. First, the insecurities and irregularities of elections are avoided. Second, succession also avoids that those ‘majestic states should depend on the will of a human being, who is frequently driven into opposite positions by his passions, or on a hereditary, patrimonial right that someone can steal or take away’.²⁸ A legal mode of succession prevents a principate from being divided, and from this, weakened and disintegrated by the pleasure of the prince (*ab libitu principis*). This preservation of territorial unity is in the interest of the people, because they will be more efficiently governed and better protected when they are living in a large, undivided *principatus* that is governed by one single authority that can use all the resources the *principatus* has to offer on the people’s behalf. ‘Therefore’, Boxhorn concludes, ‘it is not without reason that it has been said, that the common good and the prosperity of all turns upon this right [of primogeniture-JN].’²⁹ Thus, the particular importance of the right of primogeniture consists of the fact that it helps to preserve territorial unity, which, on its turn, serves the common good. This is precisely the same link that is made in the Golden Bull of emperor Charles IV (1316-1378); and it is with a reference to this Golden Bull that the claim of Charles I Louis to the electorate of the Palatinate is defended in the original disputation.³⁰

The right of primogeniture, as an eternal law of the realm or as a common law, binds both the prince and his subjects. The prince can alienate his own rights by free consent. This, however, does not invalidate the rights of his lawful successor. ‘Because the law of the realm, against which the prince can do nothing, wants that the administration of the realm begins and continues in that same order.’³¹ In a hereditary principality this law of the realm remains binding even when the prince has forfeited his rights to rule by the crimes he has committed. In such a case the person next in line automatically succeeds

²⁸ Boxhorn, *De successione et iure primogenitorum*, p. 7. ‘... & ne augusta imperia vel ab arbitrio hominis, quem identidem transversum affectus agunt, vel à jure haereditario patrimoniali, quod auferri & adimi potest ...’

²⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 11. ‘Quare et publicum bonum ac commodum in hoc jure versari, haud temere asseritur.’

³⁰ Boxhorn, *Emblemata politica: accedunt dissertationes politicae de Romanorum Imperio et quaedamaliae*, XVII.14, p. 370. Decreed in 1356 at a Reichstag in Nuremberg, the Golden Bull would fix the election of the king of the Holy Roman Empire, and regulate its procedures for 400 years. According to article seven of the Golden Bull, the secular electorate (*titulus et officium*) and its privileges (*ius, vox et potestas*) fall to the first-born male heir (*filium suum primogenitum legitimum laicum*) Why? ‘Pro bono commune’, because in this way a quarrel among the male heirs about who it is that owns the privileges that are connected to the electorate can be avoided. Article 25 states that the dukeships of the electors (*kurfürstendom*) is indivisible. The electorate and its privileges were inextricably bound up with the dukeship. See *Die Golden Bulle Kaiser Karls IV vom Jahre 1356*. Text Herausgegeben von der Deutschen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin zentralinstitut für geschichte. Bearbeiten von Wolfgang D. Fritz. (Hermann Bohlaus; Weimar, 1972), pp. 60-62, 82-83.

³¹ Boxhorn, *De successione et iure primogenitorum*, p. 15. ‘Lex enim regni, contra quam non integrum est principi quicquam facere, eo ordine regni iniri et continuari voluit administrationem.’

to the throne. To withhold the successor of his lawful inheritance would institute an illegal act, especially if the respective successor is himself innocent of any crime.³² Thus, neither the prince, nor his subjects are allowed to annul this law of the realm, that is, the right of primogeniture.³³

Boxhorn takes the discussion a step further when he denies that in a hereditary principality subjects have the right to change the monarchical form of government into an aristocracy or a democracy.³⁴ To support this point, Boxhorn refers to book 2, chapter 82 of the *Controversiarum* (*Controversies*, 1564) of the famous Spanish jurist Fernando Vázquez.³⁵ This chapter deals with the question ‘whether the people can acquire “liberty and relaxation of subjection” (*libertatem ac ditionis laxitatem*) from the prince’.³⁶ In thesis three Vázquez confirms that ‘whether by force or on their own initiative they began to be subject, there is no doubt that they can repair to their own freedom from restriction (*laxitatem suam*) and vindicate themselves therein’.³⁷ Even if the people had subjected themselves out of free will, they kept the right to renounce their subjection. The consensus of the people (*consensus populi*) is by its nature revocable,³⁸ since ‘nothing is so natural, as that each thing should be dissolved in the same way as it was put together ... and every *res* easily reverts to its nature or origin ... and no one can impose such a law upon his own will and *arbitrium*, from which it is not licit for him to withdraw’.³⁹ What is more, the

³² Parliament forfeited prince Charles’s right to the English throne not only on the ground of what his father had done, but also because he himself had fought against Parliament. See *A Declaration of the Parliament of England*, p. 380.

³³ Nor anyone else for that matter. In the original disputation the argument is, of course, aimed at other sovereigns, namely the German emperor, Ferdinand II (1578-1637), and the elector of Brandenburg, Frederick William.

³⁴ This point is absent in the original disputation. Boxhorn probably added it in reaction to the decision by the House of Commons to abolish the monarchy.

³⁵ Fernando Vázquez de Menchaca, *Controversiarum illustrium aliarumque usu frequentium. Libri tres*. Boxhorn owned a copy of the *Controversiarum*. See *Catalogus Variorum & Insignium Librorum, Celeberrimi ac Eruditissimi Viri Marci Zueri Boxhornii*, iv.

³⁶ I have taken the liberty to follow the English translation given by Annabel Brett in Annabel S. Brett, *Liberty, Right and Nature: Individual Rights in Later Scholastic Thought* (Cambridge University Press; Cambridge, 1997), pp. 196-97. For the Latin text I follow volume 4 of the modern Spanish edition of Vázquez’s *Controversiarum*. Fernando Vázquez de Menchaca, *Controversiarum illustrium aliarumque usu frequentium. Libri tres*. *Obra del jurisconsulto vallisotena D. Fernando Vázquez de Menchaca. Reimpresión por acuerdo de la Universidad de Valladolid*. Transcripción, notas y traducción de D. Fidel Rodríguez Alcalde, Vol. 4 (“Cuesta”; Valladolid, 1934).

³⁷ Vázquez, *Controversiarum illustrium*, II.82.3. ‘Sed sive vi sive sponte sua subditi esse coepissent, non dubium est, quin possent in suam laxitatem sese recipere ac vindicare ...’ Boxhorn, *De successione et iure primogenitorum*, p. 21.

³⁸ Gustaaf van Nifterik, *Vorst tussen volk en wet: over volkssoevereiniteit en rechtsstatelijkheid in het werk van Fernando Vázquez de Menchaca (1512-1569)* (Ph.D.-dissertation; Rotterdam, 1999), p. 142.

³⁹ Vázquez, *Controversiarum illustrium*, II.82.4. ‘Nihil enim tam naturale est, quam unumquodque eo modo dissolvi quo colligatum fuit ... & quaeque res de facili revertitur ad suam naturam seu originem ... neque enim quisquam voluntati & arbitrio suo eam legem imponere potest, a qua sibi recedere non liceat ...’ Boxhorn, *De successione et iure primogenitorum*, pp. 21-22.

people are even allowed, although partially, to depart from the law of nations, the law of nature, and divine law.⁴⁰ In a nice example of manipulative presentation Boxhorn states that this was Vázquez's version of 'the corrupt, evil, and unjust opinion or feeling of the fickle rabble'.⁴¹ However, Vázquez also delivers the correct answer to this 'vulgar opinion': 'for in the case of kingdoms or principates which for a thousand years or more have been passed on by succession, not election, and where it is not clear by what right the men or peoples were first subjected ... there is no reason why we should not believe that they were subdued and subjected by the best of rights ... From this we can conclude that no one is free, or that it is lawful, to derogate from that power, to prevent that something will be done against that right, which since long is established.'⁴² Thus, Boxhorn uses a common law argument to deny the legitimacy of England's new non-monarchical regime.

It is at this thesis that I.B. takes offence. I.B. follows Vázquez's opinion that the people, whose consent is the foundation of royal power, may revoke their consent 'when they deem that it will be to their benefit and to the public's advantage'.⁴³ The prince is a *princeps inter pares*, a member of the people, who lives under the same laws as the people. A prince can therefore 'be judged by the people'.⁴⁴ A right of primogeniture that is always binding, even after thousands of years, nullifies the people's realm of action and makes them powerless slaves. In other words, a hereditary principality governed by a right of primogeniture tends too much to tyranny.⁴⁵ I.B. prefers a polyarchy, a government by many, with a prince as *princeps inter pares*, more or less in the same way as the world is governed by all its kings and princes

⁴⁰ Ibidem, II.82.5. '... nam non solum juri gentium, sed etiam naturali, & divino possumus in parte derogare, licet non in totum ...' Boxhorn, *De successione et iure primogenitorum*, p. 22.

⁴¹ Boxhorn, *De successione et iure primogenitorum*, p. 21. 'Respondet autem primo ex incerti vulgi corrupta, prava et iniqua opinione sive sententia.'

⁴² Vázquez, *Controversiarum illustrium*, II.82.6. '... sed non est ita, nam in regnis seu principatibus, qui jam diu forte abhinc annos mille, vel etiam plures successione non electione deferuntur, neque apparet, quo jure primum sub tali ditione ac imperio regio illa, homines, vel populi fuissent subacti, non est cur non credamus optime jure subactos subditosque fuisse ... unde non videtur ab eo imperio se subtrahere liberum, aut fas esse, ne contra illud jus jam veluti tempore stabilitum fiat ...' Boxhorn, *De successione et iure primogenitorum*, p. 23. The last sentence is my own translation.

⁴³ I.B., *Ad dissertationem Clarissimi Viri D.M.Z.B. De jure primogenitorum, Responsio*, p. 4. 'Consensum quoque Populi semel datum sive vi sive persuasione Adulatorum sive proprio instinctu, posse revocari quandocunque judicabit Populus id esse ex usu et utilitate publica, hoc est sua.'

⁴⁴ Ibidem, pp. 10-11. 'Dicendum etiam est revera principem non esse nisi primum ex populo ... Princeps itaque membrum et pars multorum hominum h.e. populi iisdem legibus et moribus viventium, judicari necessario debet à populo.'

⁴⁵ Thus, I.B. contents that prescription of time does not run against the people. In this he follows Theodore Beza (1519-1605) and the Huguenot tract the *Vindiciae, contra tyrannos*. Richard A. Jackson, "Elective Kingship and Consensus Populi in Sixteenth-Century France", in *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 44, No. 2 (1972), pp. 159-61.

with God as its absolute ruler.⁴⁶ Besides, if it is true that the crimes of the prince do not invalidate the right of his innocent heirs, and if it is true that the people are not allowed to vindicate their freedom and to choose another form of government, then the Dutch had no right to deny the heirs of Philip II their lawful inheritance. If Boxhorn would follow up on his own line of reasoning then he should have concluded that the Dutch Republic should never have existed.

Boxhorn's answer to I.B.'s theories and reproaches is the *De majestate regum principumque* (*On the Majesty of Kings and Princes*), a long scholarly tract dedicated to all the kings and princes of the Christian world.⁴⁷ In this tract Boxhorn fiercely attacks I.B.'s preference for a polyarchy. He depicts I.B.'s polyarchy as a commonwealth in which the majority governs. This, however, Boxhorn states, is impossible, since those who obey will always far exceed those who govern. I.B.'s plea for majority rule is really nothing more than a covert defense of anarchy, the death of every form of rule. This makes I.B. not only the enemy of kings, but also of the nobles and patricians that rule the Dutch Republic.⁴⁸ Boxhorn has turned the tables: not he, but I.B. is the real threat to the *patria*.

⁴⁶ I.B., *Ad dissertationem Clarissimi Viri D.M.Z.B. De jure primogenitorum, Responsio*, pp. 17-18.

⁴⁷ Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn, *De majestate regum principumque ac praerogativa et iure primogenitorum in adeundo principatu, liber singularis. Quo varia traduntur, & Anonymo respondetur* (Petrus Leffen; Leiden, 1649). Knuttel 6383. To the opinion of this author, the Dutch pamphlet '*t Secret van de Engelsche mis ...* (?; ?, 1649. Knuttel 6381), which is a reaction to I.B.'s *Ad dissertationem* and which has been ascribed to Boxhorn (see Wansink, *Politieke wetenschappen aan de Leidse universiteit*, p. 244), has not been written by Boxhorn. First of all, in '*t Secret* Boxhorn is referred to in the third singular form: 'he, Boxhorn.' Although Boxhorn was familiar with this form (he had edited a version of Caesar's works), he never seems to have used it himself. Second, the pamphlet is pretty vulgar. I.B. is called 'a reincarnated Devil' ('een ghevleysden Duyvel', p. 4) and 'a creature removed from Hell' ('een uyt de Helle afgebracht gebroedtsel', p. 5), while an elaborate argumentation is missing. Finally, the text is preceded by two poems that mock the death of Isaac Dorislaus (1595-1649), Cromwell's ambassador at The Hague, who was murdered on May 12, 1649, by Scottish royalists. These three points do not suggest that Boxhorn is the author of '*t Secret*. Thus, it seems there is a third player. Since it is almost impossible to find out who this third person was, or could have been, '*t Secret* is left out of the discussion here. We will also not further discuss the Dutch pamphlet *Mis-verstant Vanden Heer Professor Boxhorn*, a reaction to '*t Secret* written by I.B., because it does not hold any new argumentation. To this we can add that in the *De majestate* Boxhorn only refers to I.B.'s *Ad dissertationem*. For an overview of the works involved in the discussion between Boxhorn and I.B., see Van de Klashorst, Blom and Haitsma Mulier, *Bibliography of Dutch Seventeenth Century Political Thought*, pp. 55-58. There, on p. 57, the authorship of '*t Secret* is not attributed to Boxhorn.

⁴⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 92. 'Neque enim in Monarchia modo sed & Optimatum ac Populi, herili etiam ac paterno imperio, pauciores sunt qui imperant, quam qui obsequuntur. Hi numerare hic sese jubentur, ne obsequantur. Omnis igitur imperii, quodcunque tandem illud sit (in quocunque enim plerumque obsequuntur plures, quam imperant) jugulum hic petere Anonymum, nemo non intelligit.' This is not true. In his first reaction to Boxhorn I.B. claims that nothing is more detestable and worse than anarchy. 'Anarchia nihil est quidem miserabilius et detestabilius.' I.B., *Ad dissertationem Clarissimi Viri D.M.Z.B. De jure primogenitorum, Responsio*, p. 6. Boxhorn is deliberately trying to denounce I.B.'s credibility by making it look as if I.B. is defending anarchy. In the *Institutiones politicae*, however, Boxhorn actually defends polyarchic regimes, that is, rule by more than one person, against the criticism that they would lack effective power. Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, II.6, pp. 319-27. See chapter 8.

While he makes I.B. the enemy of every legitimate ruler, Boxhorn stands for the majesty of kings and the obedience that subjects owe to their lawful rulers.⁴⁹ At first sight Boxhorn takes a quite radical pro-monarchical standpoint. The kings are God's anointed and as such they may not be harmed; they are the fathers of their people, and like fathers they need to be obeyed; bad kings, indeed, even tyrants need to be obeyed at all times. Boxhorn supports these arguments with a mass of examples and references to the Bible, classical authors, and ancient and modern history.⁵⁰ On the other hand, Boxhorn keeps a window open for those who are oppressed. Citing Grotius's *De iure belli ac pacis* (*The Rights of War and Peace*, 1625), Boxhorn holds that collectively a people, as if they are acting like one person, can depose a king who has become a tyrant.⁵¹ Furthermore, fathers who give orders that run contrary to reason or nature do not need to be obeyed and tyrants may be killed.⁵²

The latent contradiction between these two opposite stands comes most clearly to the fore in the work of John of Salisbury (1115-1180) that Boxhorn quotes. According to Salisbury in his book *Policraticus* (1159), both kings and tyrants are God's anointed and his servants. As such, they need to be honoured and obeyed. The only recourse left to subjects is to pray for salvation.⁵³ Here, via the words of Salisbury, Boxhorn stresses passive suffering. Salisbury, however, also concludes that there is a form of tyranny that so far exceeds a public crime that everyone who 'does not prosecute' the person responsible for that tyranny 'transgresses against himself and against the whole body of the earthly republic'. This form of tyranny is the 'oppression of laws which should themselves command emperors'.⁵⁴

⁴⁹ Boxhorn explicitly explains that, regardless of the form of government, obedience is due to all rulers. To substantiate this thesis he refers to Paul's letter to the Romans 13:1, that speaks of powers in the plural form. Boxhorn, *De majestate*, pp. 88-89. This interpretation of Romans 13:1 was particular popular among those who attacked the prerogatives of kingship. See, for instance, Hall, *Grounds and Reasons of Monarchy*, p. 24.

⁵⁰ To name but a few: 1 Samuel 24:7-11; Psalm 105; 1 Peter 2:13-15; Tacitus, *The Annals*, IV.28-29, and VI.8; idem, *Agricola*, XXXII; Seneca, *Controversies*, IV.27; John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, IV.20.31.

⁵¹ Boxhorn, *De majestate*, p. 23, and Grotius, *The Rights of War and Peace*, I.4.11.

⁵² Ibidem, pp. 23-24. Here Boxhorn refers to the Stoic philosopher Musonius Rufus (first century AD).

⁵³ John of Salisbury, *Policraticus*, VIII.18, and VIII.20.

⁵⁴ Ibidem, III.15. Boxhorn, *De majestate*, p. 77. '*Cum multa sint crimina majestatis, nullum gravius est eo, QVOD ADVERSVS IPSVM JVSITITIAE CORPVS EXERCETUR. Tyrannis non modo publicum crimen, sed, si fieri posset, plus quam publicum est. Si enim crimen majestatis omnes persecutores admittit, quanto magis illud, quod leges premit, quae ipsis debent imperatoribus imperare? Certe quisquis hostem publicum non persequitur, in seipsum, & in totum Reipub. mundanae corpus delinquit.*' 'Although there are many forms of high treason, none of them is so serious as THAT WHICH IS EXECUTED AGAINST THE BODY OF JUSTICE ITSELF. Tyranny is, therefore, not only a public crime, but, if this can happen, it is more than public. For if all prosecutors may be allowed in the case of high treason, how much more are they allowed when there is oppression of laws which should themselves command emperors? Surely, whoever does not

What, then, are these laws that ‘should themselves command emperors?’ The answer to this question can be found in Boxhorn’s main political work, the *Institutiones politicae*. In the *Institutiones politicae* Boxhorn determines that three kinds of law bind a prince: the law of nature, the law of nations, and the *leges majestatis*.⁵⁵ The *leges majestatis* are those laws that the prince swears to uphold during his inauguration.⁵⁶ They are the fundamental laws of the commonwealth. Examples are the *joyeuse entrée* in Brabant and the Golden Bull in Germany.⁵⁷ A prince is not allowed to transgress these laws, because all matters, even the establishment of the *majestas* itself, derive from them.⁵⁸ Thus, the foundation of the prince’s authority, his *majestas*, originates from those laws that the prince himself is obligated to uphold. It is along these lines that Boxhorn justifies the Dutch Revolt at the end of the *De majestate*. The Revolt was legitimate because Philip II, by violating the privileges he had sworn to uphold, had lost his *majestas* and had become a tyrant.⁵⁹ Therefore, the provincial Estates held all rights to depose him. ‘They [i.e. the confederated Dutch-JN] ... have deprived him [i.e. their prince, Philip-JN], of his

prosecute [this] public enemy transgresses against himself and against the whole body of the earthly republic.’ John of Salisbury, *Policraticus: Of the Frivolities of Courtiers and the Footprints of Philosophers*. Edited and translated by Cary J. Nederman (Cambridge University Press; Cambridge, 1990), p. 25. The original version has a slightly different end. ‘Certe hostem publicum nemo ulciscitur, et quisquis eum non persecutur in se ipsum et in totum rei publicae mundanae corpus delinquit.’ (‘Surely no one will avenge a public enemy, and whoever does not prosecute him transgresses against himself and against the whole body of the earthly republic’). John of Salisbury, *Policraticus I-IV*. Edited K.S.B. Keats-Rohan (Brepols; Turnhout, 1993), p. 230. According to Jan van Laarhoven, John of Salisbury did not have a theory of tyrannicide, but ‘a *praxis*: he knows the historical practice, classical as well as biblical, and he draws only one conclusion: tyrants come to a miserable end. And he passes only one moral judgement on this fact: they are really deserving it’. Jan van Laarhoven, ‘Thou shalt not slay a Tyrant! The So-called Theory of John of Salisbury’, in Michael Wilks (ed.), *The World of John of Salisbury* (Basel Blackwell; Oxford, 1984), pp. 319-41, with quote on p. 328. However, the quotation that Boxhorn takes from John of Salisbury does pass a moral judgement on those who do not act against a tyrant, thereby making it seem that John of Salisbury did leave room to actively oppose a tyrant.

⁵⁵ Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I.4, p. 38. ‘An Princeps sit solutus legibus? Dicimus solutum legibus à Majestate profectis, non solutum legibus Majestatis, legibus Naturae et Gentium.’ In a dissertation on the Achaean league Boxhorn claims that even a prince who ‘holds absolute power in a commonwealth has to admit that he is utterly obedient to natural laws, the laws of nations, and divine laws. If he disregards these laws, I see no reason why he should not be deprived of the power to command’. Marcus Zuierius Boxhorn, ‘De Veteri Achaeorum Republica, & diversa ejus mutatione ac forma’, in idem, *Varii Tractatus Politici*, 3, p. 570. ‘Ut ut enim Princeps absolutissimam in Republica obtineat potestatem, tamen se naturalibus, Gentium ac Divinis legibus, obnoxium fateri debet: quas si contemnat, nil video obstare, quo minus imperio privetur.’ Boxhorn follows here in the footsteps of Grotius, *The Rights of War and Peace*, I.3.16, p. 300. ‘I do not speak here of the Observations of the natural, and divine Law, or even of the Law of Nations, to which all Kings stand obliged, tho’ they have promised nothing.’ The dissertation on the Achaean league was held by a student named R. a Breda and presided by Boxhorn; it was first published at Leiden in 1647. See Van de Klashorst, Blom and Haitsma Mulier, *Bibliography of Dutch Seventeenth Century Political Thought*, p. 50.

⁵⁶ Ibidem, I.5, p. 57. ‘Leges majestatis ... in quas jurare initio principatus solent.’

⁵⁷ Ibidem, p. 64. These examples are given by George Hornius in his commentaries.

⁵⁸ Ibidem, I.4, p. 39. ‘Neque esse violandas, quia omnia inde sunt, etiam institutio Majestatis.’

⁵⁹ Herbert H. Rowen, ‘The Dutch Republic and the Idea of Freedom’, in David Wootton (ed.), *Republicanism, Liberty, and Commercial Society, 1649-1776* (Stanford University Press; Stanford, 1994), p. 311.

power, not so much as prince, but as subject of those laws he had sworn under oath and which he had violated in many terrible and previously unheard of ways. They did so, not as subjects, but as Estates, who, in the previous centuries, shared in power, nay more, whose power exceeded that of the prince.⁶⁰ This last remark may give us a clue why Boxhorn did not consider it necessary to disprove I.B.'s reproach that according to the right of primogeniture Philip II should have been succeeded by his heirs. The remark shows close resemblance to the Dutch resistance thesis that claimed that in the Low Countries the provincial States held sovereignty. They were the representatives of the people and guardians of the local privileges. As such, they were not only allowed, but also obligated to defend these privileges when these were transgressed.⁶¹ This thesis found its completion in Grotius's *De antiquitate*, in which it was further expressed that the provincial States of the United Provinces were accustomed to elect their princes.⁶² By following this line of argumentation Boxhorn did not need to refute I.B.'s reproach; the right of primogeniture simply did not apply to the Low Countries.⁶³

At this point we can draw some provisional conclusions. The execution of king Charles I and the proclamation of the Commonwealth had direct consequences for the Dutch Republic. England, the Republic's most important commercial rival but also one of its most important trading partners, was now *de facto* governed by a regime that was officially at war with the blood relatives of the Republic's most esteemed noble family, the family of Orange. During the civil wars the Dutch Republic had always insisted on neutrality. After the execution, however, pressure mounted to review this standpoint. What to do?

Boxhorn's answer in the *De successione et iure primogenitorum* is quite straightforward and constructed to prove that England would still have been a monarchy if the law of the realm, that is, the right of primogeniture, had been followed up. Yet it was not. Instead, the monarchy had been abolished and the

⁶⁰ Boxhorn, *De majestate*, p. 100. 'qui [Foederati Belgae-JN] ... non tam Principem, quam subjectum iis in quas juraverat, quasque multis & inauditi terroris modis violaverat, legibus, nec subjecti, sed Ordines, ab omnibus retro saeculis consortes imperii, imo vi imperii majores, imperio exuere [Principem suum Philippum-JN].'

⁶¹ Nicolette Mout, "Ideales Muster oder erfundene Eigenart: Republikanische Theorien während des niederländischen Aufstands", in Helmut G. Koenigsberger (ed.), *Republiken und Republikanismus in Europa der Frühen Neuzeit* (Oldenbourg; München, 1988), pp. 169-94, and Martin van Gelderen, *The Political Thought of the Dutch Revolt 1555-1590* (Cambridge University Press; Cambridge, 1st ed. 1992, 2002), pp. 262-65.

⁶² Grotius, *The Antiquity of the Batavian Republic*, especially chapters two and five. This construction of the Dutch past, which was used to legitimise the Dutch Revolt and thus the existence of the Dutch Republic, is also known as the 'Batavian myth'. See E.O.G. Haitzma Mulier, "De Bataafse mythe opnieuw bekeken", in *Bijdragen en mededelingen betreffende de geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, Vol. 111 (1996), pp. 344-67.

⁶³ As we shall see in Boxhorn's *Commentariolus*.

form of government had been changed. Although he gives a distorted picture of the author's true intention, Boxhorn applies Vázquez's *Controversiarum* to show that this constituted an illegal act.⁶⁴ Thus, the new republican regime in England was illegal and should not be recognised by the Dutch Republic, a standpoint that was put forward by many adherents of William II, the prince of Orange. Boxhorn, however, did not denounce the new regime because it was non-monarchical. Indeed, as the discussion with I.B. shows, it is no so much the principle of monarchical rule that is at stake – I.B. never questions the legitimacy of monarchical rule –, but the just relationship between rulers and subjects within a polity.⁶⁵

In addition, Boxhorn's argument also contains another message, albeit less direct, which relates more with the internal tensions that troubled the Dutch Republic at that time. In both the *De successione* and the *De majestate* Boxhorn emphasises the obedience that *both* parties in the political spectrum owe to the law. It is true that in the *De majestate* subjects are almost reduced to a state of slavish suffering, yet Boxhorn also expects rulers to respect the laws that form the foundation of their authority.⁶⁶ The right of primogeniture forms an example: on the one hand, it eliminates the capriciousness of the people, because it does not allow them the opportunity to let their voices be heard in free elections. On the other hand, it also binds the arbitrary will of the prince (*libitum principis*). Thus, the law, which Boxhorn defines in the *Institutiones politicae* as 'a magistrate without emotion', seems to be directed against the 'passion of men'.⁶⁷ Put against the background of the rising tensions between the States

⁶⁴ For Vázquez, the people's freedom to withdraw their consent remained crucial. He did not couch the relationship between the prince and the people in the terms of private law, where the consent of both bodies is needed to annul a contractual relationship. Brett, *Liberty, Right and Nature*, pp. 196-200, and Van Niffterik, *Vorst tussen volk en wet*, pp. 143-47.

⁶⁵ Blom, "Les réactions hollandaises à l'exécution de Charles I'", pp. 203-4.

⁶⁶ This last point was taken up by James Steuart (1635-1713) in his *Jus Populi Vindicatum*, who referred to the *De majestate* to prove his point that the son of a king does not follow in his father's right 'through right of inheritance, but through the force of the law by which he is the first-born' ('iure haereditario, sed vi legis per quam primogenitus ...'). Boxhorn, *De majestate*, p. 11. Such a law was, according to Steuart, constituted by the people. James Steuart, *Jus Populi Vindicatum* (?; London, 1669), p. 87. See further, Robert von Friedeburg, "From Collective Representation to the Right to Individual Defence: James Steuart's *Jus Populi Vindicatum* and the Use of Johannes Althusius's *Politica* in Restoration Scotland", in *History of European Ideas*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (1998), pp. 19-42.

⁶⁷ Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I.6, p. 60. 'Legem esse Magistratum sine affectu.' The critics of hereditary monarchy would of course reproach this argumentation by claiming the exact opposite: hereditary monarchy would put a man on the throne who was likely to be guided by his passions, since he did not need to earn his office and because he, while being the first heir, was surrounded by flatterers who would seduce him to follow his own insights and passions. This first point was of particular importance, because, as John Hall put it, 'Matters of Government ought to be governed by prudence, but this [i.e. hereditary succession-JN] is to put them into the hands of Fortune'. Hall, *The Grounds and Reasons of Monarchy Considered*, p. 48. Then again, John Hall was an author who rejected hereditary monarchy in all its forms. David Wootton, "Introduction: The Republican Tradition: From Commonwealth to Common Sense", in idem, *Republicanism, Liberty, and Commercial Society, 1649-1776*, p. 31. The

of Holland and William II, the works can be seen as Boxhorn's warning to the parties involved to not act hasty and emotionally, but to abide to the laws, the rules, and the logic that regulated the workings of the Dutch Republic.

The case of the Republic stated

In the same year of Boxhorn's dispute with I.B. his *Commentariolus* appeared. The *Commentariolus* is an analysis of the nature, structure, and workings of the Dutch Republic. Contemporaries judged it as a book that revealed the *arcana imperii*, the most secret designs and internal workings of the Dutch state.⁶⁸ During the 1650s and 1660s the *Commentariolus* was one of the most popular books on the Dutch Republic. At least six different editions of the book appeared, in both Latin and Dutch.⁶⁹ By examining the *Commentariolus* we can explain its popularity and get a better understanding of how the Dutch thought about their own Republic. To achieve this, we first need to go back to 1649, the year when the *Commentariolus* was first published.

In a letter to Guy Patin (1601-1672), the doyen of the medical faculty at the Sorbonne, Samuel Sorbière, who was at Leiden that year, informed Patin that he had come across a 'rather peculiar little book', Boxhorn's *Commentariolus*. According to Sorbière's information Boxhorn had drafted his *Commentariolus*

same notion that (earthly) monarchy was intrinsic corruptive because it did not produce 'prudent and virtuous' men, stood at the heart of Milton's criticism of monarchy. William Walker, "Paradise Lost and the Forms of Government", in *History of Political Thought*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (2001), p. 290, and Paul A. Rahe, "The Classical Republicanism of John Milton", in *History of Political Thought*, Vol. 25, No. 2 (2004), p. 245. In the Dutch Republic the theme of monarchy and 'passionate rule' was most forcefully expressed by the brothers De la Court. See, for example, V.H., *Consideratien en Exempelen van Staat, omtrent de Fundamenten van allerley Regeringe* (Jan Jacobsz. Dommekracht; Amsterdam, 1660), I.6-14, pp. 11-39.

⁶⁸ Samuel Sorbière, *Lettres et Discours de M. de Sorbiere, sur diverses Matieres Curieuses* (François Clousiers; Paris, 1660), pp. 438-39.

⁶⁹ Between 1649 and 1678 Boxhorn's *Commentariolus* saw six Latin editions (1649, 1650, 1650, 1654, 1659, 1668); from the third edition onwards it was published together with the *De Statu Reipublicae Batavae Diatriba* (*Discourse on the Condition of the Dutch Commonwealth*; first published under the title *De natura reipublicae Batavae* by Jacob Marcus at Leiden in 1618) of the Dutch lawyer and historian Paulus Merula and the *Corte verthoninghe van het Recht byden Ridderschap, Eedelen, ende Steden van Hollandt ende Westvrieslant* (*A Short Exposition of the Rights exercised by the Knights, Nobles and Towns of Holland and West-Friesland*) written by François Vranck. The *Commentariolus* was also translated into Dutch: Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn, *Politijck hant-boecxken, van de Staet van 't Nederlandt* (?; ?, 1650). Like the Latin edition, the Dutch edition enjoyed quite a popularity and saw at least five more editions (1650, 1651, 1652, 1660, 1674). Merula's and Vranck's tracts were incorporated with the Dutch version of the *Commentariolus* from the second edition onwards; from the fourth edition onwards with Boxhorn's *Militair repartitie-boecxken*, a tract describing the organisation and workings of the Dutch army. There also appeared one French edition; Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn, *L'estat et gouvernement politique & militaire, tant par mer que par terre, des Provinces confédérés au Pais-bas*, (?; ?, 1653). Thus, most editions appeared in 1650, when the conflict between the States of Holland and stadholder William II came to head, and during the First Anglo-Dutch War. See also Frijhoff and Spies, *Hard-Won Unity*, p. 82. Unless stated otherwise, in this thesis all references to the Dutch version of the *Commentariolus* refer to the first Dutch edition of 1650.

for his *politica* students and had dictated it to them at his private lectures. The lecture notes that were the result had become so widespread that they had finally ended up in the hands of a bookseller, who had them published, without, however, mentioning Boxhorn's name.⁷⁰

Several sources seem to confirm Sorbière's story.⁷¹ However, neither they nor Sorbière's story can give a decisive answer to the question if Boxhorn him-

⁷⁰ Sorbière, *Lettres et Discours de M. de Sorbiere, sur diverses Matieres Curieuses*, pp. 438-39. 'Je vous ay envoyé un Petit livre assés curieux; *Commentariolus de Statu Provinciarum federati Belgii*, de la publication duquel on a esté fâché en ce Provinces, pource qu'il donne une Idée fort nette du gouvernement de cette Republique, et que cela devoit demeurer *inter Arcana Imperii*. *Boxhornius* avoit dressé ce Commentaire pour ses écoliers en politique, et le leur avoit dicté en particulier: mais le secret a esté éventé, et il s'en est fait tant de copies, qu'enfin un Libraire l'a mis sous la presse, sans y mettre son nom; et l'édition a esté plutost venduë, qu'on n'a eu le loisir de s'en formaliser.' See also Wansink, *Politieke wetenschappen aan de Leidse universiteit*, pp. 239-40. The bookseller was Johannes Verhoeve at The Hague. Verhoeve was also responsible for the Dutch translation and publication of Graswinckel's promonarchical dissertation on the government of England (see footnote 4 above). He would also publish Boxhorn's *Disquisitiones politicae* (see chapter 9, footnote 1). Unless stated otherwise, in this thesis all references to the *Commentariolus* refer to the 1649 Verhoeve edition.

⁷¹ See Baselius, "Historia vitae & obitus", viii-x, with the following quote on ix-x. 'Sed & Politicam discipulos suos docebat: non vulgarem modo & tritam, nudis praeceptis consistentem ... sed & ex Historiis desumptam adeoque practicam, imo παραδειγματικὴν. Hinc natae disquisitiones Politicae, postmodum juris publici factae, sed tacito authoris nomine, quae & saepius recusae sunt. Hinc & natus commentariolus de statu foederati Belgii, eodem modo editus, saepius item recusus & in Belgicam linguam versus.' The 1649 Verhoeve edition of the *Commentariolus* does indeed not mention the name of the author.

The Royal Library in The Hague holds two handwritten manuscripts of the *Commentariolus*. One of them is bound together with a handwritten copy of Boxhorn's *Disquisitiones politicae*. Both are signed by one Albertus Becker, whose identity I have been unable to find out. (No Albertus Becker, for example, is listed in the *album studiosorum* of the University of Leiden nor in that of Utrecht.) It is possible that Becker was one of the many students who studied at Leiden, but never officially enrolled as students at the town's University. (See Wansink, *Politieke wetenschappen aan de Leidse universiteit*, p. 5.) The differences between the text of Becker's handwritten copy of the *Commentariolus* and the text of the *Commentariolus* as it was published in 1649 by Verhoeve suggest that the 1649 Verhoeve edition was not available to Becker. Thus, it is very likely that Becker's handwritten copy of the *Commentariolus* predates the 1649 Verhoeve edition. Becker may have been one of the students who attended Boxhorn's private lectures on politics or, if he did not, he could have copied his version of the text of the *Commentariolus* from the text of someone who did. See Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn, *Status politicus unifornum Ordinum Belgicarum Provinciarum dictatus*. Edidit Albertus Becker (?). KB, 76 H 30.

The other manuscript of the *Commentariolus* is dated 1643. It contains three different handwritings. The first handwriting is the actual Latin manuscript of the *Commentariolus*. The second handwriting are notes on this Latin manuscript. This handwriting is in Dutch. The third handwriting are small notes, mostly in Dutch, scattered around the manuscript. They refer to both the Latin content of the *Commentariolus* in the first handwriting and to the Dutch notes in the second handwriting. The manuscript is attributed to Johan de la Court, who was at that time enrolled as a student at Leiden University. Kossmann, *Political Thought in the Dutch Republic*, p. 42, and Wansink, *Politieke wetenschappen aan de Leidse universiteit*, p. 240. Noel Malcolm has therefore suggested that Johan de la Court 'may have been responsible for the unauthorised printing' of the *Commentariolus*, since 'the work bears a suspicious resemblance to Johan's own notes on the lectures, which he heard in 1643'. Malcolm, "Hobbes and Spinoza", p. 547. However, due to a lack of material for comparison, Johan de la Court's authorship cannot be maintained for certain. A comparison with Pieter de la Court's notes in a copy of the *Aanwysing der heilsame politieke gronden en maximen van de Republike van Holland en West-Vriesland* (Hakkens; Leiden/Rotterdam, 1669. KB, 393 C 22) and his notes in a copy of the *Interest van Holland* (?; Amsterdam, 1662. KB, 73 B 17), on the other hand, teaches us that the third handwriting is almost certainly that of Pieter de la Court. However, when Pieter de la Court wrote his notes in the manuscript of the *Commentariolus* remains uncertain. See Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn, *Status Foederatarum Belgii Provinciarum, excerptus ex ore Clarissimi viri D.M. Zuerii Boxhornii Eloquentiae in Academia Lúgduno Batava professoris ordinarij. Anno 1643*. Edidit [Pieter de

self was in anyway involved in the publication of the *Commentariolus*. As far as the evidence goes, we can only say that Boxhorn never distanced himself from the publication of the *Commentariolus*, what can be interpreted as a sign that, although the *Commentariolus* was probably published years after Boxhorn had taught it to his students, he at least still agreed with its content. If we compare the date of the intellectual conception of the *Commentariolus* – which was probably somewhere in the early 1640s – to the date of its first publication we can see why this could be the case.⁷² Both in the early 1640s and in the years 1649-50 it was feared that the whole fabric of the Dutch Republic stood on the brink of collapse.⁷³ In 1640-41 it was suspected that the provinces, Holland in particular, were deliberately undermining the Union. In 1649-50 it looked as if the conflict between the States of Holland and William II would bring down the state, thereby confirming the fears Boxhorn had expressed the year before.⁷⁴ Thus, in both cases there was a need to evaluate and explain the

la Court?]) ([Leiden?], 1643). KB, 70 G 12. I would like to thank Jan Hartman and Arthur Weststeijn for their help on the issue of the handwritings in this particular manuscript of the *Commentariolus*.

⁷² Boxhorn's discussion of a treaty between the Dutch and Portuguese (*Commentariolus*, VII.12) and a Dutch expedition to Chile (*Commentariolus*, VIII.46) indicate that Boxhorn had dictated at least some parts of the *Commentariolus* after 1640. The treaty Boxhorn is referring to is probably the ten-years truce which the Dutch and Portuguese signed in June 1641, after the latter had revolted against Spain. The Dutch expedition to Chile to which Boxhorn is referring took place between early 1643, when the Dutch fleet had set sail, and March 1644, when the Dutch fleet had returned to the Dutch Republic. From Boxhorn's discussion of the Dutch expedition it becomes clear that at the time this part of the *Commentariolus* was written down the Dutch fleet had already left the Republic 'for some months' ('... ante menses aliquot ...') to try to forge an alliance with the native peoples of Chile against the Spaniards. Since Boxhorn seems to be unaware of the negative outcome of the expedition – no alliance was made in the end – this particular part of the *Commentariolus* can be dated between mid-1643 and the beginning of 1644 by which time the information about the Dutch failure to conclude an alliance with the Indians of Chile would have reached the Dutch Republic. Boxhorn, *Commentariolus*, VIII.46, pp. 137-38, with quote on the latter. I owe the information on the Dutch expedition to Chile and its consequences for dating this particular part of the *Commentariolus* to Alexander Bick, whom I want to thank for his help on this particular subject. I suspect that Boxhorn stopped teaching the content of the *Commentariolus* and, as we shall see in chapter 9, also that of the *Disquisitiones politicae*, around the time he started to preside public disputations on politics. Boxhorn got permission to hold these public disputations on May 29, 1643. Molhuysen, *Bronnen tot de geschiedenis der Leidsche Universiteit*, Vol. 2, pp. 275-76. The first of these public disputations was held on June 10, 1643. Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn, *Disputationum politicarum De Regio Romanorum Imperio prima, de Romuli Principatu ... Ad diem 10. Iunii, horis pomerid. in Aud. Philos.* (Bonaventura and Abraham Elzevier; Leiden, 1643).

⁷³ Groenveld, "Unie, religie, militie", pp. 67-87.

⁷⁴ See chapter 4. Groenveld, "Unie, religie, militie", pp. 67, 79-80; Frijhoff and Spies, *Hard-Won Unity*, pp. 73-77; Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, p. 674. Modern scholars have given different interpretations of the debates of 1648-50. Simon Groenveld has claimed that they were about the right balance of power within the Dutch Republic. Simon Groenveld, *De prins voor Amsterdam: reacties uit pamfletten op de aanslag van 1650* (Fibula-Van Dishoeck; Bussum, 1967), p. 33. According to Jan Poelhekke, the discussions concentrated on the 'national myth' of the Dutch 'war of liberation' and on 'the foundations' of the Dutch Republic. J.J. Poelhekke, "Kanttekeningen bij de pamfletten uit het jaar 1650", in idem, *Geen blijder maer in tachtigh jaer: verspreide studiën over de crisisperiode 1648-1651* (Walburg Pers; Zutphen, 1973), pp. 35-36, with quotes on the latter. Herbert Rowen has downplayed the ideological differences between the States of Holland and William II. He has held that there were no fundamental differences; both parties accepted the aristocratic nature of the Republic and its provincial government. According to Rowen, the real issue was if the stadholder was the leader of the state by hereditary right or not. Herbert H.

logic of the Republic's existence and its *apparatus movendi*. This is exactly what the *Commentariolus* did, and, judging by its success, clearly in an appealing way. However, the early 1640s and the years 1649-50 do differ on at least one important point. In the early 1640s the Dutch were still fighting their war with Spain. In the years 1649-50 that long war had recently ended. Thus, the *Commentariolus* was taught in a time of war, but published in a time of peace. This difference should be kept in mind when reading the *Commentariolus*.

The *Commentariolus* begins quite traditionally with a defence of the legitimacy of the Dutch Revolt against Philip II.⁷⁵ Following the popular 'Batavian myth' the *Commentariolus* repeats the well-known Dutch resistance thesis: the seven Dutch provinces that formed the United Provinces had revolted against Philip II because he had tried to subdue their ancient privileges and their way of government that had existed since Roman times. In order to defend their 'liberties' and to restore the highest power (*summum imperium*) to the provincial States, the Dutch had been forced to take up arms; for this reason they united themselves in the Union of Utrecht, 'the only cornerstone and foundation of this entire confederated alliance'.⁷⁶ Three remarks, however, merit attention. First, in the Dutch translation of the *Commentariolus* that conglomerate of seventeen provinces that contemporaries called the Low Countries is indicated with the singular term 'Nederlandt'.⁷⁷ We have seen this 'singular view' before in the Dutch translation of Boxhorn's *Oratio panegyrica de Belgarum pace*, in which Boxhorn had lamented the disintegration of the 'Dutch body'; this theme is also visible in the *Commentariolus*.⁷⁸ Second, the *Commentariolus* traces the beginning of the tyranny that had befallen the Dutch provinces not to the reign of Philip II but further back in time to the reign of emperor

Rowen, "The Revolution That wasn't: The *Coup d'État* of 1650 in Holland", in Craig E. Harline (ed.), *The Rhyme and Reason of Politics in Early Modern Europe: Collected Essays of Herbert H. Rowen* (Kluwer Academic Publishers; Dordrecht/Boston/London, 1992), p. 78.

⁷⁵ The *Commentariolus*, as it was published in 1649, consists of twelve chapters. They deal with the following issues: the origin of the United Provinces as an independent political entity and its laws; the way the Union exercises its power, and the Union's supreme council; the admiralties; the offices of captain-general and stadholder; the Republic's main defences; the Republic's alliances; the organisation of the two Dutch India Companies; the reasons why the Union of Utrecht will endure; the organisation of the provincial government, especially that of Holland; the organisation of Holland's urban governments; Holland's main sources of income. Thus, the *Commentariolus* first deals with issues that concern the greater entity, the Union, before exploring its constituent parts, the provinces, with Holland, the most dominant province, serving as an example for the rest.

⁷⁶ Boxhorn, *Commentariolus*, I.5, p. 6. 'Sic factum est, ut anno 1579. foedus inter eas iniretur Vltrajecti, & inde Vltrajectinum est appellatum, totius istius foederatae societatis column unicum ac fundamentum.'

⁷⁷ Idem, *Politijck hant-boecxken, van de Staet van 't Nederlandt*, I.1, p. 2. 'Nederlandt is begrepen in seventhien Provincien, ende nae dat eenighen het ghebiedt der Spaenjaerden hadden afgezwooren, soo wort het huyden verdeeldt in het Spaensche ende Vereenighde.'

⁷⁸ See chapter 4.

Charles V (1500-1558). Philip's reign only saw the 'completion' of this tyranny, executed by the cruel duke of Alva (1507-1582).⁷⁹ Third, the goal of this 'truly cruel and pernicious command' was 'that the Spaniards and those of Austria' were planning to erect a 'monarchical form of command' in the Netherlands and to subdue these lands so to gain a beachhead from where they could conquer the rest of Europe.⁸⁰ In this way Boxhorn situates the Dutch Revolt in the struggle against the attempts of the House of Habsburg to obtain a universal monarchy.⁸¹

To help the united provinces in their fight and to regulate their efforts, the Union of Utrecht provided them with a set of rules. According to the *Commentariolus*, these agreements were the Republic's main corpus of laws.⁸² They resulted from hard bickering and heated debates about ancient quarrels.⁸³ The

⁷⁹ Boxhorn, *Commentariolus*, I,3, pp. 4-5. In seventeenth-century Dutch historiography the reigns of Charles V and Philip II were interpreted differently. Although Charles V's policy could be described as 'opportunistic and machiavellistic', it was Philip II's reign that saw the birth of real tyranny. Only in the eighteenth century do we see that Charles's and Philip's policy are seen as one and the same. See L.H.M. Wessels, "Vader en zoon als probleem: Karel V en Filips II in de Nederlandse historiografie", in *Streven: cultureel maatschappelijk maandblad*, Vol. 6, No. 11 (2000), pp. 976-83. We will see in the next chapter that Boxhorn pushed the beginning of this tyrannical rule even further back in time. However, it must be noticed that already at the meeting between the duke of Anjou and the States General at Anjou's château of Plessis-les-Tours in September 1580 the delegation of the States General held Charles V responsible 'for all the ills that had befallen the country, because in Worms he had issued edicts against heresy without consulting the Estates of the Netherlands'. Helmut G. Koenigsberger, *Monarchies, States Generals and Parliaments: The Netherlands in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries* (Cambridge University Press; Cambridge, 2001), p. 301.

⁸⁰ *Ibidem*, I,4, p. 5. 'Contra Philippi absolutissima erat dominatio, contra leges usurpata, et contra fas omne iniquissima. Qui abdita principalium consiliorum propius inspiciunt, causâ atrocis adeo et perniciosi Belgii Imperii non aliam statuunt, quam quod hic sedem Monarchici illius Imperii promovendi, et bellorum proinde ponere, Hispani Austriacique constituissent, ob locorum inde in Galliam et Britanniam, hinc in Germaniam et Septentrionem, denique in omnem celebriorem Europae oram excurrentium opportunitatem.'

⁸¹ See for this theme Van Gelderen, "The Low Countries", pp. 376-81. The fact that Charles depicted himself as Alexander the Great, for whom 'the world was not enough' (*non sufficit orbis*), did much to foster the idea that the Habsburgs were striving for a universal monarchy. See Lisa M. van Hijum, *Grenzen aan macht: aspecten van politieke ideologie aan de hoven van Bourgondische en Bourgondisch-Habsburgse machthebbers tussen 1450 en 1555* (Ph.D.-dissertation, PrintPartners Ipskamp; Enschede, 1999), pp. 180-82.

⁸² Boxhorn, *Commentariolus*, I,5, p. 6. That the Union of Utrecht would be the foundation of the United Provinces was once again affirmed during the Great Council that was held after the death of William II. At his opening speech, Jacob Cats (1577-1660), the grand-pensionary of Holland, declared that the States of Holland judged 'that the concord and good agreement of the provinces is the firm foundation upon which the structure of this state can be built with certainty and kept in good union'. Three issues formed the core of the unity between the seven united Dutch provinces: the Union of Utrecht of 1579, the protestant religion as stipulated in the Synod of Dort, and the militia. As contemporaries understood it, the peace of Münster had altered things, because for the first time since the Union of Utrecht the Dutch Republic was not in a state of war. See Jacob Cats, *Anvoanck vande Grootte Vergaderinge der Vereenichde Nederlanden* (Matthys Sebastiaenszen; Leiden, 1651), pp. 4-5, with quote on p. 4. Knutzel 7029. The Union was basically erected to obtain a common goal, namely peace and independence by mutual defence. With the peace of Münster, both goals were obtained; there was therefore another reason to rethink the nature of the Union. Van Deursen, *De last van veel geluk*, p. 270.

⁸³ The *Commentariolus* gives a short overview of 21 of the original 26 articles of the Union of Utrecht. The articles that are left out are articles number 14, 15, 23, 24, and 25. Article 14 deals with the

Union did not mean the end of all these internal disputes, but it was decided to postpone them ‘until better and more convenient times’. Instead of fighting among each other over pretended rights, it was considered that it would be better to unite and fight their common enemy ‘for the preservation of freedom and the right of all’.⁸⁴ The more rich and powerful provinces, however, had objected that the Union would make them weaker and poorer because it obliged them to help the poorer and weaker provinces. This complaint was refuted and with success, because ‘if they would help each other it would be everybody’s fortune’.

Therefore, the most powerful should consider that they were not so much helping those who are weaker, as they would be promoting their own cause through those who are weaker. Finally, they should once again consider that the power and wealth they would spend to help those who are weaker, would not so much decline, but rather increase and grow stronger by the support and loyalty of those who are weaker.⁸⁵

The Union of Utrecht, the foundation of the Dutch Republic, then, was not a union of love, but a marriage of interests, one out of sheer necessity, amid an epic struggle between the forces of good and evil. This somewhat reluctant nature of the Republic’s foundation is also reflected in the development of what might be called the Republic’s ‘political infrastructure’. First, the deputies of the provincial States were gathered in the General States of the United Low Countries that functioned as a sort *ad hoc* council of war with William

restitution of goods to those Catholics formerly living in Holland and Zeeland, and who fall under the Pacification of Gent. Article 15 arranges financial compensation to those people who have left, are will be leaving any convent or monastery. Articles 23, 24, and 25 concern the oaths the stadholders, the magistrates, and the officers of each province and those who were employed by the Union had to take on upholding the articles of the Union and the militia. Robert Fruin, *Geschiedenis der staatsinstellingen in Nederland tot den val der Republiek*. Uitgegeven door Dr. H.T. Colenbrander (Martinus Nijhoff; The Hague, 1901), pp. 366-92.

⁸⁴ Boxhorn, *Commentariolus*, I,6, p. 18. ‘Verum exceptum ab aliis est, earum rerum cognitionem in meliora & opportuna magis tempora rejici oportere. Non enim litigandum nunc singulis de jure, quod in alterum praetenderent, sed communem adversus hostem conjunctis animis litigandum de juris omnium ac libertatis conservatione.’

⁸⁵ Ibidem, I,7, p. 19. ‘Quae caeteris potentiores ditioresque erant ditiones, tantò infirmiores pauperioresque se futuras causabantur, si infirmioribus pauperioribusque juvendis ex foedere obstringerentur. At verò contra ab aliis exceptum est, non jam considerandum venire, quae ditio potentia & opibus major sit, quae inferior, sed quàm par, nisi mutuo se auxilio complecterentur, futura esset singularum fortuna. Itaque animadvertent Potentiores, non tam se adjuturas infirmiores, quàm infirmioribus se esse necessariò juvenandas. Denique ad animum suum revocarent, non tam imminui potentiam suam & opes in subsidium infirmiorum collatas, quam qualicumque etiam operâ & fide infirmiorum augeri & confirmari.’

of Orange as elected chief general and governor.⁸⁶ To structure their efforts more firmly they set up a permanent executive council, the Council of State. Its main tasks were to make an estimate of the Republic's annual expenses, to provide payment to the army and to see to it that all members of the Union abide to its laws. Only in cases of emergency, when speed was of the utmost importance, could it take decisions without consulting the States General.⁸⁷ Finally, when it seemed that the Republic would endure, it was decided to install a permanent and higher council, the States General, 'so that not only the strength, but also the appearance of the majesty of this Republic would seem to want to be increased and represented in a certain more respectable name and general consent'.⁸⁸

The States General is a 'body of seven members that are united'.⁸⁹ It consists of the deputies of the individual provinces. Together they represent the majesty of the Union. The supreme council of the States General has the supreme power to command (*supremum imperium*) in all matters that tend to the Union.⁹⁰ These matters concern military affairs, the making and maintaining of alliances, the receiving of foreign ambassadors, the treatment of requests from members of the Union, and the making of decisions upon those matters that the Union allows its members to make.⁹¹ The Union of Utrecht not only defined the States General's authority, it also limited it. All matters that it did not stipulate remained under 'the supreme right of the States of each united province'.⁹²

⁸⁶ Ibidem, II.1, p. 21. According to Fruin, the first gatherings of the States General were temporary meetings. From 1588 onwards they rarely broke up and from June 24, 1593, they were permanent. Fruin, *Geschiedenis der staatsinstellingen*, p. 179. The States General had been *de facto* ruling the Low Countries ever since effective central government had ceased to exist after 1576. After the southern provinces had broken away from the States General to reconcile themselves with the crown, the States General stood on its own. In the summer of 1580, it merged with the assembly of the Union of Utrecht (that had been permanently in session from its beginnings) because there was so much overlap in functions. Koenigsberger, *Monarchies, States Generals and Parliaments*, pp. 262-94.

⁸⁷ Ibidem, II.1-4, pp. 21-23. A Council of State had existed under the House of Habsburg where it was mainly an advisory body. On April 12, 1588, it was authorised to conduct the Union's policy. It was responsible for the maintaining of internal relationships; it had the supreme command in military affairs; it managed the Union's finances; and it exercised the Union's juridical power. Fruin, *Geschiedenis der staatsinstellingen*, p. 193.

⁸⁸ Ibidem, II.7, p. 25. 'At verò invidendis succesibus crescente jam Republica, et aliis atque aliis ideo majoribus negotiis continuo se offerentibus, et quod in augustiori quodam nomine ac consensu agenda et repraesentanda non vis tantum, sed species etiam Majestatis hujus Reipublicae videretur.'

⁸⁹ In the *Commentariolus* Boxhorn uses the allegory of the lion with the seven arrows in his claw.

⁹⁰ The Dutch version reads 'opperste ghebiedt'. Boxhorn, *Politijck hant-boecxken, van de Staet van 't Nederlandt*, II.11, p. 25.

⁹¹ Boxhorn, *Commentariolus*, II.11, p. 28. '... summa pollet Imperii potestate.'

⁹² Ibidem, II.12, p. 29. 'Ita ut quaecunque permissa illis nominatim non inveniuntur, in iis summum maneat jus penes Ordines singularum Foederatarum ditionum.'

In the *Commentariolus* Boxhorn goes at great length to correct ‘the misguided view of foreigners’ who think that the States General is entrusted with the supreme power over the provincial States and their subjects. The supreme power to command ‘is not with those deputies of the provinces, that are called the States General, but with the States of each province, which are tied together by a strict union to help each other. And that to such a degree that those matters fall under the power of the States General that tend to the protection of all, while all those other matters remain with the States of each province’.⁹³ Just like the Swiss cantons, the seven Dutch provinces had united themselves not so ‘that the rights of the power of each people would be confounded, but that they would be better protected by common assistance’.⁹⁴ The power of the States General is restricted to those matters that concern the Union. The States General does not have any power over the inhabitants of the respective provinces, while only the provincial States can make civil laws.⁹⁵ Laws that are drafted by the States General have to be presented to the provincial States and only if the States of each province approves of them do they have the force of law.

Boxhorn admits that this construction has its disadvantages and that it is quite easy for disputes to arise among the provinces. However, ‘there are many reasons that present themselves to lay these disputes down again’.⁹⁶ What these reasons are remains unanswered, but Boxhorn is quite firm in his refutation that the Dutch Republic would be better off if all the provinces were subjugated to the ‘supreme power of a high magistrate or council’.⁹⁷ First, when setting up a supreme power one must not look at what is best and perfect according to reason, but one needs to look to the ‘particular laws, customs, and divers humours of each people’.⁹⁸ Furthermore, it was not cer-

⁹³ Ibidem, II.14, pp. 30-31. ‘Sed quemadmodum ostendit idem Polybius non penes Senatum fuisse summam Imperii Romani, ita apud nos verè dicitur, Summum Imperium non esse penes illos ditionum Legatos, qui Generales Ordines dicuntur, sed penes uniuscujusque ditionis Ordines, qui ad opem mutuam arctissimo foedere connectuntur: Adeo quidem, ut in Generalium Ordinum potestate ea sint omnia, quae ad communem spectant defensionem, manentibus rebus caeteris penes Ordines singulorum ditionum.’

⁹⁴ Ibidem, II.15, p. 32. ‘Non est igitur à foederatis Belgarum ditionibus foedus, ut jura Imperii singulorum populorum confundentur, sed ut illa inviolata, melius communi auxilio defenderentur.’ Many, for example Oldenbarnevelt, made this comparison. He also compared the Union with the alliance the Dutch Republic had concluded with England and France in 1595. Fruin, *Geschiedenis der staatsinstellingen*, p. 179.

⁹⁵ Ibidem, II.26-27, pp. 41-43.

⁹⁶ Ibidem, II.17, p. 35. ‘At verò, si quae inter ditiones controversiae hic extiterint, plurimae offerunt sese componendi omnia rationes ...’

⁹⁷ Ibidem, II.16, pp. 33-34. ‘Multi quidem in hac Republica exposuere aliquando longè utilius fore, firmioremque futuram hanc Rempublicam, si omnes foederatae ditiones unius supremi Magistratus aut Senatus summo in omnibus Imperio subessent.’

⁹⁸ In his *Apology for the Lawful Government of Holland and West-Friesland ... as it was before the Altera-*

tain that the erection of a supreme power would lead to improvements. All provinces used to be 'under the power of specific and various lords'. These lords had created laws that were customised to fit the 'humours' of each people. If these peoples are now to be united, then the result will not be a perfect commonwealth, but 'a great confusion of diverse matters' that 'hardly correspond with each other'.⁹⁹ Thus, at least in the case of the seven united Dutch provinces, tensions and disputes between allies are preferred to an, in theory, effective singular form of government.¹⁰⁰

The importance Boxhorn attaches to the independence and supremacy of the provincial States becomes especially clear if we look at Boxhorn's description of the functioning of government on the provincial and town level. Boxhorn begins his explanation of the functioning of government on the provincial level with an important rhetorical move. Since he holds it 'too extensive' to discuss 'the way of command' of every single province and 'because in most matters all the other provinces are equal', Boxhorn limits his discussion of the functioning of government on the provincial level to the province of Holland.¹⁰¹ This puts him in the position to introduce 'a charter of the States of Holland themselves', in which the States of Holland describe their way of government.¹⁰² The move is an important one, for the charter in question is the declaration the States of Holland issued on October 16, 1587, during their dispute with Robert Dudley (1532-1588), the earl of Leicester, and his supporters about the best form of government and the locus of sovereignty.¹⁰³ The declaration was writ-

tions of 1618 (*Apologeticus eorum qui Hollandiae Westfrisiaeque et vicinis quibusdam nationibus et legibus praefuerunt ante mutationem quae evenit anno MDCXVIII* (Nicolai Buon; Paris, 1622)) that he wrote when he was in exile in France Grotius would argue the same thing. 'Concerning the opinion of some that, if all the provinces were submitted to one sovereign authority, the government would be the more stable and effective this is the answer: that the sovereignty of the provinces should not be judged in the light of imaginings as to what might seem to be the most useful or not; but it should be judged by the laws and usages ...' Quoted from Geyl, *History of the Dutch-Speaking Peoples*, pp. 365-66. Boxhorn owned a copy of Grotius's *Apology*. See *Catalogus Variorum & Insignium Librorum, Celeberrimi ac Eruditissimi Viri Marci Zucri Boxhornii*, xxxxi.

⁹⁹ Boxhorn, *Commentariolus*, II.16, p. 35. '... non perfectior aliqua Respublica, sed confusa quaedam diversarum rerum & vix inter sese coëuntium moles tandem extaret.'

¹⁰⁰ As we shall see, these issues will return in Boxhorn's discussion on the forms of government. See chapter 8.

¹⁰¹ Boxhorn, *Commentariolus*, X.1, p. 149. 'At verò cum id prolixius futurum videatur, satis erit Hollandiam solam inspicere in exemplum, cum ad ejus instar in plerisque sese habeant reliquae omnes ditiones.'

¹⁰² *Ibidem*, X.2, p. 150. 'Regimen Hollandiae, quo intelligatur propius, cognoscaturque qui supremi Ordines sint, & ex quibus eorum Comitatus constent, ante omnia operae pretium fuerit audire ipsos illos Ordines eà de re disserentes, in diplomate eo de argumento sub initium mutatae Reipublicae promulgato.'

¹⁰³ *Ibidem*, X.19, p. 157. 'Atque hoc ipsorum Ordinum de curandae suae Reipublicae ratione publicum rescriptum est, Anno 1587. 16. Octob. cujus sententia tamen & ratio ut propius innotescat, quaedam accuratius expendenda sese offerunt.' Following the Treaty of Nonsuch (August 20, 1585) between queen Elizabeth I of England (1533-1603) and the revolting Dutch provinces the States General had appointed Leicester governor-general (January 1586) and had granted him far-reaching powers. How-

ten by the town pensionary of Gouda François Vranck (1555-1617) to defend the authority of the States of Holland against the attacks of Thomas Wilkes (1545-1598), an English member of the Council of State, who in his *Remonstrance* had come to the defence of Leicester. Wilkes had declared against the States of Holland that 'in the absence of a legitimate prince the sovereignty belongs to the commonalty and not to you, gentlemen, who are only servants, ministers, and deputies of the commonalty and have commissions which are limited and restricted not only in time but also in subject matter'.¹⁰⁴

In the declaration he had written for the States of Holland Vranck accepts Wilkes's notion of popular sovereignty, but interprets it differently.¹⁰⁵ As Vranck explains, and Boxhorn follows, the States of Holland and West-Friesland has two members: the delegates of the nobles and the nobility (*ridderschap*) and the delegates of the towns.¹⁰⁶ 'The nobles form one "member" of the States by virtue of the dignity of their birth ... and because of the seigniories they have in these provinces and which usually include high, middle and low jurisdiction.'¹⁰⁷ Although the nobles usually attend the meetings of the States of Holland with twelve or thirteen members, they only have one voice.¹⁰⁸

The other member of the States are the towns. In the towns the supreme power to command rests with the town council (*vroedschap*).¹⁰⁹ Only the town

ever, Leicester's position was one full of contradictions, and soon he found himself at odds with the States of Holland and their delegates in the States General who feared that Leicester's principal stand on the issue of 'trade with the enemy' (*handel op de vijand*) would spell economic ruin. They furthermore wished to curtail the power of the Council of State where the English had a number of seats and could block important decisions. Boxhorn, *Disquisitiones politicae*, XXII, pp. 96-101. For a discussion of this episode and the issues involved, see Van Gelderen, *The Political Thought of the Dutch Revolt*, pp. 199-207, and Koenigsberger, *Monarchies, States Generals and Parliaments*, pp. 307-11.

¹⁰⁴ E.H. Kossmann and A.F. Mellink (eds.), *Texts Concerning the Revolt of the Netherlands* (Cambridge University Press; Cambridge, 1974), p. 273. Wilkes had addressed his *Remonstrance* to the States General and the States of Holland on March 16, 1587.

¹⁰⁵ The title of the declaration reads *Korte vertoning aan Leycester van het recht der Staten van Holland tot handhaving der vrijheden en privilegiën van hun gewest*. It was shortly afterwards published in a slightly revised version: *Corte verthoninghe van het Recht byden Ridderschap, Eedelen, ende Steden van Hollandt ende Westvrieslant van allen oude tijden in den voorschreuen Lande ghebruyckt, tot behoudnisse vande vrjheden, gherechticheden, Priuilegien ende Loffelicke ghebruycken vanden seluen Lande* (Dierck Mullem; Rotterdam, 1587). Knuttel 790.

¹⁰⁶ Boxhorn, *Commentariolus*, X.3, p. 150. 'Ordines, ajunt illi, Hollandiae VVest-Frisiaequae bipartiti sunt, ac in duo membra distributi. Constat enim partim ex delegatis Nobilium & equestris Ordinis illius Provinciae, vulgò *die Ridderschap ende Edelen* appellatur; partim ex Civitatibus, quae vulgò *die Steden* vocantur. Vnde publicorum decretorum Ordinum hujus Provinciae inscripto sic se habet, Equestris Ordo, Nobiles & Civitates Hollandiae VVest-Frisiaequae.'

¹⁰⁷ *Ibidem*, X.4, pp. 150-51. 'Nobiles igitur unum membrum constituunt, tum stemmatis splendore & gentis dignitate, tum Dynastiis & possessionibus per hanc ditionem sparsis illustres. In quibus Dynastiis vel Dominiis supremam, mediam & infimam praefecturam sive Jurisdictionem omnes ad unum ferè habent atque exercent.' Translation taken from Kossmann and Mellink (eds.), *Texts Concerning the Revolt of the Netherlands*, p. 277. In most cases Boxhorn closely follows the original text, but sometimes gives his own interpretation. In that case I provide my own translation.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibidem*, X.15, p. 156.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibidem*, X.12, p. 154. 'Penes haec magistratum collegia summum Imperium est, per Hollandiae VVest-Frisiaequae civitates ...'

councils have 'the right and the power to deliberate, consider, and decide about matters that concern both the whole dominion [i.e. the province-JN] and the town ... And what has been deliberated, considered, and decided in these town councils, is accepted by the entire common people, when all are willing, and nobody has the power to violate or to assail their decision'.¹¹⁰

In terms of age the town councils rival with the towns themselves, or, as Boxhorn remarks, 'at least the records that reveal their origin are forgotten'.¹¹¹ As the extant ancient statutes lay down, only the best and the most wealthy citizens can become a member of the town council. Depending on the town, the number of people on the town council ranges from twenty to forty members. These two features, that is, the noble background of the town councillors and their relatively small number, and the fact that the town councillors choose the delegates they send to the States of Holland from their midst lead Boxhorn to conclude that the way power is administered in each town and the province of Holland as a whole is 'aristocratic'.¹¹²

Members of the town council serve for life or as long as they remain a resident of the town where they hold a seat. If in the case of a death or migration a seat on the town council becomes vacant, a new member is elected from 'the citizens themselves by the common approval of those sitting on the town councils'.¹¹³ Although this formulation leaves some room to speculate about who did the actual choosing, in reality the election was in the hands of the members of the town council, who, through a system of cooptation and

¹¹⁰ Ibidem, X.8, p. 152. 'Penes haec sola Collegia deliberandi, consulendi ac decernendi de negotiis tam totius ditionis, quam urbis jus potestasque est: quodque in iis Collegiis deliberatum, consultum & decretum est, à toto plebe volentibus omnibus, admittitur, nec quispiam idem infringendi aut impugnandi habet potestatem.' The Dutch translation speaks about '... endt het gheene in die Collegien ghedilbereert, beraetslaegt, ende besloten is, wort van het geheel gepeupel (alle willende) aengenomen, ende niemant heeft macht om dat selvige te verbreecken ofte te wederstaen.' Boxhorn, *Politijck hant-boecxken, van de Staet van 't Nederlandt*, X.8, p. 147. The original text reads slightly different. 'These boards alone have power to resolve upon all matters affecting the state respectively of the province and the town, and the citizens accept their decisions as binding for they have never infringed or opposed these decisions.' Kossmann and Mellink (eds.), *Texts Concerning the Revolt of the Netherlands*, p. 277.

¹¹¹ Ibidem, X.7, p. 152. 'Atque haec Collegia antiquitate cum ipsis Civitatibus certant, aut certe monumenta ipsorum originem prodentia oblitterata sunt.' The original reads much more affirmative. 'These boards must be as old as the towns, as no one remembers their origin.' Kossmann and Mellink (eds.), *Texts Concerning the Revolt of the Netherlands*, p. 277. Note also that Boxhorn refers explicitly to the public records, while the original does not. The town councils emerged in the time of the Burgundian princes. Fruin, *Geschiedenis der staatsinstellingen*, pp. 68-74.

¹¹² Ibidem, X.6, p. 152. Ibidem, XI.4, p. 165. 'Senatus Vrbanus amplissimus ille est, qui vulgò den Brederraedt appellatur; constat plerisque in oppidis numero, ut Leidae, 40, in nonnullis 30, praeter propter Optimum & ditissimorum civium. Tales enim solos ad eum admitti volunt antiquae Leges, unde apparet & singularum Urbium & Ordinum totius ditionis, qui constant, sicuti praecedenti capite diximus, ex equestri ordine & Vrbanorum Magistratum legatis, plane Aristocraticam esse administrandi Imperii rationem.'

¹¹³ Ibidem, X.7, p. 152. 'Cooptati in eum Ordinem, eo munere quoad in vivis sunt, aut civitate gaudent, fruuntur. In mortuorum verò aut aliò migrantium locum alii ad explendum numerum ex ipsis civibus communi consensu Collegiarum surrogantur.'

patronage, saw to it that only blood relatives or members from their own rank were elected to fill a vacancy, thereby limiting membership 'to a handful of rich patrician families'.¹¹⁴ Holland's town councils, then, were 'aristocratic' in name, but 'oligarchic' in practice.

In imitation of Vranck Boxhorn assigns three important privileges to the town council. The first privilege is that the town council has the right to choose every year several of its members to fulfil the town's most important administrative offices, a privilege they sometimes have to share with the stadholder.¹¹⁵ The second important privilege of the town council is the right to deliberate and decide about matters that concern the town and the whole province. Here it is important to note that decisions in the town council are reached by majority vote: 'and what the greater part of this town council shall approve, shall be explained and held as the opinion of that whole town in those assemblies.'¹¹⁶

'Those assemblies' are the assemblies of the States of Holland and the third important privilege of the town council is the right to elect three of its members to go to the meetings of the States of Holland, to convene with delegates of the other towns and those of the nobility, and to express their town's opinion on matters concerning the whole province. 'And on these delegates [i.e. of both the towns and the nobility-JN] lean all affairs, which pertain to the public welfare and the preservation of the fatherland, [namely], to examine, to discuss, and to decide on all those matters, which contribute greatly to the good of the commonwealth.'¹¹⁷ The delegates, however, have no power of

¹¹⁴ J.L. Price, *Holland and the Dutch Republic: The Politics of Particularism* (Clarendon Press; Oxford, 1994), pp. 20-21, 34, and Henk van Nierop, "Popular Participation in Politics in the Dutch Republic", in Peter Blickle (ed.), *Resistance, Representation and Community* (Clarendon Press; Oxford, 1997), pp. 276-79. The original is quite clear that it are the members of the town council who choose new members. 'Once chosen the councillors serve as long as they live and possess burgher rights. When someone dies or leaves the town, the board chooses a new member from among the citizens to make up their number.' Kossmann and Mellink (eds.), *Texts Concerning the Revolt of the Netherlands*, p. 277.

¹¹⁵ Boxhorn, *Commentariolus*, X.9, p. 153.

¹¹⁶ *Ibidem*, X.24, p. 159. 'His acceptis Nobiles inter se & singulae Civitates in Urbico Senatu sententiam exquirunt, & ex majoris partis suffragiis concludunt super iis, de quibus in proximis Comitibus est agendum.' *Ibidem*, XI.5, pp. 165-66. 'Hic Senatus convocari non solet, nisi ubi deligendi ac creandi novi Consules, novique Scabini sunt: ad ista horum conventus quoque indicitur, quoties Comitia Ordinum convocantur, quo expendant capita rerum, de quibus in iis Comitibus erit deliberandum. Nam quicquid majori hujus Senatus parti visum fuerit, pro sententia totius illius civitatis in ipsis comitiis exponitur atque habetur.' By explicitly holding that decisions in the town council are reached by majority vote Boxhorn reveals a 'secret of command' (*arcantum imperii*), for as Lesley Price explains, although in town councils 'all decisions were taken collegially, that is, the *raad* was assumed to have reached a common opinion, and to be acting as a single body' and 'dissent minorities were expected to go along loyally with the majority', for the outside world a 'considerable effort was made to maintain an appearance of solidarity'. Price, *Holland and the Dutch Republic*, pp. 22-23. See also *ibidem*, p. 64.

¹¹⁷ Boxhorn, *Commentariolus*, X.16, p. 156. 'Atque his delegatis incumbit, res omnes, quae ad publicam salutem & patriae conservationem pertinent cognoscere, pertractare, deque iis omnibus ea statuere, quae maximopere bono Reipublicae faciunt.'

their own but are supposed to act according to the instructions given to them by their constituents, the town councils and the nobles. The delegates 'show the States themselves; not because they are the States in person and on their own authority, but because that office is given by higher colleges, and because they acknowledge others as their founders'.¹¹⁸ The delegates function as representatives; real power lies in the hands of the nobles and the town councils. They are 'the States in person'. With Vranck, then, Boxhorn makes a clear distinction between the residence of sovereignty, the nobles and the towns, and its administration by their delegates, the States.¹¹⁹

A few remarks are in order here. First of all, Vranck describes the nobles and the towns as 'the inhabitants', 'the people' or 'the commonalty' of Holland.¹²⁰ Thus, like Wilkes, Vranck acknowledges that sovereignty resides with 'the people'. Hence we can say that 'Vranck accepted the notion of popular sovereignty'.¹²¹ Boxhorn, however, does not describe the nobles and the towns in such terms. This does not mean that Boxhorn disagrees with Vranck, but since Boxhorn leaves us guessing what the precise relation is between the nobles and the towns, on the one hand, and 'the inhabitants' or 'the people', on the other, we should be careful to conclude that in the *Commentariolus* Boxhorn adheres to a notion of popular sovereignty. All the more so, since in his other political works Boxhorn does not locate sovereignty in the people, but in the commonwealth, which he describes in legal terms as a 'body of many' (*corpus multorum*).¹²²

Second, if we look at terminology we notice that in the *Commentariolus* Boxhorn, like many of his Dutch contemporaries, shuns to use the Latin term *majestas* (*majesty*) in the sense of 'sovereignty' to describe the powers of the provincial States and the town councils. The reason why many Dutch scholars avoided the term was that *majestas* in the Bodinian sense of indivisible

¹¹⁸ Ibidem, X.17, p. 156. 'Hi porro delegati cum ad hunc modum convenère, exhibent ipsos Ordines, non quod ipsi per se & propria auctoritate Ordines sint, sed quia à potentioribus collegiis id muneris iis est mandatum, & auctores alios agnoscunt.' Kossmann and Mellink (eds.), *Texts Concerning the Revolt of the Netherlands*, p. 279. 'And these delegates acting in this way in union which each other represent the estates of this country. They are not the States in person or in their own right. They are the States only by virtue of the commission of their constituents.'

¹¹⁹ Van Gelderen, *The Political Thought of the Dutch Revolt*, p. 205. Lesley Price has concluded that 'it can be argued that in a very real sense sovereignty lay not so much with the States of Holland themselves, but in effect with the governments of the voting towns collectively'. Price, *Holland and the Dutch Republic*, p. 12.

¹²⁰ According to Vranck, '... the inhabitants of these provincers were divided into two orders or estates, to wit, the nobles and the towns'. Thus, when Vranck speaks of 'the States which represent the commonalty', he means that the States represent the nobles and the towns. Kossmann and Mellink (eds.), *Texts Concerning the Revolt of the Netherlands*, pp. 277, 280.

¹²¹ Van Gelderen, *The Political Thought of the Dutch Revolt*, p. 205.

¹²² See chapter 8.

sovereignty proved to be hardly applicable to the Dutch situation.¹²³ In the *Commentariolus* Boxhorn, who refers to the powers or the rights of the provincial States and the town councils with the Latin terms *summum imperium* (the supreme power to command), seems to subscribe to this point.¹²⁴

Finally, Boxhorn addresses an issue that Vranck leaves unmentioned, namely that in matters concerning war and peace, taxation, and alliances decisions in the provincial States, unlike those in the town councils, had to be unanimous.¹²⁵ The requirement of unanimity was inspired by the lovely ideal that 'strength lies in unity'.¹²⁶ In practice, however, it often proved difficult to meet this requirement. Each town had its own special interests and was reluctant to concede them for the greater common good, or was only willing to do so if duly compensated. Thus, the decision-making process in the province of Holland often involved a lot of bickering, bargaining, and mediation, which brings us to the office of the stadholder.¹²⁷

The tension between the need for unity and unanimity on both the Generality and the provincial level, on the one hand, and the diversity of power on the provincial level and the local level, on the other, is reflected in the image that Boxhorn provides of the two most important offices that existed in the Dutch Republic, namely the offices of captain-general and stadholder.¹²⁸ The first office falls under the responsibility of the Generality. It provides its office-holder with a certain *majestas* that is acquired during accomplishments in wartime. However, the captain-general does not represent the *majestas* of the Union itself. That is done by the three or four delegates from the States General who accompany the captain-general during the Republic's war campaigns. The prerogatives of the captain-general are restricted: he is not allowed

¹²³ Van Gelderen, "Aristotelians, Monarchomachs and Republicans", pp. 197-204. Grotius, for example, used the words *summa potestas* instead of *majestas* to indicate what he saw as the 'supreme power' in political society. See, for example, Grotius, *The Rights of War and Peace*, I.3.6, pp. 257-59.

¹²⁴ The powers or rights Boxhorn assigns to the provincial States and the town councils are similar to the prerogatives he assigns to a sovereign. See chapter 8.

¹²⁵ Boxhorn, *Commentariolus*, X.28, p. 161. 'In rebus tamen maximi momenti, ut novis tributis & vectigalibus, bello indicendo aut finiundo, novis foederibus ineundis non ratum habetur, quod sola major pars decreverit, sed omnium consensus necessario expectatur.' See also idem, *Institutiones politicae*, I.8, pp. 113-14.

¹²⁶ According to the famous adage, taken from Sallust: 'Nam concordia parvae res crescunt, discordia maxumae dilabuntur.' 'In harmony, small things grow; in disharmony, the greatest are dissipated.' Latin text taken from Sallust, *Iugurtha*, X.6, p. 60. English translation taken from Sallust, *The Jugurthine War*, X.6, p. 57. 'Concordia res parvae crescunt' was the adage of the Dutch Republic. For 'unity' as a goal of local Dutch politics, see Judith Pollmann, "Eendracht maakt macht: stedelijke cultuuridealen en politieke werkelijkheid in de Republiek", in Bos, Ebben and Te Velde (eds.), *Harmonie in Holland*, pp. 134-51, 254-57.

¹²⁷ As Lesley Price holds, the principle of unanimity 'meant that reaching decisions, particularly on important issues, could be difficult, but it prevented a dictatorship of the majority and put a premium on negotiation, compromise, and realism'. Price, *Holland and the Dutch Republic*, p. 125.

¹²⁸ In the *Commentariolus* the stadholder is styled as 'supremus gubernator'.

to recruit or discharge soldiers, nor to pay them. These rights remain in the hands of the States General, whose permission the captain-general needs for every military action he wants to take.¹²⁹ During military campaigns his powers are less restricted; he can, for example, appoint who ever he wants and he may execute punishments to enforce military discipline.¹³⁰ He also has the right to sit in the Council of State and thus partake in decision-making.

The stadholderate is a provincial office and the prerogatives connected to this office differ in every province.¹³¹ The same goes for the stadholder's authority (*auctoritas*), even more so, since within each province a distinction can be made between the authority the stadholder has because of his office and because of his assets.¹³² The stadholder's main task is to see to it that the decisions that are made by the States General or the provincial States are indeed executed. The stadholder is obligated to swear obedience to the States General and to the provincial States.¹³³ Within the States General and the provincial States 'he has no other authority than to give advice'.¹³⁴ However, he

¹²⁹ Boxhorn, *Commentariolus*, IV.6-8, pp. 57-59. Thus, Maurits, although he vigorously opposed the plan, was compelled to lead the army to do battle at Nieuwpoort, a decision 'that held as much foolishness, as its outcome was fortunate'. Idem, *Institutiones politicae*, I.12, p. 200. 'Belgae sanè pro arcano Dominationis id habent, ne unquam praelio decernant, & unicum ferè tantum eorum praelium sub Mauritio Flandricum memoratur, in quo ipso tantum in consilio imprudentiae fuit, quantum in eventu felicitatis.' C.E.H.J. Verhoef, *Nieuwpoort 1600: de bekendste slag uit de Tachtigjarige Oorlog* (Aspekt; Soesterberg, 2000), pp. 54-56. Thus, the States General's deputies in Frederik Hendrik's camp insisted that he would withdraw the army when, in 1631, it faced the Spanish army at the canal from Ghent to Bruges. However much Frederik Hendrik disliked this kind of interference, he preferred to keep the deputies close at hand 'because their presence facilitated approval of his plans and activities by the States General'. Herbert H. Rowen, *The Princes of Orange: The Stadholders in the Dutch Republic* (Cambridge University Press; Cambridge, 1st ed. 1988, 1990), p. 62. This enabled Frederik Hendrik to operate more freely than his predecessors ever had done. He did so probably much too Boxhorn's liking. In the *Institutiones politicae* Boxhorn explained the logic of having a general who was not bound by the restrictions that were laid upon him by his principals. Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I.12.24, pp. 186-87. 'Imperator ... & libera potius utatur, quam mandatorum legibus adstricta potestate, praesertim iis in bellis gerundis, quorum diversi casus ante consilia & mandata non possunt provideri ...'

¹³⁰ Ibidem, IV.6-8, pp. 57-59.

¹³¹ Thus, in the province of Zeeland the stadholder was the first nobleman and owned the marquisates of Vliissingen and Veere, giving him three of the seven votes in the provincial States. Boxhorn, *Commentariolus*, pp. 68-69.

¹³² Within the province of Holland, for example, the towns Leerdam (city rights in 1407), Ysselstein (city rights between 1331-1360), and Geertruidenberg (city rights since 1213; the town was sold by the English to the Spaniards in 1589 and recaptured by Maurits in 1593) were the property of the prince of Orange, who at the same time was also the stadholder of Holland. See Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn, *Toneel ofte beschryvinge Der Steden van Hollandt ...* (Jacob Keyns; Amsterdam, 1634), pp. 290, 303, 311.

¹³³ Boxhorn, *Commentariolus*, IV.10-14, pp. 61-63. In the first ten years after the Union of Utrecht was signed it was common that the States General appointed a stadholder at the province's request. The stadholder first swore an oath to the States General and then to the provincial States. In the seventeenth century, however, this custom changed and the election and appointment became an exclusive provincial affair. Fruin, *Geschiedenis der Staatsinstellingen*, pp. 214-15.

¹³⁴ Ibidem, IV.26, pp. 66-67. 'In Comitibus Ordinum vel Generalium vel Particularium nullam nisi consulendi habet auctoritatem, quare & receptum nunc moribus est, ut Ordinum, qui Hagae agunt, Syndici, Praesidesque quotidie ante horam Conventui indictam, conveniant Gubernatorem, ejusque sententiam perrogent, de iis, quae ventura sunt in deliberationem.'

does possess some very powerful prerogatives: he has the right to pardon, he can elect members of the nobility, and in Holland and Zeeland he possesses the right to replace half of the town magistrates by choosing new candidates from a list that is presented to him by the town councils.¹³⁵ Furthermore, the stadholder fulfils an important role as mediator when disputes arise within provinces or between provinces. Since both on the Generality level and the provincial level unanimous decisions are demanded on matters of great importance, this is a very important role indeed.

From the beginning of the Republic the two offices have always been given to someone who was a member of the House of Nassau, with the exception of Leicester, and Boxhorn comes up with three reasons why this practice should continue. First, the Dutch owe the beginnings of their freedom and commonwealth to the family of Nassau, especially to William of Orange, who exceeded his offspring in authority. Second, paraphrasing a famous *sententia* of Tacitus, Boxhorn holds that in free commonwealths many changes are not beneficial.¹³⁶ Third, Dutch freedom was sufficiently secured by the laws that bound the authority of their commanders.¹³⁷ That this authority could be very great proves the example of William of Orange. William's guidance and power had helped to establish the Dutch Republic, because those turbulent times, when the meetings of the States were still irregular and unsettled, needed the 'great authority of one'.¹³⁸ The States had deemed William so worthy that they had offered him both 'the command and lordship' over their provinces. William, however, had refused, knowing that 'the character of the united peoples' would be more inclined to obey and to pay heavy taxes, if they were 'under the supreme power of the States instead of a count, under whom commonly is less freedom'.¹³⁹

¹³⁵ Ibidem, IV.21, pp. 65-66. Originally, these rights had belonged to the sovereign prince. When the provincial States assumed sovereignty these rights should have fallen in their hands. Instead, they ended up in the hands of the stadholder, who originally was the deputy of the sovereign prince and who was now officially a 'servant of the States'. Boxhorn does not note the apparent paradox that the stadholder, a servant of the sovereign States, had the right to elect those who officially represented the members of the States. Fruin, *Geschiedenis der Staatsinstellingen*, p. 214; Rowen, *The Princes of Orange*, p. 27; Frijhoff and Spies *Hard-Won Unity*, pp. 94-95. This issue is somewhat ill treated by Koenigsberger in his otherwise excellent *Monarchies, States Generals and Parliaments*. See Koenigsberger, *Monarchies, States Generals and Parliaments*, pp. 298-321.

¹³⁶ Here Boxhorn follows the well-known *sententia*, taken from Tacitus, that 'frequent changes were not useful'. Tacitus, *The Annals*, XII.11.3, p. 219. For the Latin text, see Tacitus, *Annalium ab excessu divi Avgusti libri*, XII.11. '... neque usui crebras mutationes.'

¹³⁷ Boxhorn, *Commentariolus*, IV.3, pp. 55-56.

¹³⁸ Ibidem, IV.4, p. 56. 'Interim Guilielmo Nassovio summa quaedam & exquisitissima, majorque quam caeteris successoribus auctoritas fuit ... denique quod illorum turbatissimorum temporum res inprimis requirent unius eximiam auctoritatem.'

¹³⁹ Ibidem, pp. 56-57. 'Imo Guilielmo tanti tum temporis Ordines fecere, ut non Praefecturam modò, sed Dominium quoque harum ditionum offerendum ei judicaverint, quod tamen ipse munus

William's prudence led him to accept his role as stadholder and captain-general; he did not seek sovereign power over the provinces nor did he try to unite them under one central government. Not only did regional governance by the States suit the 'humours' of the Dutch better, these 'humours' also differed from one another. Thus, although the seven provinces were united in a 'body', 'as if they were one province', a 'commonwealth', this unity of the Dutch Republic was severely restricted by the demands of its constituent parts. The reason, for example, that it was unnecessary for the seven provinces to have one and the same person as stadholder (much like the Dutch Republic had one captain-general) was because 'the regulation of each province serves not so much the good of the common Union, but [the good] of each particular province'.¹⁴⁰ Indeed, as Boxhorn makes clear in the *Institutiones politicae*, alliances like those between the seven Dutch provinces have to take into account two common goods: the common good of its constituent parts, which are sovereign entities, since only princes or peoples who are independent and who possess *summa potestas* can make alliances, and the common good of the alliance.¹⁴¹ This, of course, can easily lead to friction, since these two common goods, or the interpretations of what these two common goods exactly amount to, do not always agree. In the Dutch Republic the situation was even worse. Not only was the same man, the prince of Orange, the chief office-holder in several provinces, he was at the same time one of the most important servants of the Generality. Leaving the prince of Orange's own personal interests aside, this could constitute a conflict of interests, since he was required to uphold both the common good of the province and the common good of the union.¹⁴²

However, in his analysis of why the Dutch Republic should last Boxhorn focuses on rather different problems. Boxhorn accredits the Republic's 'pervis-

prudenter repudiavit, cognito haud dubiè Foederatorum populorum ingenio, quos ad obsequia & gratia tributorum praestanda onera promptiores sub Supremo Ordinum, quam unius Comitatus Imperio, in quo minus plerumque est libertatis, futuros non ignorabat.' This explanation nicely fits the self-image of the Dutch as a 'freedom-loving' people. See, for example, Marieke Meijer Drees, *Andere landen, andere mensen: de beeldvorming van Holland versus Spanje en Engeland omstreeks 1650* (Sdu Uitgevers; The Hague, 1997), pp. 26-29.

¹⁴⁰ Ibidem, IV.14, p. 63. 'Quemadmodum enim omnes Foederati Ordines agnoscere coguntur unum & eundem Militiae Imperatorem, ita & in agnoscendo domi eodem Gubernatore necessarium non est, cum uniuscujusque ditionis disciplina non tam ad bonum communis foederis, quam uniuscujusque singularis ditionis sit comparata.' This was exactly the reason why the States of Friesland, much to the dismay of Frederik Hendrik, elected William Frederick (1613-1664) to succeed his brother Hendrick Casimir I (1612-1640) as stadholder. The States of Friesland feared a further increase of Frederik Hendrik's power and preferred to elect someone from the House of Nassau-Dietz, a branch of the House of Nassau that had been fulfilling the office of stadholder of Friesland since 1620. Luuc Kooijmans, *Liefde in opdracht: het hofleven van Willem Frederik van Nassau* (Uitgeverij Bert Bakker; Amsterdam, 2000), pp. 24-30.

¹⁴¹ Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I.11, pp. 165, 175.

¹⁴² Some, however, reasoned the other way around: the prince of Orange's several functions would bind him and the provinces closer to the Union.

tence' to its favourable geographical conditions, the alliances the Dutch had made with England and France,¹⁴³ the unchanged form of their government,¹⁴⁴ and their wealth.¹⁴⁵ The first two advantages protected the Republic against external aggression, while the last two gave the Republic stability and the means to support its war efforts. In addition, Boxhorn also refutes the analysis of cardinal Guido Bentivoglio (1579-1644), who, in his *Relationi* (*Relations*, 1629), had claimed that it was unlikely that the United Provinces would last very long in the same form as it was in 1609.¹⁴⁶ Bentivoglio had reasoned that just as Rome, the city that had liberated itself from the tyrannical king Tarquinius Superbus, the United Provinces would eventually fall once more under the authority of a supreme head. That supreme head could be the stadholder, whose authority Bentivoglio thought to be too great, or the province of Holland, which exceeded the other provinces so much in power that it could easily reign over them.¹⁴⁷

Boxhorn dismisses Bentivoglio's comparison between ancient Rome and the Dutch Republic as useless.¹⁴⁸ Unlike in Rome, where insufficient precautions had been taken to guarantee the equality of the nobles and the people, the Dutch had seen to it that the equality of the States was guaranteed. Despite the fact that the provinces differ in economic power or prosperity, in matters concerning the Union 'they have the same strength of authority'.¹⁴⁹ The

¹⁴³ Boxhorn, *Commentariolus*, IX.7, p. 145. According to Boxhorn, England and France would always support the Dutch Republic against Spain since it was in their own interest that Spain would not conquer the Republic.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibidem*, IX.4, p. 144. Here Boxhorn once again refers to a Tacitean *sententia*. 'Sed & verissimum illud est axioma: Maximè ea omnia duratura esse Imperia, quae in oblato aliquo transitu rerum, ut loquitur Tacitus, minimum passa sunt mutationis.' The fact that the seven Dutch provinces no longer had a prince did not count for much in Boxhorn's eyes, because the power of the prince had always been subjected to the powers of the provincial States. I have been unable to find out to which work of Tacitus Boxhorn is referring here.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibidem*, IX.6, p. 145. For a more thorough analysis of this last point, see chapter 7.

¹⁴⁶ Guido Bentivoglio, *Relationi*, 2 vols. (Nicolaus Pantin; Cologne, 1629). The first Dutch translation appeared in 1648: *Verhael-boecken van den cardinael Bentivoglio*, 2 vols. (Joannes Naeranus; Rotterdam, 1648). An English translation appeared in 1652 by the hands of Henry Carey (1595-1661), the earl of Monmouth: *Historicall Relations of the United Provinces & of Flanders written originally in Italian by Cardinall Bentivoglio* (Humphrey Moseley; London, 1652). In this thesis references are made to the English edition of 1652.

¹⁴⁷ Boxhorn, *Commentariolus*, IX.10-16, pp. 146-49. Bentivoglio concedes that there is 'too much in the power of some of the Provinces which do almost Lord it over the rest' and then refers to Holland. Bentivoglio, *Historicall Relations*, p. 48. This comparison should be seen as a rhetorical device; Bentivoglio's main argument is that 'it must be granted that the Authority of the Supream Head in all these Governments hat ever been, and still is very great: Wherein the peoples obedience to their Prince is so ancient, as they can endure no other Government then that of one alone. It may then also be imagined, that the United Provinces must necessarily incline, out of their habit of antient obedience, to suffer themselves to be Govern'd by some one only man; but in that Form of Government notwithstanding which they were wont formerly to enjoy, and which may correspond with their antient institution and Customs'. Bentivoglio, *Historicall Relations*, p. 47.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibidem*, IX.12, p. 146.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibidem*, IX.15, p. 148. 'Quod una Provincia, e.g. Hollandia, multo potentior sit quam caeterae, ac

authority of the stadholder is also checked. No matter how great his authority would be, the authority of the States would always be 'much greater and the highest'; and although the stadholder has the right to give council, it are the States that have 'the power to command'.¹⁵⁰

With the authority of the stadholder firmly in check and the provinces in equilibrium, the Dutch Republic seems to have found a way to make its political fabric durable. Yet the question remains how the Dutch managed to make their polity work when conflicts arouse. We have noticed that Boxhorn was aware of the possible conflicts between the supreme power of the provincial States, on the one hand, and the demands of the Union, on the other. He was also aware that there could be a difference between the interests of the Union as a whole and the interests of the individual provinces. As a possible solution Boxhorn had vaguely pointed out that 'there are many reasons that present themselves' to the provinces to come to some sort of an agreement. If we look at Boxhorn's view of how the Republic came about, we can only guess that Boxhorn probably thought that in the end self-interest would keep the Union together, because united the provinces, even the more powerful ones, would be stronger in the face of any future onslaught.

Boxhorn mostly refers to the Union of Utrecht as the great mediator and 'law of the nation'. This seems as a rather cheap way out, because Boxhorn does not give any comments on the Union as such.¹⁵¹ However, the *Commentariolus's* short abstract of the Union of Utrecht, in other words, Boxhorn's *representation* of the Union, does hold some interesting insights. Two articles are of particular importance: article nine and twenty-one. Article nine states that in important matters such as war and peace or taxation the decision in the States General needs to be unanimous. 'But if it happens that the provinces cannot reach an agreement on matters of armistice, peace, war or contributions, their differences must provisionally be referred and submitted to the present stadholders of the provinces, who will bring about a settlement or at their own discretion give their judgement on the differences. If, however, the stadholders cannot agree among themselves they will select and ask such impartial assessors and assistants as they themselves choose to consult. And the parties shall be bound to accept the decisions

proinde dominationem in caeteras facile possit usurpare. At verò exceperim in illa potentiae dissimilitudine, quoad res foederis curandas, unicuique eandem vim esse auctoritatis, sed & altera in alterius ditionis singularibus rebus nunquam miscetur.' Here Boxhorn is probably referring to the fact that in the States General the provinces had one vote each. Officially, important decisions on war and peace, taxes, and alliances required unanimous approval.

¹⁵⁰ Ibidem, IX.13, pp. 147-48.

¹⁵¹ It was exactly on the right interpretation of the Union of Utrecht that much of the debates of 1649-50 concentrated. The most elaborate and useful discussion of these debates is still Groenveld's *De prins voor Amsterdam*.

taken by the stadholders in the aforesaid manner.¹⁵² According to article twenty-one of the Union, when 'there is anything obscure or doubtful in these articles which might lead to questions or disputes, the interpretation thereof shall be determined by the allies who shall with general advice and consent decree what they consider proper. If they cannot agree among themselves they shall ask for the intervention of the stadholders of the provinces in the manner described above'.¹⁵³ That is, in the same way as is articulated in article nine.

Both articles, as supporters of the prince of Orange would not fail to point out, seem to stress the importance and the powers of the stadholder's role as mediator, who could act on behalf of a province or the States General.¹⁵⁴ The *Commentariolus's* version of article nine gives a slightly moderate perspective: when no agreement can be found, then 'those different cases, with consent, until there be another council, will be submitted to the governors of each province, and it will be fair that they [i.e. the provinces-JN] collectively will follow their [i.e. their governors'-JN] feelings'.¹⁵⁵ It will be *fair*, not *necessary*. This version, then, seems to diminish the mediating role of the stadholders. But it is the *Commentariolus's* version of article twenty-one that shows the greatest difference. 'If some difference would occur about the intention or meaning of these laws [i.e. the articles of the Union-JN], or something would be unclear, then the meaning and intention of these laws will be determined by the opinion of the majority of the confederates [i.e. the provinces-JN].'¹⁵⁶ This constituted a significant threat for that precious provincial 'particularism', 'the elevation of provincial autonomy to the position of the fundamental principle of the Dutch constitution', because it meant that, if matters would come to a head, the majority in the States General could dictate what was right and what was wrong according to that piece of paper that everyone agreed upon formed the foundation of the Republic.¹⁵⁷ And this was of vital importance because article twenty-three of the Union clearly stated that if someone was found to be acting against the articles of the Union, then his act would become null and void, and, if he persisted, repercussions could follow.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵² Kossmann and Mellink (eds.), *Texts Concerning the Revolt of the Netherlands*, p. 169.

¹⁵³ *Ibidem*, pp. 171-72.

¹⁵⁴ Groenveld, *De prins voor Amsterdam*, p. 55, and Poelhekke, "Kanttekeningen bij de pamfletten uit het jaar 1650", pp. 36-39.

¹⁵⁵ Boxhorn, *Commentariolus*, I.5.9, pp. 11-12. 'Si tamen belli aut pacis, aliarumve majorum rerum nomine inter se convenire haut possint Foederati, arbitrio, donec aliud statutum fuerit, Gubernatorum singularum ditionum res controversae submituntur, eorum arbitrium sequi fas omnes esto.'

¹⁵⁶ *Ibidem*, I.5.19, p. 17. 'Si de mente aut interpretatione harum legum controversiae quid obortum sit, aut in ea obscurum, sententiâ plurium ex Foederatis ipsarum legum sententia & mens censetur.'

¹⁵⁷ Price, *Holland and the Dutch Republic*, p. 279.

¹⁵⁸ Kossmann and Mellink (eds.), *Texts Concerning the Revolt of the Netherlands*, p. 172. Article twenty-three. 'The united provinces have promised and are promising herewith to keep and observe, and to

It was this argument that William II used to justify his actions in the spring of 1650 when the States of Holland unilateral decided to dismiss some of the companies that it had been paying.¹⁵⁹ By doing so, the States of Holland implicitly stated that the troops it paid for were its own and stood under its command, not under the States General's. William thought that this act violated the powers of the captain-general and undermined the unity of the army, and thereby the unity of the Republic, represented by the States General whose rights, he proclaimed, he now needed to defend.¹⁶⁰ On June 5 he succeed in obtaining from the States General, by *majority vote* and against the protests of Holland, a resolution that gave him vague mandates 'to bring all necessary order, and to take those provisions, to that end that everything will be maintained in good peace and quiet'.¹⁶¹ Backed by this resolution William felt free to take some drastic measures. First, he tried to put pressure on his enemies by visiting the towns that refused to abide to his wishes with a delegation of the States General and a large military escort. When this tactic failed he captured and imprisoned six of his adversaries and attempted to capture the town of Amsterdam, his greatest opponent in the States of Holland, by force. The attempt failed, but William did manage to obtain some of his objec-

ensure that others keep and observe, all these points and articles and each of them in particular and no to do anything contrary to them or to have anything done or allow anything to be done either directly or indirectly in any way or manner. And they declare that if anybody does or tries to do anything to the contrary, this action shall henceforward be null, void and invalid; to this effect they pledge the lives and properties of themselves and all residents in their respective provinces and their towns and members; in case of contravention these maybe arrested, held and charged anywhere by any lord, judge or court that can or is allowed to lay hands on them, for the sake of maintaining this union and everything contingent upon it. For that purpose the aforesaid provinces renounce all other profits of rights which stipulate that no general renunciation may take place without a particular renunciation.' In the *Commentariolus* article twenty-three of the Union of Utrecht is listed as article twenty-one. Boxhorn, *Commentariolus*, I.5.21, p. 17. This article, however, constitutes another ambiguity in the Union of Utrecht, since article two states that so long as there is some kind of controversy among the provinces, one province could not harm the other. On the other hand, article twenty-three made it theoretically possible for the States General to apply military means to coerce a reluctant province if, for example, a province refused to fulfil its military obligations. Van Nimwegen, '*Deser landen krijchsvolck*', p. 73.

¹⁵⁹ On June 4 the States of Holland informed William II and the Council of State that within the next fourteen days it would disband 31 French, English, and Scottish companies. Van Nimwegen, '*Deser landen krijchsvolck*', p. 254. That same day the States of Holland informed the respective captains that no more money was to be expected. Simon Groenveld, *Naspel op Munster: het stadhouderschap van Willem II* (Kok; Kampen, 1973), p. 23. The troops in the Dutch army were paid by a system of 'apportionment' (*repartitie*). Officially, it was the States General that raised and paid for the troops. However, since the States General had no money of its own, it had become custom 'for each province to make payments directly to companies assigned to it, whether stationed on its territory or elsewhere; this was the specific meaning of "apportionment"'. Rowen, *The Princes of Orange*, p. 84. It was agreed upon that 58% of the annual war expenditure would be paid by Holland. In reality, Holland paid a much larger proportion, particular because the inland provinces could not (or would not) pay their share.

¹⁶⁰ Rowen, *The Princes of Orange*, pp. 87-88, and Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, p. 688.

¹⁶¹ Groenveld, *De prins voor Amsterdam*, p. 25. The prince was given the assignment 'omme alle nodige orde te stellen, ende die voorsieninge te doen, ten einde dat alles in goede ruste ende vreedde werde geconserveert'.

tives. Yet his triumph had not been complete, and both the stadholder and his opponents in the States of Holland were waiting in dear anticipation of what the other party would do next.¹⁶² William's sudden death on November 6, however, changed everything.

Clearly, Boxhorn had not foreseen all these events when he first drafted the *Commentariolus* in the early 1640s, nor did anyone thought about them in 1649 when the *Commentariolus* was first published. In the *Commentariolus* the Dutch Republic is first and foremost depicted as an alliance between seven independent provinces, which, out of necessity, agreed that they would do certain matters in common for their mutual common good. To accomplish these matters, they somehow needed to find a way to reconcile their internal differences and work together. The Union of Utrecht had laid down the principles that this process of reconciliation should follow and what to do in case an agreement was not forthcoming. The *Commentariolus* does not seem to call the principle of provincial sovereignty into question; Boxhorn makes it perfectly clear that the supreme power to command is 'with the States of each province' and that within the Union they have 'the same power of authority'. Furthermore, although the offices and the purposes of stadholder and captain-general are not called into question, they are servants who owe obedience to their superiors, respectively the provincial States and the States General. The problem, of course, is that here also there are conflicts between the demands of the Union and the rights of the provinces, and these conflicts the *Commentariolus* leaves unchallenged.

Yet, in the case that a choice has to be made between the common good of the individual provinces and the common good of the Union, it seems that in the *Commentariolus* the advance tilts towards the overriding common good of the Union. If a majority in the States General could indeed dictate the right interpretation of the Union, then that ambiguous and in practice loose confederate structure that gave the Dutch Republic so much of its vigour could be tightened and clarified in a way that would benefit the majority at the expense of provincial autonomy.¹⁶³ Furthermore, in the specific case of the command of the army, the *Commentariolus* is clear who held the highest power: 'The

¹⁶² On August 18 the States General adopted a resolution concerning the reduction of the army; the figure was set for the military forces William wanted, but those units that would be dismissed would be foreign units, a compromise William had to accept. Eight days later, on August 26, 'the Delegated Councilors of Holland decided to oppose William's endeavor to force Dutch mediation upon Spain as well as France', since they feared that it would force Spain to refute this mediation, which William could then use as a pretext for war. Rowen, *The Princes of Orange*, pp. 91-92, with quote on p. 91.

¹⁶³ Price, *Holland and the Dutch Republic*, p. 3, and Prak, *The Dutch Republic in the Seventeenth Century*, p. 272.

power to hire or to disband soldiers remains most free and solely with the united States.¹⁶⁴ Holland's unilateral action would not have met Boxhorn's approval. It could not be otherwise. As Jonathan Israel has pointed out, if a province could dismantle the army regiments which it paid for without consent of the Generality, then not only would the authority of the Generality be starkly diminished, but there would also be no such thing as a 'Dutch state'. Instead, there would be 'states'.¹⁶⁵ For men like Boxhorn, although they could clearly envisage the Republic as an alliance of seven independent sovereign states, this was a bridge to far.¹⁶⁶ It would have meant the downfall of the Dutch *res publica*, that common entity with that common goal they all cherished and shared.

A predictable war

William's death meant an abrupt end to the tensions that had dominated Dutch political life since the peace of Münster. Freed from their former foe, the States of Holland quickly took the opportunity to settle matters their way. On November 12, only six days after William's untimely death, they summoned the other provinces to participate in a 'Great Assembly' of the States

¹⁶⁴ Boxhorn, *Commentariolus*, IV.6, p. 58. 'Conscribendorum & exauctorandorum militum penes solos Ordines Foederatos liberrima manet potestas ...'

¹⁶⁵ Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, p. 688.

¹⁶⁶ Not so Jonathan Israel: 'The United Provinces were, after all, not a league of "seven sovereign allies".' Ibidem, p. 769. See also Rowen, "The Dutch Republic and the Idea of Freedom", p. 311, where Herbert Rowen holds that the Dutch Republic 'was a republic in which sovereignty reposed in the provincial States – that is, the representative assemblies of the individual provinces. There was no one locus of final political authority in the republic, which was a federation of seven provinces, the United Provinces of the Netherlands'. It is important to note that in the *Institutiones politicae*, Boxhorn's main political work, Boxhorn speaks of the Dutch Republic solely in terms of an alliance (*foedus*) between neighbours of equal strength. In such an alliance both the common good of all the partners together and the common good of each ally individually must be taken into account. Therefore, the Dutch have two councils, one on the provincial level and one on the level of the Generality. However, the power of the States General is restricted so that they cannot change 'the condition of the commonwealth' (*status Reipublicae*) of the individual provinces. Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I.11, p. 175. 'Nempe in ejusmodi foederibus duplex bonum considerandum, bonum publicum singulorum, & bonum omnium, ideoque duplicia consilia esse debent, & duplex quasi rerum collegium. Ita Belgae confoederati, qui ex diversis provinciis coaluere, duplices habent ordines, alios Provinciarum suarum singularum, alios omnium. Atque omnium sunt generales, qui vocantur, Ordines & Consiliarii Status. Quia autem per potentiam horum status Reipubl. immutari possit, potestas illorum legibus foederis circumscripta est, ut si quid in foedere desit, tunc ad singularum provinciarum Ordines recurratur.' Boxhorn compares the Dutch Republic with the alliance of the Swiss cantons and the Hanseatic league, who, just like the Dutch, had united to stand stronger against an aggressive enemy. Ibidem, p. 172. Thus, Boxhorn closely follows the picture set out by Hugo Grotius in his works. See, for example, Grotius, *The Antiquity of the Batavian Republic*, VII.17-18, pp. 112-13, and Grotius, *The Rights of War and Peace*, I.3.7, p. 260. Boxhorn also owned copies of Grotius's *The Good Faith of the States of Holland and West-Friesland* ((*Ordinum Hollandiae ac West-frisiae pietas* (Johannes Patius; Leiden, 1613))) and *Apology*. See *Catalogus Variorum & Insignium Librorum, Celeberrimi ac Eruditissimi Viri Marci Zueri Boxhornii*, xviii and xxxiii.

General that would be held in The Hague on January 18 of the next year. Even before this meeting had commenced the States of Holland had decided not to pronounce a successor for the office of stadholder and captain-general. They also effectively took over his military functions and the prerogatives that had belonged to the stadholder. This meant that the towns now could elect their own magistrates without outside interference, under the responsibility of the States of Holland. The States of Holland also dictated the outcome of the 'Great Assembly'. Holland, Gelderland, Overijssel and Utrecht decided that, for the time being, they would refrain from electing a new stadholder. The command of the army was divided between the seven provinces.¹⁶⁷ Furthermore, on Holland's initiative the States General had also acknowledged the Commonwealth of England as 'a free Commonwealth'.¹⁶⁸

There was hardly any opposition. If there was an Orangist faction, it was headless and powerless to act, despite the hopes the birth of a male heir, William III (1650-1702), eight days after his father's death, had installed in their hearts. Worse, those who sympathised with the 'Orangist cause' now saw themselves confronted with a growing opposition to what had not been in question since the founding of the Republic, namely the institution of the stadholderate itself. An institution whose reputation William II had stained by his ill attempt to gain by force what he could not obtain by mediation.

Indeed, as Boxhorn found out, the actions of the late prince of Orange had cast a shadow on the past. When Boxhorn decided to publish the funeral oration that he had delivered on the death of the prince the curators of the University of Leiden intervened.¹⁶⁹ Boxhorn could publish his oration, they held, but only if he would make some alterations. These alterations concerned 'the disbandment and continuation of the militia of this state and the procedures

¹⁶⁷ Frijhoff and Spies, *Hard-Won Unity*, pp. 75-80.

¹⁶⁸ Groenveld, "The English Civil Wars as a Cause of the First Anglo-Dutch War, 1640-1652", p. 555.

¹⁶⁹ In 1650 the three curators of the University of Leiden were Gerard Schaepe (1598-1666), Amelis van Bouchorst (†1669), and Cornelis van Beveren (1591-1663). Schaepe was a wealthy man, who had been burgemeester of Amsterdam several times. In 1650, when the crisis between the States of Holland and William II came to a head, the States send him as their own representative to London to watch over the province's interest. In 1651 they sent him to England to negotiate a treaty with the new republican regime. Rowen, *The Princes of Orange*, p. 86, and Pincus, *Protestantism and Patriotism*, pp. 30-31. Van Bouchorst, Lord of Wimmenum, was the eldest member of the Knighthood of Holland. As such, he was chair of the so-called 'gecommitteerde raden' of the South Quarter of Holland, one of the two 'standing committees ... which supervised the routine administration' of the province of Holland. Extremely wealthy, he was not committed to any party, but more of an opportunist, changing sides as he saw fit. During the 1640s he held a seat in one of the secret commissions ('secrete besognes') and actively helped Frederik Hendrik's pro-French course. Groenveld, *Verlopend getij*, p. 87; Henk van Nierop, *Van ridders tot regenten: de Hollandse adel in de zestiende en de eerste helft van de zeventiende eeuw* (De Bataafsche Leeuw; Dieren, 1984), p. 231; Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, pp. 279-80, with quote on p. 279. Van Beveren was a regent from Dordrecht who favoured Orange. Otterspeer, *Het bolwerk van de vrijheid*, p. 376.

against the king of Great Britain'.¹⁷⁰ If Boxhorn wanted to say something about the militia, he could state 'that the Commendable Lord Prince had wanted to take care that this state would not suffer any danger from those who wanted to harm the said state, neither from the inside nor from the outside'.¹⁷¹ Concerning the House of Stuart Boxhorn could to say 'that His Highness, married to that illustrious house, carried the affliction that had befallen the said house, with bravery and wisdom'.¹⁷²

Reading the funeral oration that finally appeared in print somewhere at the end of 1651, almost a year after William II's death, we learn that Boxhorn indeed took these advices to heart.¹⁷³ We hear nothing of the dispute between William II and the States of Holland about the reduction of the army nor about the prince's dubious actions of the summer of 1650. What we do read is a long eulogy of the illustrious deeds of William II's forefathers, William of Orange, Maurits, and Frederik Hendrik, compromising almost half of the thirty-page oration. William II himself is praised for his 'great benevolence' (*magna benignitas*), 'gentle character' (*mitis indoles*), 'severity of judgement' (*judicii severitas*), and the 'moral purity' and 'fairness' of his 'conscience' (*conscientiae sanctitas ac aequitas*).¹⁷⁴ These character traits probably helped William to cope with the terrible fate that had befallen his father-in-law and that had taught him that 'the matters of men are harassed and agitated by an amazing fickleness', and that 'princes, who show their subjects to be like Gods among men, are in turn, compared to God, nothing other than men themselves', subjected to Him and His 'frightful judgements'.¹⁷⁵ But not a word about the prince's attempts to gather active support for the Stuart cause or of his avances with France. Boxhorn leaves the most sensitive issues of William's policy unmentioned.

¹⁷⁰ Molhuysen, *Bronnen tot de geschiedenis der Leidsche Universiteit*, Vol. 3, p. 56. 'De afdanckinge ende continuatie van de militie van desen staet, ende de proceduren tegen de Coninck van Groot Bretangen.' The curators's remarks are from March 9, 1651.

¹⁷¹ *Ibidem*, p. 57. 'Dat den Hoochedachten Heere Prince sorge had willen dragen dat desen staet noch van binnen noch van buyten eenich perycule mocht komen te lopen van den genen, die den selven staet qualick souden willen.'

¹⁷² *Ibidem*. 'Dat Sijne Hoocheyt getrouwt sijnde aen dat illustre huys, d'afflictie 't selve huys overgekomen, met kloekmoedicheyt ende wijsheyt had gedragen.'

¹⁷³ Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn, *Oratio fonebris in excessum celsissimi principis Guilielmi, Principis Arausiae, Comitiss Nassaviae, &c. Supremi Foederatorum Belgarum terrâ marique militiae Imperatoris* (Petrus Leffen; Leiden, 1651). A Dutch translation appeared that same year. *Idem, Oratie gedaen over den dootlijcken Afganck van Sijne Hoocheit Wilhelm, Prins van Oranien* (Petrus Leffen; Leiden, 1651). Herzog August Bibliothek, A: 1241.49.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibidem*, pp. 20-21.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibidem*, pp. 16-17. 'Discere ex eo inter ipsa statim imperii initia gener potuit, ac haud dubie didicit, & mira inconstantia verti agitarique res hominum, & tunc maxime fallere fortunam, cum faventis specie non jam dicam blanditur, sed adulator; denique, ut principes subjectis velut quidam inter homines Dii offeruntur, ita vicissim principes Dei adspectu, non alios quam homines sese cogitare, & Deum ejusque terribilia judicia trepide, & sancte, & constanter debere revereri.'

What Boxhorn does mention about the prince's primary political concerns takes the form of a warning against several future threats as he had done two years earlier in his *Oratio panegyrica de Belgarum pace*. Boxhorn recalls how William II shared the concerns of a person 'of very great standing in this town', that is, Leiden, about the great multitude and diversity of religious sects that could endanger the recently won peace and ruin the Dutch Republic.¹⁷⁶ The anonymous person believed, 'and he believed certainly wisely', that the Dutch Republic, although at peace, was in danger of falling victim to civil wars, 'which are often the works of Spaniards'. Civil wars would threaten to weaken the position 'of the lovers and protectors of the true faith and the commonwealth' and they would give the upper hand to 'bad citizens', who 'are neither well-disposed towards religion, nor towards the commonwealth and the fatherland'.¹⁷⁷ Since 'the matters of the church and the commonwealth are connected here with such a close tie, that the latter cannot exist nor last without the former', such a course would spell doom for the Republic.¹⁷⁸ To prevent this from happening, special care should be taken of the church, 'in order that we have a more prosperous church, and thus a more secure commonwealth, while the quarrelsome license of those who have an opinion is more and more suppressed'.¹⁷⁹

Another great concern of the prince had been the well-being of the WIC. After a flying start, during which the Dutch had acquired a new empire in the Americas, the Company had experienced some severe setbacks. These setbacks had both foreign and domestic causes. A foreign cause was 'the wickedness and treachery of certain Portuguese', who pretended to be friends, but who were in fact enemies. On the Dutch side idleness, a lack of enthusiasm, and a slow decision-making process were to blame for the WIC's mis-

¹⁷⁶ Ibidem, pp. 21-22. 'Eum ego hic praesentem intueor, virum amplissimae in hac urbe dignitatis, & interioris apud Principem admissionis, cum quo cum nonnunquam de Religionum sectarumque omnis generis in hac Republ. multitudine ac varietate verba faceret, eam praecipuam sollicitudinem esse significavit, ne ea res aliquando in exitum Reipublicae cederet, & vehementer pacem ejus turbaret.' A possible candidate is Johan van Wevelinchoven (c.1620-1660), pensionary of Leiden and secretary of the college of curators and burgomasters of Leiden University. In a letter of March 16, 1651 (KB, 135 D 19), Boxhorn informs Van Wevelinchoven that he has adopted his funeral oration according to the wishes of the college and that he awaits their approval.

¹⁷⁷ Ibidem, p. 22. 'Judicabat enim, & profecto prudenter judicabat, motibus forte civilibus ac turbis, quae Hispanorum fere artes sunt ... motibus, inquam, & turbis forte sic excitatis, minorem haud dubie futuram veram Religionem & Rempubicam amantium ac tuentium manum, & magno ac prope immenso numero superiores eos, qui neque Religioni, neque Reipublicae ac patriae bene volunt, & ut mali cives, praesentium pertaesi, votis consiliisque omnibus & destinationibus non incumbunt nisi in sectantium sese incrementum, & eorum quae composita sunt mutationes ...'

¹⁷⁸ Ibidem. 'Quare & sapienter judicabat; Ecclesiae ac Reipublicae res arcto adeo hic esse nexu conjuncta, ut haec sine illa salva esse non possit aut constare.'

¹⁷⁹ Ibidem. 'Quare & censebat idem, in eam inprimis curam esse incumbendum, ut repressâ magis magisque diversa sentientium licentiâ, florentiorem ecclesiam, & sic securiorem Rempubicam habeamus.'

fortunes.¹⁸⁰ The prince, on the other hand, had spared no effort to avenge the Portuguese treachery, to restore Dutch rule in the Americas to its ancient glory, and to revitalise the WIC, for he had understood that, once they were expelled from the Americas, the Spaniards would lose the means to wage war. 'May the greatness and prudence of his judgement also reside in the hearts of all the other leading men of the country!'¹⁸¹

This, however, was not the case. Since the mid-1640s the WIC had been struggling to keep its head above water. The Company was burdened with great debts, while its possessions in Brazil were under constant threat by the risings of Portuguese colonists, who were suspected of receiving support from the king of Portugal, who was officially an ally of the Dutch. The WIC had turned to the States General for help, but there opinions about the right course of action had been, and in 1651 still were, divided. The province of Zeeland, where many people held great stakes in the WIC, pleaded insistently on the Company's behalf, but everytime its proposals to help the WIC stumbled on opposition from the States of Holland, led by Amsterdam, and the States of Friesland, which had other interests and refused to invest in what they believed to be a sinking ship.¹⁸² With his comments on the deplorable state of the WIC and the prince's praiseworthy efforts to restore the Company to its former glory Boxhorn clearly sides with Zeeland, where he had many friends and relatives, against Holland and Friesland. Strangely enough, the curators did not mind that Boxhorn once again vented his opinion on a contested political issue, as is demonstrated by the handsome fee of 300 guilders with which they rewarded Boxhorn for his adjusted oration.¹⁸³

It is not so surprising that in 1651 the curators once again decided to intervene and to rap Boxhorn's knuckles.¹⁸⁴ Just as in 1649 the connection between

¹⁸⁰ Ibidem, p. 25. 'Caeterum haud multo post, partim eorum ignavia, quorum erat constantia ac fide jam parta tueri, partim impari quorundam domi cura & mora, & minus promptis aptisque consiliis, ira certe quâdam Dei immortalis in res nostras, eorundem jacturam, paucis admodum reliquiis exceptis, magno & incomparabili privatarum publicarumque rerum damno feceramus. Accesserat & Lusitanorum quorundam (nam dicendum mihi quod res est) scelus ac perfidia; qui exuto jam excussoque Hispanorum imperio, post petitam nostrorum pacem ac impetratam, humani omnis divinique juris negligentes, Societatis non in India tantum ditiones, sed & in Africa quoque, auro alia permutantium commerciis nobilissimas, proximis annis invaserant; cuiusmodi hostibus, qui amicos in speciem se fingunt, nulli magis cavendi sunt, & nulli minus possunt caveri.'

¹⁸¹ Ibidem, p. 26. 'Intelligebat autem, ex illis sedibus Hispano semel ejecto ... non autem vim rerum, aut gerendarum instrumenta ac nervos, ei mansura. Utinam vero (nam certe voti haec res est) ejusdem consilii magnitudo ac rationes reliquorum quoque omnium procerum animis sederent!'

¹⁸² The end of the story was that the WIC lost all its possessions in Brazil. See Henk den Heijer, *De geschiedenis van de WIC* (Walburg Pers; Zutphen, 1994), pp. 49-54, and Clazina Dingemans and Marijke Meijer Drees, "'Praatjes' over de WIC en Brazilië: literaire aspecten van gesprekspamfletten uit 1649", in *De zeventiende eeuw*, Vol. 21, No. 1 (2005), pp. 112-27.

¹⁸³ On November 8, 1651. Mollhuysen, *Bronnen tot de geschiedenis der Leidsche Universiteit*, Vol. 3, p. 59.

¹⁸⁴ On June 27, 1649, the curators of the University were informed that Boxhorn's *De majestate* had

the Houses of Orange and Stuart was a sensitive issue, especially now that the Dutch were in the middle of negotiating a peaceful settlement with England's new regime. The negotiations, however, failed and on July 10, 1652, the Dutch were at war again.¹⁸⁵ This time their adversaries were that very same regime whose legitimacy Boxhorn had questioned from the start. During the First Anglo-Dutch War Boxhorn once again set out to prove his point, albeit from a different perspective. The product of this endeavour was the *Metamorphosis Anglorum* (*Metamorphosis of the English*), probably his last publication before his death.¹⁸⁶

The *Metamorphosis Anglorum* has been described as an 'anthology of changes in English history'.¹⁸⁷ Yet it is more. It consists of a collection of different works and pieces of text taken from different works that, put together, can only lead to one conclusion: the republican regime that ruled England after the execution of Charles I is not only illegal, but also an historical anomaly, and a dangerous one at that.¹⁸⁸

The *Metamorphosis Anglorum* can be divided into two parts. The first part gives a chronological overview of English history from the time of the ancient Britons to the execution of Charles I. It consists of John Selden's *Analecton Anglo-Britannicon* (*Collection of Anglo-British History*) and *Jani Anglorum*, and

attracted the attention of the burgomasters of Leiden. The burgomasters were not so pleased because they thought that the *De majestate* jeopardised the Republic's stand of neutrality and demanded action. Molhuysen, *Bronnen tot de geschiedenis der Leidseche Universiteit*, Vol. 3, pp. 28-29.

¹⁸⁵ Explanations why war broke out between England and the Dutch Republic in 1652 vary. Three schools of thought can be distinguished. One school emphasises economic reasons and focuses on the mercantile competition between the two countries. Charles Wilson, *Profit and Power: A Study of England and the Dutch Wars* (Martinus Nijhoff; The Hague, 1st ed. 1957, 1978), p. 61; Groenveld, "The English Civil Wars as a Cause of the First Anglo-Dutch War, 1640-1652", pp. 556-57; Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, pp. 785-86. The second school of thought stresses the importance of domestic and international politics. J.R. Jones, *The Anglo-Dutch Wars of the Seventeenth Century* (Longman; London, 1996), pp. 107-13. Finally, there is a school of thought that sees the First Anglo-Dutch War as emerging from ideological concerns. Geyl, *Orange and Stuart*, pp. 90-94, and Pincus, *Protestantism and Patriotism*, p. 75.

¹⁸⁶ Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn, *Metamorphosis Anglorum, sive Mutationes variae regum, regni, rerumque Angliae. Opus Historicum et Politicum, ex variis fide dignissimis Monumentis ac Auctoribus contextum, ad haec usque tempora deductum, memoriaeque posteritatis aeternae consecratum* (?; ?, 1653). The *Metamorphosis Anglorum* was published anonymously in 1653, probably just before Boxhorn's death, although an exact date cannot be given. See Barlaeus, "Oratio Funeris In Excessum Clarissimi Viri, Marci Zuerii Boxhornii", p. 151. 'Quin & Metamorphosin rerum Anglicarum post caedem Caroli Britanniarum Regis nuper exortam è diversis auctoribus collectam concinnatamque in vulgus dedit.' Boxhorn died on October 3, 1653. Barlaeus held his funeral oration six days later, on October 9. See chapter 3, footnotes 13 and 177.

¹⁸⁷ E.O.G. Haitsma Mulier, "The History of Great Britain as seen by the Dutch of the Seventeenth Century: A Chapter from the History of Historiography", in Simon Groenveld and Michael Wintle (eds.), *Britain and the Netherlands*, Vol. 11: *The Exchange of Ideas: Religion, Scholarship and Art in Anglo-Dutch Relations in the Seventeenth Century* (Walberg Instituut; Zutphen, 1994), p. 144.

¹⁸⁸ In a time when ancientity and immutability formed the basis of legitimacy, any form of change could constitute an illegal act, an argument that was used by both the Dutch, when they revolted against what they called bad Spanish government, and the English who opposed the regime of Charles I. However, as I will try to show, it is not so much the occurrence of change in England's political regime as such that Boxhorn attacks, but the direction of that change.

some brief descriptions of pieces of English history taken from Boxhorn's *Historia universalis* (*Universal History*, 1652). Together, these three different sources provide the reader with a consistent image of English history. This image is characterised by many changes and violent upheals.¹⁸⁹ However, although both Selden and Boxhorn recognise that the English past and England's political institutions are not static and immutable, there is also a sense of continuity that is represented by England's mixed constitution. Indeed, in both the *Analecton* and the *Jani Anglorum* Selden presents England as a mixed constitution, 'in which the king, nobles, clergy and freemen had shared sovereignty from the very beginning'.¹⁹⁰ This shared sovereignty, amid all changes and violent upheals, remained in place, although its practical working adapted to the demands of time. Thus, in ancient times England was divided in several small kingdoms that were ruled by a king. One king, however, always held suzerainty.¹⁹¹ The invasions by the Anglo-Saxons and the Normans did see changes in custom and law, but even William the Conqueror (c.1028-c.1087), who had, for a brief time, absolute power in England, yielded to the request of the barons to abide to the laws of king Edward the Confessor (c.1005-1066), which 'were before the rest of the Laws of the Countrey respected, confirmed and observed all over England'.¹⁹² During the Middle Ages the king extended his power through conquests in Ireland, Scotland, and France. These ventures also forced him to call on Parliament to gain the financial support of his subjects, who were not always willing to help him.¹⁹³ Conflict, and sometimes

¹⁸⁹ Both Selden and Boxhorn hold that the invasions by the Anglo-Saxons and later by the Normans had brought about significant changes in custom and law. See, for example, Selden's remark on the year 1066, duly copied by Boxhorn. 'Now this is no rare thing among Writers for them to devise, that William the Conqueror brought in as it were a clear new face of Laws to all intents and purposes. 't is true, this must be acknowledg'd, that he did make some new ones ... But so however that they take their denomination from the English, rather from the Normans; although one may truly say, according to what Lawyers dispute, that the English Empire and Government was overthrown by him.' John Selden, *The Reverse or Back-face of the English Janus: to-wit, All That is met with in Story Concerning the Common and Statute-Law of English Britanny, from the First Memoirs of the Two Nations, to the Decease of King Henry II ...* Written in Latin and rendred into English by Redman Westcot (Thomas Basset and Richard Chiswell; London, 1682), p. 48, and Boxhorn, *Metamorphosis Anglorum*, p. 214. Boxhorn's brief descriptions are mostly about domestic uprisings and disputes between the king and his subjects, for example, the dispute between Edward I (1239-1307) and the clergy at the end of the thirteenth century and the Peasant Revolt of 1381. Boxhorn, *Metamorphosis Anglorum*, pp. 290-99. What does strike is that the struggle between the House of Lancaster and the House of York is missing in the *Metamorphosis Anglorum*. In the *Historia universalis* this story immediate follows Boxhorn's description of the Peasant Revolt. Boxhorn, *Historia universalis*, p. 900ff.

¹⁹⁰ Christianson, *Discourse on History, Law and Governance in the Public Career of John Selden* (1610-1635), pp. 7, 12-31; Parry, *The Trophies of Time: English Antiquarians of the Seventeenth Century*, pp. 98-107; Janelle Greenberg, *The Radical Face of the Ancient Constitution: St. Edward's "Laws" in Early Modern Political Thought* (Cambridge University Press; Cambridge, 1st ed. 2001, 2006), pp. 35, 149.

¹⁹¹ Boxhorn, *Metamorphosis Anglorum*, p. 275. Boxhorn follows Beda, *The Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, II.5.

¹⁹² Selden, *The Reverse or Back-face of the English Janus*, p. 49, and Boxhorn, *Metamorphosis Anglorum*, p. 215.

¹⁹³ Boxhorn recalls the Parliament at Berwick that was summoned by king Edward I, who was in

even rebellions could follow, but the essential nature of England's polity never changed, nor was it ever called into question. The civil wars of the 1640s, however, had resulted in 'a great conversion and change'. That is, it had produced a new English polity without a monarchical element.¹⁹⁴

In what can be called the second part of the *Metamorphosis Anglorum* the same argument is brought forward, now, however, by material gathered from works that were written in immediate response to the events in England in the 1640s. This material contains the introduction and the first chapter of Salmasius's *Defensio regia* (*Royal Defence*, 1649), *Lex terrae* (*Law of the Land*, 1648) of David Jenkins (1582-1663), and some 65 pages of the *History of Independency* (1648) of Clement Walker (c.1599-1651).¹⁹⁵ From albeit different angles, all three men defend the English monarchy and denounce a parliamentary regime without a king as illegal. England, Salmasius claimed, had been a monarchy since the very beginning. Now that the king was executed that 'old government of the kingdom, that was commonly ruled by one' was changed 'into another, held by many tyrants, against all human law and divine law, against the laws of the kingdom, against the loyalty of her oath, and against the solemn agreement of that compact, that was initiated between the two kingdoms'.¹⁹⁶ Jenkins maintained that 'the King is King by an inhaerent birth-

desperate need of money. Boxhorn, *Metamorphosis Anglorum*, p. 291. The Parliament at Berwick was a Scottish one, held after the surrender of John I Balliol (1249-c.1313), the king of Scotland, at Montrose (1296). Richard Oram, *The King and Queens of Scotland* (Tempus Publishing; Stroud, 2006), pp. 112-15.

¹⁹⁴ Boxhorn, *Metamorphosis Anglorum*, p. 304. 'Inter haec Angliae, Scotiae, Hiberniaeque Rex Carolus I. regnorumque Proceres, subditique, in contraria scissi studia, maximi terroris motibus bellisque domi inter se committuntur. Ex quibus, capto tandem rege, & securi ab Anglis publice percusso, regiaque omni sobole regio nomine ac jure exuta, magna conversio rerum ac mutatio facta est.'

¹⁹⁵ Boxhorn ends where Walker is talking about the instalment of the 'three committee-men' who will have 'power to Imprison and Sequester all such as actually adhere to any that shall raise or endeavour to raise Tumults and Insurrections; or shall speak or publish anything reproachful to the Parliament, or their proceedings.' These men could 'judge and execute according to their discretion, without Law, or so much as a formality thereof.' Boxhorn reckoned this to be the end of English liberty: 'Vale Anglica Libertas.' Clement Walker, *Relations and Observations, Historicall and Politick, upon the Parliament, begun Anno Dom. 1640. : Divided into II. Books: 1. The Mystery of the Two Iunto's, Presbyterian and Independent. 2. The History of Independency, &c.: Together with an Appendix, Touching the Proceedings of the Independent Faction in Scotland (?; London?, 1648)*, pp. 90-91, and Boxhorn, *Metamorphosis Anglorum*, p. 466.

In the *Metamorphosis Anglorum* Boxhorn also uses the *Apophthegmata* of Charles I. They were published in 1649 attached to William Dugard's version of the *Eikon Basilike*. Later, there followed three separate editions. See *Eikon Basilike: The Portraiture of His Sacred Majesty in His Solitudes and Sufferings*. Edited by Philip A. Knachel (Cornell University Press; New York, 1966), pp. 15-16. In 1650 there appeared a Latin edition of the *Apophthegmata* in The Hague, published by the royalist printer Samuel Brown. *Apophthegmata aurea regia Carolina: ex libro Eikon Basilike collecta*.

¹⁹⁶ Salmasius, *Defensio regia*, p. 32, and Boxhorn, *Metamorphosis Anglorum*, p. 333. 'Isti sunt qui regem judicant, qui condemnarunt inauditum, qui securi percusserunt, qui regimen regni antiquum ab uno temperari solitum in alium qui à pluribus tyrannis teneatur mutare praesumpserunt, contra jus, contra fas, contra leges Regni, contra sacramenti sui fidem, contra solennem conventionis pactionem quae inter duo regna inita fuerat ...' Salmasius was, of course, a staunch defender of the royal prerogative and of monarchical rule. However, compared to chapters six and seven of the *Defensio regia*, the introduction and the first chapter of the work are less 'absolutistic' in tone. See Claude Salmasius, *Defensio Regia*:

right, by nature, by gods-law, and by the law of the land'.¹⁹⁷ The king was also 'the head of the Parliament, the Lords the principall members of the body, the Commons the inferior members, and so the body is composed, therefore there is no more Parliament without a King, then there is a body without a head'.¹⁹⁸ Walker asserted that the king was 'the *first* and most visable legall authority of *England*', while Parliament stood second.¹⁹⁹ The king was the 'fountaine' from which the Lords and the House of Commons derived their power. Without a king they would have no legislative power, nor could there be any due process of law because the common law was broken.²⁰⁰

The republican regime that came into being after the execution of Charles I was felt to be so new and so different from anything before that new concepts had to be invented to make any sense of it. Salmasius was sure that the new people in power had 'completely obliterated the mode of a popular regime by electing a council of forty tyrants to exercise the highest power in the state and by installing a new regime that was unheard of in the previous ages'. That regime, Salmasius continued, 'must be called a *military* regime, because it is becoming that this government by armed forces is called by this name, which form of government is introduced nowadays in England by those inflamed fanatics'.²⁰¹ Walker identified these fanatics as the Independents, that 'compila-

Selections. Translated by Kathryn A. McEuen. In: John Milton, *The Complete Prose Works of John Milton*, Vol. 4: 1650-1655, Part 2, Appendix C. General editor Don M. Wolfe (Yale University Press; New Haven/London, 1966), pp. 986-1035.

¹⁹⁷ David Jenkins, *Lex terrae, or, A briefe discourse of law* (Jo. Gyles; London, 1648), p. 20, and Boxhorn, *Metamorphosis Anglorum*, p. 410.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 8, and Boxhorn, *Metamorphosis Anglorum*, p. 399. 'Rex est caput Parlamenti, Domini principalia membra corporis, Communes inferiora membra, & ita corpus est compositum, quapropter non magis est Parlamentum sine Rege quam corpus sine capite.' Jenkins, however, also expressed that 'the King is also sworne to observe the Lawes, and the Judges have in their Oath a clause, That they shall doe common right to all the Kings people, according to the established Lawes, notwithstanding any command of the King to the contrary, under the Great Seale or otherwise.' Jenkins, *Lex terrae*, p. 13, and Boxhorn, *Metamorphosis Anglorum*, p. 404. Jenkins has been labelled as 'the chief Royalist exponent of the politics of the ancient constitution' during the 1640s. Glenn Burgess, *Absolute Monarchy and the Stuart Constitution* (Yale University Press; New Haven/London, 1996), p. 207. See also Michael Mendle, *Henry Parker and the English Civil War: The Political Thought of the Public's "Privado"* (Cambridge University Press; Cambridge, 1995), pp. 154-55, and David Smith, who ranks Jenkins among the eight authors 'that stand out as the leading exponents of Constitutional Royalist theory'. David L. Smith, *Constitutional Royalism and the Search for Settlement, c.1640-1649* (Cambridge University Press; Cambridge, 1994), p. 219.

¹⁹⁹ Walker, *The History of Independency*, p. 34, and Boxhorn, *Metamorphosis Anglorum*, p. 433. 'Primae & maxime visibilis auctoritatis legalis in Regno Angliae ...' Walker was chief usher of the Exchequer. Later on he became a royalist journalist with Leveller sympathies. Mendle, *Henry Parker and the English Civil War*, p. 28, and Jason Peacey, *Politicians and Pamphleteers: Propaganda during the English Civil Wars and Interregnum* (Ashgate; Aldershot, 2004), p. 104.

²⁰⁰ *Ibidem*, pp. 61-62, and Boxhorn, *Metamorphosis Anglorum*, p. 447.

²⁰¹ Salmasius, *Defensio regia*, p. 36, and Boxhorn, *Metamorphosis Anglorum*, p. 338. 'Popularis vero status genus penitus aboleverunt quadraginta tyrannorum Consilium eligendo cum summa potestate ad rempublicam administrandam, novum autem & inauditum saeculis prioribus statum instituendo qui *Militaris* debet appellari. Hanc enim *στρατοκρατιαν* priscis incognitam vero nomine oportet nuncupari, quae forma hodie in Anglia regiminis per hos inspiratos fanaticos introducta est ...' This case is

tion of all wrongs', who 'subject all matters, to the power of the Sword'. In this they resembled the Turk. The goal of the Independents was 'to monopolize the power of the sword into their own hands' so that they could rule England.²⁰²

Domination of England, however, was not their end goal. In reaction to England's declaration of war the States General published a declaration in which they defended the Dutch position.²⁰³ This declaration, taken up in the *Metamorphosis Anglorum* after the *History of Independency*, reads that the 'hidden designs' of 'the current government of England' was 'to ruin our commerce, and by this to weaken the strength of our State'.²⁰⁴ Its ultimate goal was 'to completely ruin our power at sea, and to suppress the commerce of these lands, and thus to exercise their long pretended mastery of the sea, first over us, but thereafter over all other nations, and to make them, if they could, their paying subjects'.²⁰⁵ Thus, once again, the Dutch were in the frontline of an international struggle for freedom.

a fine proof that 'political practice was a major source of the development of political thought, and often triggered its elaboration'. Wim Blockmans, "Limitations to Monarchical Power", in Robert von Friedeburg (ed.), *Murder and Monarchy: Regicide in European History, 1300-1800* (Palgrave Macmillan; Basingstoke, 2004), p. 137. For it was Salmasius who first coined the Greek term 'stratokratia'. Sir Rober Filmer (1590-1653) provided the first English translation in his *Observations upon Aristotles Politics, touching Forms of Government* (Printed for R. Royston; London, 1652). See Paul W. Blackford, "Stratocracy, a Seventeenth Century Greek Coinage", in *The Classical Journal*, Vol. 51, No. 6 (1956), pp. 279-80. After 1649 the term 'stratocracy' became incorporated into European political thought, and formed an integral part of many discussions on the forms of government. In 1675 Petrus Valckenier could distinguish six legitimate forms of government: a monarchy, an aristocracy, a democracy, a mixed regime, a theocracy, and a stratocracy. Of these six forms he deemed the last two the most durable because both were led by a firm hand, respectively God and justice. Petrus Valckenier, 't *Verwerd Europe, ofte politijke en historische beschryvinge der waare fundamente en oorsaken van de oorlogen en revolutien in Europa, voornamentlijk in en omtrent de Nederlanden zedert den jaere 1664, gecaeseerd door de gepretendeerde universele monarchie der Franschen* (Antoni Schoonenberg and Johannes Rotterdam; Amsterdam, 1st ed. 1675, 1742), p. 15.

²⁰² According to Walker, the Independents were governed by 'profit and preferment, their last and ultimate end'. This sentence is missing in the *Metamorphosis Anglorum*. Walker, *The History of Independency*, pp. 27-28, and Boxhorn, *Metamorphosis Anglorum*, pp. 427-28.

²⁰³ On August 2, 1652. *Declaratie ofte Manifest, van de Hooge ende Mogende Heeren Staten Generael der Vereenichde Nederlandsche Provincien: Behelsende een oprecht verhael van der selver sincere intentie, ende rechtmatige proceduren ontrent de onderhandelinghe met de extraordinaris Ambassadeurs, ende Ghecommitteerden vande tegenwoordige regeringe van Engelandt, soo allhier in 's Graven-Hage, als tot London geaallen. Mitsgaders: Vande onrechtvaardige ende violente proceduren van die vande voorsz regeringe, die hare Ho: Mo: ghenootsaect hebben, om by wegen van retorsie haren Staet ende Ingesetenen tegen den overlast der selver te beschermen* (Van Wouw; The Hague, 1652). Knuttel 7169.

²⁰⁴ *Declaratie ofte Manifest van de Hooge ende Mogende Heeren Staten Generael der Vereenichde Nederlandsche Provincien*, vi, and Boxhorn, *Metamorphosis Anglorum*, p. 477. 'Et interim praefata per eosdem Legatos nostros Tractatione serio instanterque promotā, cumque per eosdem id unice curatum actumque esset, ut eum omnia agenda in statum adducerentur, in quo praedictum Regimen sine ulteriori omni dissimulatione, velut aperire sese aut mentem cogeretur, neque diutius posset occultas destinationes suas celare, (ut nempe sic sub amicitiae larva lactantes nos specie institutae de societate Tractationis consuetis meditatisque praetextibus, Commercium nostra excinderent, & robur hujus Status imperique nostri enervarent ...)' The phrase 'the current government of England' can be found on the title page of the States General's declaration. See the previous footnote.

²⁰⁵ Ibidem, xii-xiii, and Boxhorn, *Metamorphosis Anglorum*, p. 485. 'Quae omnia intolerandum adeo in modum atque injuste coepta, tamque violenter acta, cum evidentissime à praenominato Regimine in id suscepta atque patrata sint, quo nostras mari vires penitus affligerent, commercia harum ditionum

Positioned at the end, the declaration of the States General forms the conclusion of the *Metamorphosis Anglorum*.²⁰⁶ One can say that Boxhorn, as a true patriot, felt the urge to defend his country when it became the victim of new foreign aggression and that for this reason he constructed the *Metamorphosis Anglorum*, a work that blackens the reputation of England's republican regime, brands it as illegal, and portrays it as warlike, aggressive and untrustworthy. If so, it is but one side of the story. A letter that Boxhorn wrote on November 22, 1652, to Constantijn Huygens can give us a glimpse of how Boxhorn must have felt in those troubled days.²⁰⁷ What we hear is a whole shopping list of complaints, of situations Boxhorn 'would rather not hear'.²⁰⁸ Throughout Europe 'a band of malignant fevers sat upon the lands'. Everywhere the seas were unsafe for the Dutch because of 'robbery and piracy', while 'in this Republic many were at the helm, who, however, do nothing against the pirates and king killers, as if they not as yet were spread over the whole world'. Boxhorn also saw 'a Republic that is ungrateful towards the offspring of those ancestors that had, with the greatest persistence and loyalty, brought forth this freedom for us, this empire for us'. The Organist court was divided 'into contrary feelings and thrown into confusion by the most important people'. The churches and the halls of the universities were 'full of foolish people and people, who express themselves unsound, and yet these people want to be seen as skilled in all divine and human affairs and as teachers and masters of philosophy'.²⁰⁹

Clearly, Boxhorn was not pleased with the overall situation in November 1652. What stands out is that he especially criticises the new regime that had taken control of the Dutch Republic after the death of William II. They squandered Dutch maritime interests by not acting against the threat the English

opprimerent, atque hoc pacto pridem jactatam sibi mari dominationem reapse in Nos, ac deinceps in reliquis Nationes universas, exercerent, easdemque, si possent, vectigales sibi redderent ...'

²⁰⁶ The *Metamorphosis Anglorum* ends with a long list of political and moral 'gnomae'. *Gnomae* or *gnomes* are pithy aphorisms, usually in verse, that embody some moral sentiment or precept.

²⁰⁷ That is six weeks after the battle of the Kentish Knock (October 8), where the Dutch, being out-gunned and suffering from internal divisions, were beaten by an English fleet under the command of Robert Blake (1599-1657).

²⁰⁸ This letter is one of the few we have in which Boxhorn comments on contemporary political issues.

²⁰⁹ Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, pp. 312-13. 'Audio passim per Europam incubuisse terris malignam febrium cohortem; passim è medio tolli viros & amicos eximios, decora saeculi & ornamenta: malim non audire. Audio raptu & latrocinii infesta ubique nostris maria & in hac repub. multos ad clavum sedere, nec tamen in pyratas & Regicidas, haud aliter quam si toto adhuc orbe divisi essent, navigari: malim non audire. Audio ingratham Rempubl. in posteros eorum majorum, qui summa constantia ac fide hanc nobis libertatem, hoc nobis imperium peperere, malim non audire. Audio in contraria scissam studia turbatamque principalis aulae vestrae pacem; malim non audire. Audio (nam de repub. plura mihi jam non dicenda esse intelligo) & invitus quotidie audio & in templis, & in auditoriis Academicarum homines ineptissimos, & disserentes ineptissime, qui tamen divinarum humanarumque rerum periti, & doctores sapientiae ac magistri audiri volunt: malim non audire.'

Commonwealth, those ‘pirates and kingkillers’, posed at sea. The ‘ingratitude’ Boxhorn observes ‘towards the offspring of those ancestors’ to whom the Dutch owed their freedom is an implicit reference to the refusal of the States of Holland to elevate the young prince of Orange to the offices of stadholder and captain-general.²¹⁰ And all the while the church ministers and university professors talked nonsense. From this perspective, the *Metamorphosis Anglorum* can also be seen as criticism towards those who were leading the country, that is, the *regenten* of Holland. If, like Selden and Boxhorn, the *regenten* had known their English history, then they would have understood that a non-monarchical regime did not comply with English history. Indeed, from the British chiefdoms, the Anglo-Saxons kingdoms, and the Norman Conquest until the kingdom of Great-Britain many changes had occurred in English history, but none of them had questioned the monarchical element within the English political framework or had pointed towards a new, ‘non-monarchical’ future. Throughout the *Metamorphosis Anglorum* the rights of Parliament are not being denied. But, as becomes clear from the works of Jenkins and Walker, without a king England’s ancient constitution is broken. In short, what Boxhorn argues is that the Commonwealth of England constituted a historical anomaly, which had no precedent in the English past and stood in contrast to it.²¹¹ As the Dutch found out, nothing good could be expected from a regime that defied history.²¹²

Conclusion

Death can be kind. It spared Boxhorn the pain of witnessing situations he ‘would rather not hear’. By agreeing to the Treaty of Westminster, the States General had again confirmed the legitimacy of the English Commonwealth,

²¹⁰ Boxhorn attributed the beginnings of Dutch Republic and its independence to the family of Nassau, and especially to William of Orange. See above. In the autumn of 1652 the States of Zeeland had pushed to make the young William captain-general. Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, pp. 790-92, and Pincus, *Protestantism and Patriotism*, pp. 106-14.

²¹¹ During the Interregnum the new English regime tried hard to convince the English people of its legitimacy. Their means were natural law theories, continental sources, Biblical materials, and English history. See Greenberg, *The Radical Face of the Ancient Constitution*, pp. 230-42.

²¹² To conclude, England was only England but in name, not in substance. This can explain why, besides the obvious rhetorical effect, Boxhorn had opted for the term ‘metamorphosis’ and not its most likely Latin equivalent ‘transformatio’. As William Anderson has explained, Ovid’s ‘metamorphosis’ usually indicates a change, whereby something from the old form survives in the new. This may concern form or matter. For example, Zeus in the shape of the bull that carried away Europe still remained Zeus in his godly essence, while Apollo, when he chased Daphne, retained his divine shape, but was transformed internally, as his burning desire turned him into a restless being, seeking the help of human beings. It is also interesting to note that Ovid discerns the passions as one of the greatest causes of these ‘changes’. William S. Anderson, “Multiple Change in the Metamorphoses”, in *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association*, Vol. 94 (1963), pp. 1-27.

while the Act of Exclusion that was secretly adopted by the States of Holland meant a serious break in the political structure of the Dutch Republic.²¹³ As Boxhorn had pictured it in the *Commentariolus*, this structure was incomplete without a stadholder. Now, that community of interests that was the Dutch Republic would have to find another way to make its political machinery work. With no stadholder to mediate and no possibility of majority voting in the States General, this would prove to be a hard bargain.²¹⁴ Soon many came to long for 'the good old times'.²¹⁵ However, it would take respectively six and eighteen years before the situation would return to the *status quo ante* that Boxhorn had sought to defend in the last five years of his life.

It was to defend the 'powers that be', then, that Boxhorn had put the pen to paper. In 1649 he re-edited an old dissertation held by one of his students to defend the rights of the House of Stuart to the English throne. He also inserted and manipulated a text taken from the Spanish jurist Vázquez to add authority to his thesis. When attacked, he used an array of biblical, juridical, historical, and political argumentation to backup his standpoint and to incriminate his opponent as their fatherland's true enemy. In 1653 Boxhorn published another work to denounce England's republican regime. This time he used the latest publications on English history and the latest political commentaries and constructed them into a single theory driven thesis. These publications, then, show the readiness, the ability, and the flexibility with which the Dutch responded to contemporary events and the ingenuity with which they adapted and adjusted historical and political works and the ideas expressed in them to the demands of new circumstances. Furthermore, they show the willingness of Dutch scholars to mingle in contemporary debates and, judging by Boxhorn's works and those of his colleagues, on a variety of subjects.²¹⁶

²¹³ The Treaty of Westminster, which was ratified by the States General on April 22, 1654, was the peace treaty that ended the First Anglo-Dutch War. Connected to this treaty was the Act of Exclusion, 'a secret clause ... in which the States of Holland declared that in future the Oranges would be excluded from the stadholdership in Holland'. The Act of Exclusion was adopted by the States of Holland on May 4, 1654, despite the opposition of six towns, among them Leiden and Haarlem. See Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, pp. 722-23, and Prak, *The Dutch Republic in the Seventeenth Century*, pp. 47-48, with quote on p. 48.

²¹⁴ At the Great Council of 1651 the sovereignty of the provincial States was once again confirmed. In his famous *Deduction* (1654), in which he defended the late Act of Seclusion, Johan de Witt, the grand-pensionary of Holland, stressed Holland's absolute sovereignty within the Union of Utrecht, making it clear that Holland would act on its own if it deemed this necessary. This greatly undermined the spirit of the Union and made a mockery of majority voting. *Deductie, ofte declaratie vande Staten van Holland ende West-Vrieslandt: behelsende een warachtich en grondich bericht vande fundamenten der regeringe van de orye Vereenigde Nederlanden ... ingestelt ende dienende tot justificatie van 't verlenen van seeckere Acte van seclusie, rakende 't employ vanden heere prince van Oraigne ... op den 4. Mey 1654 gepasseert* (Van Wouw; The Hague, 1654), esp. pp. 35-42. Knuttel 7545.

²¹⁵ The success of the *Commentariolus* during the 1650s and 1660s can be seen as an indication of that longing.

²¹⁶ Both Boxhorn and Salmasius, for example, had voiced their opinion in the so-called 'hairy-war'.

Boxhorn's publications proof that seventeenth-century Dutch scholars did not lock themselves up in an ivory tower. Sometimes they climbed down the stairs to meet the man in the street and, if only for a short period of time, to build a bridge between the lecture hall and the outside world.

See chapter 3, and Otterspeer, *Het bolwerk van de vrijheid*, pp. 320-21.

Chapter 6

New tidings

In the *Oratio panegyrica de Belgarum pace* Boxhorn had expressed the hope that the whole of Europe would soon be at peace. In a true Erasmian spirit Boxhorn had tried to strengthen his plea for a European-wide peace with an appeal to the humanity ‘which binds us with [our fellow] men, or with those of the Christian name’.¹ This European brotherhood of men was not solely confined to the Christian faith or geographic boundaries. Boxhorn’s personal appeal to Louis XIV shows that the bond between the different European peoples (*Europeae gentes*) also had a strong historical component; the French and the Germans were brothers because they had the same common ancestors.² Yet despite their common descent, the peoples of Europe could not help fighting among each other. At the time of his death Boxhorn’s Dutch compatriots were at war with the English, while the Spaniards and the French were still embroiled in a bitter struggle for the premier place in Europe.

In what would be the last stage of his life the common ancestry of the European peoples became one of Boxhorn’s most important research subjects. Boxhorn conducted this research along linguistics lines; by comparing the European languages with each other he hoped to find evidence for his thesis that most, if not all European peoples descended from the same common ancestors and had once all spoken the same language. It is for the works resulting from this endeavour that Boxhorn is now most renowned.

At the same time, during the last years of his life academic life at Leiden University became invested by the scholarly dispute that had erupted over the ‘new’ and ‘heretical’ ideas of the French philosopher René Descartes. Although it seems that no positive link can be made between the two, there is a connection between Boxhorn’s linguistic enterprises and ‘the first Cartesian

¹ Boxhorn, “*Oratio panegyrica de Belgarum pace*”, p. 127. ‘Denique non hominum tantum, quibus humanitas nos conjungit, aut Christiani nominis, aut sociorum, foederatorum, vicinorum, quae velut propinquitatum cognationumque inter gentes sunt vocabula, sed Belgarum etiam caussa, qui neque felices videri sibi possunt, si sint soli, si soli famulantes votis & voluptatibus suis habeant hanc rerum secundarum & pacis tranquillitatem.’

² *Ibidem*, pp. 129-30. ‘Vt Ludovici decimi quarti, Galliarum Regis Christianissimi, quanquam longe lateque triumphalem adolescentiam, commendent tamen praecipue expleta tot senum, tot adutorum pro pace desideria ac vota, primi omnium ac nobilissimi triumpho ... per Francorum, qui è gremio Germaniae olim progressi in Gallia sedes posuere, per Caroli Magni, ex se orti, & conjuncti in Gallia Germanique florentissimi quondam ejus imperii, memoriam.’

war'. In this chapter we will take a close look at both of them and how they are connected. This will not only give us another inside into Boxhorn's last roaring years and the stand of Dutch *academiae* at that important juncture in time, but it will also provide us with a stepping stone from which to start our research into Boxhorn's historical and political thought.

Nehalennia

For our investigation into Boxhorn's work in the field of linguistics we return to the year 1646. November of that year found Boxhorn once again plagued by his mysterious disorder.³ His bad health may have prevented Boxhorn from carrying out his usual duties at the University but it did not stop him from working altogether.⁴ From a letter that he wrote a month later to the young Hendrik Bruno (1617-1664), we learn that Boxhorn kept himself busy with a subject he called 'Scythia'. In the letter Boxhorn does not reveal what this subject [precisely] entails. He does, however, entrust Bruno that 'this doctrine, as it is new, is not without either envy or ignorance, even amongst other very learned men'.⁵

The winter weather soon provided Boxhorn with an opportunity to make his work and views on 'Scythia' publicly known. On January 5, 1647, a col-

³ Boxhorn in a letter to Fabricius, November 12, 1646. Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, pp. 277-78. 'Statueram humanitatem hanc tuam praevenire ipse, sed cum annuo & prope ultimo commistus morbo coactus sum ea intermittere officia, ad quae jam pridem obstrictum me agnoscebam.'

⁴ That is, if what Hornius writes in his preface to Boxhorn's *Originum Gallicarum liber* relates to the same period in time. George Hornius, "Preface", in Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn, *Originum Gallicarum liber. In quo veteris & nobilissimae Gallorum gentis origines, antiquitates, mores, lingua & alia eruuntur & illustrantur* (Rodopi; Amsterdam, 1970), i. 'Cum A. Ch. MCDXLVI ex Anglia redux ipsum officii & honoris ergo salutasset, tum forte ex gravissimo convalescentem morbo reperi: cumque virium debilitas consuetos in Academia labores nondum ferret, neque tamen domi otiosus omnino desiderare posset, ut longi temporis taedia falleret, Originum vocabulorum Belgicorum examinare coepit. Vidit innumera vocabula, Germanis, Latinis, Graecis & aliis per Europam nationibus, communia esse. Inde conjiciebat à communi fonte eam similitudinem profectam, id est eadem omnium illarum gentium Origine ... Non ergo vel Latinos à Graecis, vel hos à Germanis, quae communia inter se habent, hausisse, sed ab eadem, id est Scythica origine.'

⁵ Boxhorn in a letter to Bruno, December 13, 1646. Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, pp. 278-79. 'Sunt interim & alia quae me exercent. Scythia nempe. Utinam verò illa quàm vera & certa sunt, tam vera & certa aliis videantur? Institutum hoc, ut novum vel invidia, vel ignorantia, etiam caetera doctissimorum, non caret. Sunt tamen & habentur inter doctissimos, quibus rationes meas probavi. Et etiamsi non probassem, scio probandas omnium eorum iudicio, qui amant virtutem. Epistolae haec, quam legere te volui, sed eâ lege ut intra bidui spatium ad me redeat, quid moliar, & quid paratum jam habeam, te docebit.' In the letter Boxhorn also reveals that 'there is nothing here' that could delay ('Nihil hic est, quod moram objiciat') the publication of Enricus Puteanus's letters to Constantijn Huygens and Daniel Heinsius. This may hint that by the time he wrote his letter to Bruno Boxhorn had sufficiently recovered from his disorder, which he does not mention in this letter. Hendrik Bruno was the private teacher of Constantijn Huygens's sons. He would later become the deputy vice-chancellor of the Latin school at Hoorn. See Frederiks and Van den Branden, *Biographisch woordenboek der Noord- en Zuidnederlandsche letterkunde*, p. 106. See also Meertens, *Letterkundig leven in Zeeland in de zestiende en eerste helft der zeventiende eeuw*, p. 367.

lection of ancient stones, coins, and several statues with Roman inscriptions dedicated to the goddess Nehalennia were found on the beach of Domburg, a small town on the northeast coast of Walcheren in the province of Zeeland. The winter storms and the high sea had knocked off a part of the beach and had uncovered the ancient treasure that had been lying there for dozens of centuries. The news of the discovery spread like wildfire. The painter Hendrick van Schuylenburgh (+1689), a resident of Middelburg, made drawings of the stones and sent them to Huygens in The Hague. Huygens forwarded them to Scriverius on February 15, together with a letter in which he notified the renowned scholar of the spectacular new catch. In the letter he also made an attempt to come up with an explanation for the meaning of the name Nehalennia, a name that until then had been unknown to classical scholars. Huygens thought the name was a derivative of Greek origin and meant something like ‘recently caught’.⁶ Scriverius probably showed the drawings to Boxhorn, who, on his turn, shared some of his information with Salmasius. On February 24, the latter wrote a letter to Huygens in which he writes that Boxhorn had showed him copies of the inscriptions, but not the drawings. From the inscriptions and some figures of the goddess he had seen in a Dutch pamphlet Salmasius concluded that Nehalennia resembled the Roman goddess Pomona.⁷ Yet he also proposed that ‘Nehalen’ could refer to a place name. Since ‘hal(l)e’ means ‘marketplace’, ‘Nehalen’ then would mean ‘new marketplace’, an explanation nicely befitting the urban mercantile provinces of Holland and Zeeland.⁸

⁶ Huygens to Scriverius, February 15, 1647. Constantijn Huygens, *De briefwisseling van Constantijn Huygens (1608-1687)*, Vol. 4: 1644-1649. Uitgegeven door J.A. Worp (Martinus Nijhoff; The Hague, 1915), p. 390, letter 4548. ‘Allusimus nonnulli ad Belgicum idioma ac de *Net hael inne*, sive *Niew hael inne* nescio quid ausi fuimus somnari. Mihi vero τὸ νεαλῆς succurrit, et sive id recenter captum, sive salitum indicare velis, ad originem huius nomenclaturae manu ducere visum est.’

⁷ Salmasius to Huygens, February 24, 1647. *Ibidem*, p. 392, letter 4552. ‘Monsieur Boxhornius me les avoit desja fait voir, mais sans les figures ... J’avois aussi veu les mesmes inscriptions dans un livre imprimé en flamant, ou les figures aussi n’estoient point lesquelles m’ont appris que cette deesse Nehalennia sembloit estre celle que les Normains ont appellee Pomona.’ Pomona was the Roman goddess of fruit trees, gardens, and orchards. See also Daniel Droixhe, *L’étymon des dieux: mythologie gauloise, archéologie et linguistique à l’âge classique* (Librairie Droz S.A.; Geneva, 2002), p. 139. Thirteen figures of the drawings Van Schuylenborch had made appeared in a Dutch pamphlet published by Hendrick Danckers (c.1625-1680). *Afbeeldinge van de over oude rariteyten, aen de strandt omtrent Domburch in den Eylande van Walcheren ... gevonden den 5e Januarij 1647* (Danckers; The Hague, 1647). Boxhorn used these figures in the *Bediedinge*. See also Ada Hondius-Crone, *The Temple of Nehalennia at Domburg* (J.M. Meulenhoff; Amsterdam, 1955), pp. 8, 114-15.

⁸ *Ibidem*, pp. 392-93. ‘Et la forme de son nom le monstre clairement, qui semble estre fait pour la deesse adree en la ville ou la bourgade de Nehallen ... Je ne scai pourtant si j’oserois dire que ce mot de Nehalen vint de celui de *Hale* ou *Halle* qui signifie marché ou lieu ou l’on tiuet le marché, qui est un vieux mot allemant duquel nous nous servons aussi quand nous appelons *la Hale* pour le lieu ou se vendent toutes sortes de marchandises. Et beaucoup de villes ont este appeeles du nom de *Forum* pour cette mesme raison, comme *Forum Iulij*, *Forum Sempronij*; d’autres ont esté nommes *Tabernae*, et se peut faire que ce Nehalen signifie *Novum Forum*.’ See also P.J.J. Stuart, *Nehalennia: documenten in steen* (De

Boxhorn used the discovery of Nehalennia to set forth his views on what he, in a letter of March 9, 1647, to Huygens, called his ‘Scythian observation’ on the goddess Nehalennia.⁹ Attached to the letter Huygens found the ‘first public fruit’ of Boxhorn’s scholarly efforts on ‘Scythia’, the *Bediedinge van de tot noch toe onbekende afgodine Nehalennia* (*Meaning of the so far Unknown Goddess Nehalennia*), a thirty-two page treatise, written in the form of an open letter to Amalia van Solms (1602-1675), the wife of stadholder Frederik Hendrik, that Boxhorn had published eight days earlier.¹⁰ After scornfully refuting some Catholic claims that the Nehalennia statues were sacred images of the holy Virgin Mary (‘O unhappy Mother of God!’) he explains to ‘MY-LADY’ Amalia that the goddess Nehalennia derives her name from the place where she was once worshipped and recently found, Zeeland. ‘Nehalennia’, according to Boxhorn, was the latinised form of ‘Nehalent’, that is, ‘Zehalent’, which shows close similarities to Zeeland.¹¹ ‘Nehalent’ or ‘Zehalent’ were derivatives of the German ‘Ealent’. As was clear from the French ‘eau’ and the Latin ‘aqua’, ‘ea’ or ‘aa’ stood for water. Thus, ‘ealent’ or ‘aalent’ was ‘waterlent’ or ‘waterland’, land surrounded by water. From this it took Boxhorn only a small step to ‘eilent’ or ‘eilandt’ (‘island’).¹²

But how to account for the first letters ‘z’ or ‘n’? To explain these extra letters Boxhorn points to the vicissitudes of time.

It is with words, MY-LADY, just as with cloths and costumes. Every century, yes every man, adds something to them or takes something off them.¹³

It is with words, MY-LADY, just as with us humans. In their beginnings they have often been short, having the length of a syllable; in time they have been extended with two or three letters, as if still in their luxuriant years of growth; this then has also been followed by

Koperen Tuin; Goes, 2003), pp. 11-12.

⁹ Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, p. 281. ‘Ecce ergo ergo, hic tibi, Virorum nobilissime, Constantine Hugeni, publicas Scythicarum observationum primitias, quae Deae Nehalenniae datae sunt. Tuum vero imprimis iudicium cognoscere aveo, ut aut hac via sapere porro ac eruere veritatem pergam, aut desinam ineptire. Cum ad celsissimam Principem hanc dissertationem instituerim, multa etiam huc facientia praetermittere debui, alibi locum habitura.’

¹⁰ Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn, *Bediedinge van de tot noch toe onbekende afgodine Nehalennia, over de dusent ende ettelicke hondert Jaren onder het sandt begraven, dan onlanx ontdeekt op het strandt van Walcheren in Zeelandt* (Willem Christiaens van der Boxe; Leiden, 1647). Knuttel 5564. The *Bediedinge* is dated March 1, 1647.

¹¹ *Ibidem*, p. 14. ‘Om het kort te maecken, de Godinne Nehalennia heeft haren naem van de plaetse daer sy eertijds geeert wierde, ende thans ontdeekt is geworden: dat is, DEA NEHALENNIA is niets anders te seggen, als, Godinne van NEHALENT, dat is, Zehalent.’

¹² *Ibidem*, pp. 19-24.

¹³ *Ibidem*, p. 17. ‘Het gaet met de woorden, ME-VROUWE, even gelijk als met de cleederen ende drachten. Ieder eeuw, ja ieder man, doet daer wat aen ofte af.’

an old age that has clipped quite a bit of their branches, and that has shrunked the full face, and that has taken some of their parts away; thus, in the end some of them are like dead, being, not withoutstanding their innocence and gray face, replaced by strange, or newly baked words, and being in time banned from the mouth of the people that they have long accompanied.¹⁴

The crucial message of the *Bediedinge*, however, was that the Germanic languages showed close similarities with the Persian language, and, more importantly, that these similarities were due to the fact that the Germans and the Persians descended from the same forefathers and spoke more or less the same language. These forefathers were the ancient Scythians or Scyths and their language, ‘Scythian’, still spoken in Boxhorn’s own days by the ‘Scyths or Tartars, who are of the same blood as we are’, had been the common origin of both the Germanic languages and Persian.¹⁵

The contention that there existed strong similarities between the Germanic languages and Persian was not new. As early as 1584 Franciscus Raphelengius (1539-1597), the son-in-law of the famous Antwerp printer Christoffel Plantin (1520-1589) and the soon-to-be professor of Hebrew at Leiden University, had written a letter to Lipsius in Leiden in which he presented the eminent Dutch scholar a list of German and Persian words that showed strong lexical similarities. Lipsius was sceptical; although he did not deny that there existed similarities between the Germanic languages and Persian, he believed the latter to have more affinity with Latin. Lipsius’s successor, the illustrious Scaliger, for once seem to have been in agreement with his predecessor, and was likewise sceptical about the Persian-German connection. Other learned men, however, such as Grotius and the Dutch theologian Abraham Mylius (1563-1637), were more positive.¹⁶

¹⁴ Ibidem, pp. 25-26. ‘Het gaet met de woorden, ME-VROUWE, ghelijck met ons menschen. Sy zijn veeltijds kleyn gheweest in hare beginselen, hebbende de lenghte van een syllabe; met de tijdt zijn sy een letter twee ofte drie uytgespreyt gheworden, als zijnde noch in hare groeyende weelige jaren; daer is dan ook op gevolgt eenen ouderdom, die de wiecken vry wat gekort heeft, ende haer incrompende het volle aengesicht, ende eenighe ledekens heeft benomen; sommige dan oock zijn te laetsten gelijck als gestorven; werdende door vreemde, of nieuw gebackten woorden, niet tegenstaende hare onnooselheyt ende grijs aengesicht, verschoven, ende uyt de mond van Volckeren, welcke sy lange bygewoont hebben, met der tijdt verbannen.’

¹⁵ Ibidem, p. 19. ‘Dat *Ealent* eertijds geseght is geweest onder de Scythen ende Duytschen voor het ingekrompen woordt *eilent*, blijft klaerlijck.’ Ibidem, p. 27. ‘Soude men nu oock wel over al in Nederlandt verstaen de naem van *Souaers*, of *Souers*, beteyckende *Sackedraghers*, ende diergehlijcke *Kraenkinderen*, dat is, het geheele *Sint Jans Gilde*? Nochtans spraecken eertijds so alle de Duytschen, ende spreecken noch alle de Persianen, zijnde van de selfde afcomste, ende te meerderen deele gebruyckende eene ende de selfde tale ghelijck de Duytschen.’ Ibidem, p. 28. ‘Nochtans spreecken noch soo heden te daghe de Scythen ofte Tartars, zijnde van het selfde bloedt als wy zijn.’

¹⁶ J.T.P. de Bruijn, *De ontdekking van het Perzisch* (Rijksuniversiteit Leiden; Leiden, 1990), pp. 5-10,

The search for an etymological connection between the Germanic languages and Persian was one of the many attempts at language comparison, a very popular subject in the Low Countries in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.¹⁷ One of its pioneers had been Johannes Goropius Becanus (1519-1572/73), personal physician of Philip II at Antwerp and friend of Raphelen- gius. In his *Origines Antwerpianae* (*Origins of Antwerp*) Becanus had set forth the theory that Dutch, and not Greek, Latin, or even Hebrew, was the most ancient remnant of the original language of man, a language that he labelled ‘Scythian’.¹⁸ Almost five decades after Becanus Adrianus Schrieckius (1560-1621), born at Bruges, contended that Scythian was the most ancient common language and that Dutch was ‘its most pure representative’.¹⁹ By the time of the publication of the *Bediedinge* the Scythian language and the ancient Scythians were much in vogue, although each scholar gave his own interpretation to them.²⁰

This brings us to another point: the origin of Boxhorn’s ideas and the date, so to speak, of their conception. Most scholars hold that Boxhorn had formulated his Scythian theory somewhere in 1637. They refer to a letter of Boxhorn to Salmasius in which Boxhorn sets forth the relationship between Scythian, Greek, Latin, and Turkish.²¹ The problem with this explanation, however, is that the specific letter, although it can be found between two other letters of Boxhorn dated 1637, is itself undated.²² Furthermore, in the letter concerned Boxhorn makes some similar remarks as he does in another undated letter, this time addressed to Huygens, where he also brings up his work on the Scythian language. This letter, however, can be dated somewhere after March 9, 1647, for Boxhorn mentions that he is busy compiling an answer to ques-

and Toon Van Hal, “Joseph Scaliger, puzzled by the Similarities of Persian and Dutch?”, in *Omslag: bulletin van de Universiteitsbibliotheek Leiden en het Scaliger Instituut*, Vol. 1 (2007), pp. 1-3.

¹⁷ Cornelis Dekker, “*The Light under the Bushel*”: *Old Germanic Studies in the Low Countries and the Motivation and Methods of Jan van Vliet (1622-1666)* (Ph.D.-dissertation; Leiden, 1997), p. 47.

¹⁸ The book was published in 1569 by Plantin at Antwerp. De Bruijn, *De ontdekking van het Perzisch*, p. 6.

¹⁹ Schrieckius was lord of Rodoorne and counsellor of archduke Albert of Austria (1559-1621). He maintained that after the fall of the Tower of Babel, Scytho-Celtic had been the primary language that was at least as old as Hebrew. Pierre Swiggers, “*Van t’ beghin der eerster volcken van Europen* (1614): Kelten en Scythen by Adrianus Schrieckius”, in Toorians (ed.), *Kelten en de Nederlanden*, pp. 128, 130-44, and Maurice Olender, “Europe, or How to Escape Babel”, in *History and Theory*, Vol. 33, No. 4 (1994), pp. 13-17.

²⁰ Dekker, “*The Light under the Bushel*”, pp. 45-49, and George van Driem, *Languages of the Himalayas: An Ethnolinguistic Handbook of the Greater Himalaya Region*, Vol. 2 (Brill; Leiden/Boston, 2001), pp. 1039-40.

²¹ See, for example, Droixhe “Boxhorn’s Bad Reputation”, p. 360, and Van Driem, *Languages of the Himalayas*, p. 1043.

²² Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, pp. 90-96. The two letters, the first dated April 29, 1637, and the second July 8, 1637, are both addressed to Pontanus. In both letters Boxhorn does not mention his Scythian theory. Indeed, in none of his letters to Pontanus, who died on September 20, 1639, does Boxhorn speak about his Scythian ideas. I deem it highly unlikely that Boxhorn would not correspond with Pontanus about the Scythian enterprises he held so dear.

tions raised by the *Bediedinge*.²³ Finally, George Hornius reveals in his preface to Boxhorn's *Originum Gallicarum liber* (*Book about the Origins of the Gauls*), which he published after Boxhorn's death, that Boxhorn had started working on his 'Scythian' thesis in 1646 during a recovery from a serious illness, a story that shows some similarities with the information we can find in the letters Boxhorn wrote to Fabricius and Bruno at the end of 1646.²⁴

Thus, serious questions can be raised about the date of Boxhorn's letter to Salmasius. Although the issue may seem trivial, it does hold some importance. In 1640 Salmasius published a work called the *Tabula Cebetis* (*Tablet of Cebes*).²⁵ The work had been compiled by Johann Elichmann (c.1600-1639), a doctor who had served at the Persian court and who, after he had come to Leiden, became the friend of Salmasius and Descartes.²⁶ In the preface of the *Tabula* Salmasius made clear that Elichmann had discovered many correspondences between German, Greek, and Persian that not only showed lexical similarities, but also 'words with similar flexional endings' and 'the same morphological composition'. German, Persian, and possibly also Greek, according to Elichmann, came from the same origin (*ex eadem origine*), 'Scythian'. Three years

²³ Ibidem, p. 218. 'Quid ex Scythiâ illâ nostrâ, illâ, ut iste loquitur, vaginâ gentium & officinâ nationum, proxime expectandum sit ex his Questionibus, ad quas jam respondeo, facile intelliges.' The letter can be found between a letter of Boxhorn to Adriaen Hoffer, March 18, 1644, and a letter to Rochus Hoffer, April 21, 1644. Ibidem, pp. 216-18. In this letter to Huygens Boxhorn quotes Jordanes, *De origine actibusque Getarum*, IV.25. 'Ex hac igitur Scandia insula, quasi officina gentium aut certe velut vagina nationum, cum rege suo nomine Berig Gothi quondam memorantur egressi.' 'Now from this island of Scandza, as from a hive of races or a womb of nations, the Goths are said to have come forth long ago under their king, Berig by name.' Latin text taken from Jordanes, *De origine actibusque Getarum*. A cura di Francesco Giunta e Antonino Grillone (Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medio Evo; Rome, 1991), IV.25, p. 12. English translation taken from Jordanes, *The Gothic History of Jordanes*. Edited by Charles C. Mierow (Evolution Publishing; Merchantville, 1st ed. 1915, 2006), IV.25, p. 57. In the undated letter to Salmasius Boxhorn quotes the same line. Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, p. 93. 'Aut admodum fallor, aut a Scytharum *Su* ita dicuntur. Germanis autem, ex Scythia etiam, ut vagina, sicut Jordanes loquitur, gentium & officina nationum, progressis, idem nomen, & idem significans, superest in vocabulis prope infinitis.' The quotation also returns in the *Antwoord*, p. 64. 'Hier toe dienen oock, en sulle dit sluyten, de woorden van Jordandes, een outd schrijver van der Gothen saecke, by den welcke het Noorden genaemt werdt; Vagina gentium et officina nationum; dat is; *de scheede ende de winckel van volckeren*.'

²⁴ Hornius, "Preface", i. 'Cum A. Ch. MCDXLVI ex Anglia redux ipsam officii & honoris ergo salutarem, tum forte ex gravissimo convalescentem morbo reperi: cumque virium debilitas consuetos in Academia labores nondum ferret, neque tamen domi otiosus omnino desiderare posset, ut longi temporis taedia falleret, Originum vocabulorum Belgicorum examinare coepit. Vidit innumera vocabula, Germanis, Latinis, Graecis & aliis per Europam nationibus, communia esse. Inde conjiciebat à communi fonte eam similitudinem profectam, id est eâdem omnium illarum gentium Origine. Displucuerunt Goropii & Schrickii conatus, neque satisfaciebant novae Cl. Bocharidi, pro Phoenicibus, machinationes. Quare alia via rem aggressus, communem quandam Linguam, quam Scythiam vocabat, matrem Graecae, Latinae, Germanicae & Persicae statuit, ex qua illae velut Dialecti, profisciscantur. Non ergo vel Latinos à Graecis, vel hos à Germanis, quae communia inter se habent, hausisse, sed ab eâdem, id est Scythica origine.' For Boxhorn's letters to Fabricius and Bruno, see above.

²⁵ Cebes, *Tabula Cebetis Graece, Arabice, Latine*. Item *Aurea Carmina Pythagorae, cum paraphrasi Arabica* (Johannes Maire; Leiden, 1640). The *Tabula Cebetis* is a moralistic allegorical work probably from the first-century A.D. The authorship of Cebes, a philosopher from Thebes and disciple of Socrates, is now therefore denied. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the *Tabula* enjoyed great popularity.

²⁶ Droixhe "Boxhorn's Bad Reputation", p. 360.

later, in the *De Hellenistica Commentarius* (*Commentary on the Greek Language*, 1643), Salmasius concurred with Elichmann that German, Greek, and Persian derived ‘from the same origin’ (*ab eadem origine venientia*).²⁷ If the undated letter of Boxhorn to Salmasius is of a much later date than 1637, it could be that Boxhorn followed in Salmasius’s (sic Elichmann’s) footsteps instead of the other way around.

However, if Boxhorn cannot be credited for the discovery of the Scythian origin of German, Greek, and Persian, he did take this field of language comparison to a new level. As mentioned before, Boxhorn’s Scythian thesis in the *Bediedinge* attracted questions that appeared in a pamphlet printed by Van der Boxe.²⁸ Boxhorn reacted to these questions with a 112 page long treatise, the *Antwoord* (*Answer*, 1647).²⁹ In short, the purpose of the *Antwoord* is the same as the *Bediedinge*: to prove that the Germanic languages and Persian derive from the same common origin, Scythian. There are, however, some important differences between the *Bediedinge* and the *Antwoord*, and between Boxhorn’s Scythian thesis and that of Elichmann and Salmasius. First, in the *Antwoord* Boxhorn does not limit the discussion to the Germanic languages and Persian, but also takes Latin, Greek, Old English, and the Baltic and Slavic languages into consideration and connects them to each other. In the *Originum Gallicarum liber* he would draw Celtic into this picture.³⁰ At the same time Boxhorn, who counted Dutch among the Germanic languages, turns against the ‘Belgicophile’ theories of Becanus and Schrieckius, and he ridicules their ‘twaddles’ (*beuselinghen*), claiming that they had been too blind to see and that they had been absolutely clueless about the ins and outs of the matter.³¹

²⁷ Van Driem, *Languages of the Himalayas*, pp. 1042-43. Claude Salmasius, *De Hellenistica commentarius, controversiam de lingua Hellenistica decidens, et plenissime pettractans originem et dialectos Graecae linguae* (Elzevier; Leiden, 1643).

²⁸ Anonymous, *Vraagen voorghestelt ende opghedraaghen aan de heer Marcovs Zuerius van Boxhorn, over de bediedinge van de tot noch toe onbekende afgodinne Nehalennia, onlangs by hem uytgegeven* (Willem Christiaens van der Boxe; Leiden, 1647).

²⁹ Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn, *Antwoord van Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn, gegeven op de vraaghen, hem voorgestelt over de Bediedinge van de afgodinne Nehalennia, Onlanx uytghegeven. In welke de gheimeine herkomste van der Griecken, Romeinen, ende Duytschen Tale uyt den Scythen duydelyck bewesen, ende verscheiden Oudheden van dese Volckeren grondelyck ontdeckt ende verklaert worden* (Willem Christiaens van der Boxe; Leiden, 1647).

³⁰ For a more detailed study of the *Originum Gallicarum liber*, see Hofman, “Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn (1612-1653)”, pp. 149-67.

³¹ Boxhorn, *Antwoord*, p. 15. ‘Van Becanus ende Scrickius, beide Nederlanders, ende andere haer volghende, moet ick hier of niet, of immers weinich spreekken. Niet, om dat ick haer gevoelen verwerpe; weinich, op dat niemant dencke dat mijne meininghe eenige gemeinschap heeft met hare beuselinghen. Die mannen zijn al siende blindt gheweest. Sy hebben wel kunnen sien de oudtheit van de Scythische ende Duytsche, ende eene overeenstemminghe daer van met de Griecsche ende Latijnsche talen, maer hebben den oorspronck daer van ghesocht, daer die niet te vinden was, ende de selve soecken te beweerren met louter kracht ende geweld te doen aen de waerheit. Op haer past het soete spreekwoordt; Dat sy wel hebben een kloekjen hooren luyden, maer niet gheweten in wat Capelle; dat is, dat sy gantsch niet gheweten hebben waer dat dese saeck vast is.’

Second, Boxhorn uses both in the *Bediedinge* and the *Antwoord*, but especially in the latter, material unavailable to Elichmann and Salmasius. Jacob Golius, for example, professor of mathematics and oriental languages at Leiden University, had given Boxhorn insight into the Persian lexicon he was working on.³² Another great help was Johannes de Laet (1581-1649), one of the directors of the WIC, who in his leisure time conducted all kinds of scholarly research, ranging from geography to church history and linguistics. It was thanks to the mediation of De Laet that Boxhorn had acquired a copy of the *Antiquae linguae Britannicae dictionarium duplex* (*Two-fold Dictionary of the Old British Language*) of John Davies (c.1567-1640) from Sir William Boswell (†1650), the English ambassador at The Hague.³³ Furthermore, Adriaen Pauw (1585-1653), the influential Dutch politician from Amsterdam and an important member of the Dutch delegation to the Münster peace conference, had shown Boxhorn a rare manuscript of a certain *Eburonis chronicon* (*Chronicle of the Eburones*), written by one Francisco Campana, that he had obtained during one of his stays at Münster and that had once belonged to count Herman of Nieuwenaar and Meurs (1514-1587).³⁴ The chronicle told the story of the immigrations of the Goths, Huns, and 'Scyths' from the northern plains into Italy and Western Europe, and so provided additional evidence that the 'North' (read Scythia) was 'the hive of races and womb of nations'.³⁵

³² Boxhorn, *Bediedinge*, p. 27. Golius's Persian lexicon would be published posthumously by the English orientalist Edmund Castell (1606-1685). Jacob Golius, "Dictionarium persico-latinum", in Edmund Castell, *Lexicon heptaglotton* (Thomas Roycraft; London, 1669). Golius also wrote a very important Arabic dictionary, *Lexicon Arabico-Latinum* (Elzevier; Leiden, 1653), and translated the Heidelberg Catechism into Arabic. Because of his travels to Morocco, Syria, and Arabia, Golius had obtained a broad knowledge of the Middle-Eastern and Mediterranean world.

³³ Boxhorn, *Antwoord*, p. 92. 'Der ouden Britten tale wil ons geem de handt bieden, ende dat door de beleeftheit van de my op het loffelijcxste te melden Heer, *Johan de Laet*, die uyt the Boeckasse van den recht Edelen ende geachten Heer, *Guiliam Boswel*, de saecken van sijne hoochst te eeren Majesteit van Groot Britannien trouwlijck waernemende in den Hage, ons heeft doen hebben seecker Woordenboek, bygenaemt; *Antiquae Linguae Britannicae, nunc vulgo dictae Cambro-Britannicae, a suis Cymraecae vel Cambricae, ab aliis Wallicae, Dictionarium*. Dit hebbe ick ontfangen ende lesende gekust als een onwaerdeerlijcke schat.' John Davies, *Antiquae linguae Britannicae dictionarium duplex* (R. Young; London, 1632). John Davies was a Welshman. He studied theology at Oxford. For more than 40 years he served as a pastor in Mallwyd, a village in Northern Wales. Prys Morgan, "Boxhorn, Leibniz, and the Welsh", in *Studia Celtica*, Vol. 8-9 (1973-74), pp. 220-21, and Dekker, "The Light under the Bushel", pp. 217-18.

³⁴ *Ibidem*, pp. 62-64. It could be a book written by Francesco Campana (c.1491-1546), the secretary to Cosimo d'Medici (1519-1574), the duke of Florence. The Eburones were a tribe that lived in northern Gaul between the rivers Rhine and Meuse. Adriaen Pauw was a very active book collector. During his stays at Münster he acquired many new books to fill his library that at the time of his death counted more than 16.000 copies. See H. de la Fontaine Verwey, "Adriaan Pauw en zijn bibliotheek", in Willem R.H. Koops (ed.), *Boek, bibliotheek en geesteswetenschappen*. Opstellen door vrienden en collega's van dr. C. Reedijk geschreven ter gelegenheid van zijn aftreden als bibliothecaris van de Koninklijke Bibliotheek te 's-Gravenhage (Uitgeverij Verloren; Hilversum, 1986), pp. 103-15, esp. pp. 108-10.

³⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 64, and Jordanes, *The Gothic History of Jordanes*, IV.25, p. 57.

But the most important difference seems to be Boxhorn's thorough historical approach to the study of languages that has earned him the title of being 'the first historical linguist'.³⁶ Since Boxhorn believed that almost all European languages derived from one common source, he was not so much interested which language had priority over which language. Instead, he was more interested in how the changes in words that had in time developed into different languages (or 'dialects' as he calls them) had come about.³⁷ This quest demanded a systematic approach. Here Boxhorn made use of the same method and principles of De Laet, who in his notes on Grotius's *Dissertatio de origine gentium Americanarum* (*Dissertation on the Origin of the American Peoples*) had fulminated against the attempts of the renowned Dutch scholar to construct a relationship between the different languages of the world 'by changing letters, by exchanging, adding, or subtracting syllables'. Central to De Laet's approach is that differences between languages should be accounted for by means of rules that are always valid, and that similarities between the endings of verbs and nouns are such that they cannot be attributed to chance.³⁸ Correspondences should have a systematic character and 'comparisons should not involve mere look-alikes'. Loanwords like 'camel' should therefore not be confused with inherited vocabulary.³⁹

Comparisons should not stop at looking at lexical similarities, but should also focus attention on correspondences in grammar and in flexional morphology. The strongest evidence, according to Boxhorn, for linguistic relationships consisted of shared grammatical anomalies and morphological irregularities. 'That these peoples [i.e. the Greeks, the Romans, and the Germans-JN] too acquired their language from a single mother is also evidenced by the common ways in which words and names are variously treated, viz. by the ways in which they are *declined*, and *conjugated* and in other ways as well; especially by the *anomalies* themselves.'⁴⁰ Series of lists with comparative words scattered over the *Antwoord* were meant to substantiate these claims.⁴¹

³⁶ Jack Fellman, "The First Historical Linguist", in *Linguistics: An International Review*, Vol. 137 (1974), pp. 31-33; Hofman, "Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn (1612-1653)", p. 157; Van Driem, *Languages of the Himalayas*, p. 1044; Droixhe, *L'étymon des dieux*, p. 8.

³⁷ Dekker, "The Light under the Bushel", p. 211.

³⁸ Droixhe, *L'étymon des dieux*, pp. 160-61. Johannes de Laet, *Notae ad dissertationem Hugonis Grotii De origine gentium Americanarum et observationes aliquot ad meliorem indaginem difficillimae illius quaestionis* (Elzevier; Amsterdam, 1643). Hugo Grotius, *Dissertatio de origine gentium Americanarum* (?; Paris, 1642). For the critique of De Laet on Grotius, see Joan-Pau Rubiés, "Hugo Grotius's Dissertation on the Origin of the American Peoples and the Use of Comparative Methods", in *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 52, No. 2 (1991), pp. 221-44.

³⁹ Boxhorn, *Antwoord*, p. 65, and Van Driem, *Languages of the Himalayas*, pp. 1044-45.

⁴⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 80. 'Dat oock dese volckeren van eene moeder hare tale geleert hebben, blyct mede uyt de ghemeyne maniere van met de woorden ende namen verscheidentlijck om te gaen, soo in het *declinieren*, als *conjugeren*, ende anders, ja oock uyt de *anomalien* self.' English translation quoted from Van Driem, *Languages of the Himalayas*, p. 1046.

⁴¹ *Ibidem*, pp. 6-7, 67-68, 78-80, 88-99.

With the *Antwoord* Boxhorn gave the first full expression of his scholarly efforts on ‘Scythia’. More publications were about to follow. At least, that is what he promised his readers.⁴² But no further publications on ‘Scythia’ would appear during Boxhorn’s lifetime. Numerous letters contest that for the remainder of his life Boxhorn kept working on his ‘Scythian observations’.⁴³ But for reasons unknown he kept postponing their publication. In the end death caught up with him, and it was left to his successor Hornius to publish Boxhorn’s *Originum Gallicarum liber*. In this book Boxhorn further expended his Scythian thesis, adding Celtic to the list of languages that had derived from ‘one common source’, Scythian.

If modern scholars have judged positively about Boxhorn’s contribution to the field of language comparison, the reaction of his contemporaries was rather more mixed.⁴⁴ In England Bishop Brian Walton (1600-1661), responsible for the London Polyglot Bible, preferred Boxhorn’s opinion on the relationship between the Germanic languages and Persian to Scaliger’s.⁴⁵ In Germany, however, Boxhorn’s ideas met with a hostile reception. Reinesius, whom we have already met in chapter 3, and Christoph Adam Ruprecht (1612-1647), professor of history and eloquence in Altdorf, mocked Boxhorn for his many *putida* or ‘rotten parts’.⁴⁶ For them, the comparison between the Germanic languages and Persian had lost its relevance, although the way Boxhorn expressed his ideas, for example in Dutch instead of Latin, probably also did not help him to overcome the ‘envy’ or ‘ignorance’ of even the most learned men.⁴⁷

⁴² See, for example, *ibidem*, p. 39. ‘Van de reden, waerom de *g* verhuyst, ende de *c* in haer plaetse gecomen is, sal ick wijdtlustiger, met Godt, spreekken in mijn *A b c boeck van de Scythen*’, i.e. a Scythian dictionary (or abc book).

⁴³ See his letters to Pibo a Doma (1614-1675), the councillor of the court of Friesland, to Blanckaert, to Hornius, and to Constantijn Huygens. Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, pp. 289-307, 314-15.

⁴⁴ Unlike Fellman and those who followed him, Dekker is more critical about the ‘innovative’ contribution of Boxhorn, whom he calls a ‘philologist-turned-historian’, to the field of linguistics. He holds that in Boxhorn’s work ‘the historical hypothesis received more attention than the etymological evidence. His approach is therefore historical rather than philological, and is reminiscent of previous scholars like Becanus. In his work on Nehalennia, Boxhorn did not establish a new method, but reached back to the past’. That is, Boxhorn’s ‘structural division of the ways in which words could change originated directly from Varro’s concept of language change in *De Lingua Latina*, and Boxhorn was no different from his predecessors in his rather unrestricted application of these principles’. Dekker, “*The Light under the Bushel*”, p. 212.

⁴⁵ Peter N. Miller, “The ‘Antiquarianization’ of Biblical Scholarship and the London Polyglot Bible (1653-57)”, in *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 62, No. 3 (2001), p. 481.

⁴⁶ In letters of 1640 Reinesius attacks Boxhorn’s interpretation of *aures* in the Dutchman’s *Quaestiones Romanae*, while Ruprecht ‘had composed “for private use” a collection of Boxhorn’s mistakes’. Droixhe, “Boxhorn’s Bad Reputation”, pp. 366-67, with quote on p. 367.

⁴⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 362. ‘It is obvious, even highly deplorable, that their reception was greatly conditioned by the way they were sometimes expressed. It happened that he gave them a very clumsy or, like Becanus, a really too provocative presentation, and that he chose difficult communication media.’

A generation later Boxhorn's tracts on Nehalennia also failed to make a big impression on Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646-1716),⁴⁸ although the great German polymath did make great use of Boxhorn's *Originum Gallicarum liber* for his own collection and comparison of Celtic words.⁴⁹ Indeed, for all his criticism, Leibniz subscribed to Salmasius's and Boxhorn's Scythian theories that Latin, Greek, the Germanic and the Celtic languages derived from a common origin and that 'all these peoples descended from the Scythians'.⁵⁰

Leibniz's treatment of Boxhorn's work became exemplary; lip service was paid to Boxhorn's ideas, but because of their presentation, apparent lack of originality, and some faults and exaggerations they soon came to be seen as curious, but otherwise unimportant material. And so the memory of Boxhorn's linguistic achievements faded away, only to be rescued from the state of oblivion by modern linguists and historians of linguistics in the twentieth century.

On the threshold of a new era

Boxhorn's publications on the goddess Nehalennia have always merit attention from modern researchers for what they reveal about Boxhorn's philological ideas and his methodological approach to the study of languages, and rightfully so. Not so well known is that they also contain some important clues about how Boxhorn thought scholarly research should be conducted *in general*. For example, in the next three chapters it will become clear that the insight that people, customs, and languages change over time also plays an important role in Boxhorn's historical and political works, and that the idea of change and its inevitability greatly influenced the way Boxhorn thought about how history and politics should be studied and taught. In the remainder of this

⁴⁸ Leibniz in a letter to Maturin Veysière la Croze (1661-1739), French historian and later librarian of Frederick I (1657-1713), the elector of Brandenburg, November 17, 1712. Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Epistolae ad diversos, theologici, iuridici, medici, philosophici, mathematici, historici et philologici argumenti, e MSC. auctoris* (Bernhard Christoph Breitkopf; Leipzig, 1734), p. 419. 'La *Dea* Nehalennia me paroît avoir quelque rapport à a riviere *Valhalis*. Boxhornius a fait une dissertation en Flamand sur cette Deesse, que j'ay. Mais je ne me souviens pas de l'explication qu'il en donne. Un de mes amis soupçonne qu'au lieu d'OTMIOC nom d'Hercule Gaulios, il faudroit lire OPMIOC, et que ce pourroit être IRMIN Dieu Germanique. Je vous supplie, Monsieur, de me marquer quelques passages d'Herodote, et d'autres anciens sur la maniere de se servir de cornes comme de vases propres pour en boire; supposé que cela ne vous donne point de peine.'

⁴⁹ Morgan, "Boxhorn, Leibniz, and the Welsh", pp. 220-28, and Daniel Droixhe, *De l'origine du langage aux langues du monde: études sur les XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles* (Gunter Narr; Tübingen, 1987), p. 113.

⁵⁰ Olender, "Europe, or How to Escape Babel", pp. 19-20, with quote and reference on p. 19. Some modern scholars, like Bruce Lincoln, hold that after Boxhorn "'the Scythian thesis" was the standard form in which claims of northern origins and privilege were encoded'. Bruce Lincoln, *Theorizing Myth: Narrative, Ideology, and Scholarship* (The University of Chicago Press; Chicago/London, 1999), p. 81.

chapter, however, I will follow up on what Boxhorn's publications on the goddess Nehalennia reveal about Boxhorn's position in the scholarly dispute over Descartes's ideas that in 1647 had just erupted at Leiden University and that would divide the Dutch academic world for the rest of the seventeenth century.

That the discovery of the statue of Nehalennia coincided with the eruption of the scholarly dispute over Cartesian ideas at Leiden University is one of those whims of fortune. In 1647 the ideas of Descartes had been available in print for some ten years. Indeed, it was at Leiden that the French nobleman and former student of the town's renowned University had, at the insistence of Golius and Huygens, published his ideas for the first time.⁵¹ But it was at the University of Utrecht where the impact of Descartes's 'new philosophy' was first felt. There, four years after the publication of Descartes's first work, the *Discours de la Méthode* (*Discourse on the Method*, 1637), Henricus Regius (1598-1679), professor of medicine and once close friends with Descartes, started to hold disputations in which tenets of Descartes's philosophy were defended. This greatly alarmed the orthodox theologian and rector of the University Gisbert Voetius (1589-1676), who, in a series of disputations on atheism two years earlier, had already staged Descartes as an example of an atheist. Among other things, Voetius saw in Descartes's adherence to the heliocentric cosmology of Copernicus and Galileo and the Frenchman's system of methodological doubt a great threat to biblical authority and Aristotelian philosophy.⁵² Soon both Regius and Descartes found themselves under attack by Voetius and in 1642, just one year after Descartes had published his second work, the teaching of his ideas was officially prohibited by the University of Utrecht.⁵³ Furthermore, Descartes also came under heavy attack by Martinus Schoockius (1614-1669), professor of logic at the University of Groningen and a former student of Voetius. In line with the criticism of his former teacher Schoockius dismissed Descartes's method of doubt in his *Admiranda methodus novae philosophicae Renati Des-Cartes* (*The Astonishing Method of the New Philosophy of René Descartes*, 1643) as dangerous, for, in the end, it would lead to scepticism and atheism.⁵⁴

⁵¹ René Descartes, *Discours de la Méthode* (Jean Maire; Leiden, 1637). For the influence of Golius and Huygens on Descartes to publish this work, see the introduction by Theo Verbeek in René Descartes, *Over de methode* (Boom; Amsterdam, 1st ed. 1977, 2002), p. 10.

⁵² Frijhoff and Spies, *Hard-Won Unity*, pp. 296-98.

⁵³ René Descartes, *Meditationes de prima philosophia* (Michael Soly; Paris, 1641). A second edition of this work, which contained additional objections to Descartes's ideas and Descartes's responses to these objections, was published by the Elzeviers in Amsterdam in 1642.

⁵⁴ Theo Verbeek, *Descartes and the Dutch: Early Reactions to Cartesian Philosophy, 1637-1650* (Southern Illinois University Press; Carbondale/Edwardsville, 1992), pp. 17-29, and Van Bunge, *From Stevin to Spinoza*, pp. 34-40.

Thus, by the time Descartes published his third book, the *Principia philosophiae* (*Principles of Philosophy*) at Elzevier in Amsterdam in 1644, he had already been branded an atheist and his philosophy condemned for its dangerous and sceptical content. This did not stop his ideas from winning support among the learned. On the contrary, it was in that same year that Boxhorn's colleague at Leiden Adriaen Heereboord (1614-1661), professor of logic, started to pay attention to Descartes's ideas in his lectures. More importantly, in 1648 the curators of Leiden University appointed the Calvinist minister Abraham Heidanus (1597-1678), famous for his emotional and moving sermons and of undisputed orthodoxy, to a chair in theology. This meant that Golius and Heereboord now had an ally among the theologians who was favourably disposed towards the Frenchman's new philosophy.

The positive disposition of a figure like Heidanus towards Descartes's ideas was no unnecessary luxury for Descartes and his supporters, for just as at Utrecht it were the theologians who at Leiden University most strongly objected against the teaching of Cartesian ideas. Indeed, it was a professor of theology, Jacob Trigland (1583-1654), who caused the scholarly dispute over Descartes's ideas to erupt at Leiden. On September 18, 1646, he made a scene during the graduation of one of Golius's students, one Paulus Biman, by objecting to Biman's second thesis that 'Doubt is the beginning of an undoubtable philosophy' after Biman had already been invested with the signs of his new dignity. Trigland was afraid that if the method of doubt was accepted as a legitimate method of research and philosophy then soon everything would be doubted, even the existence of God.⁵⁵ Golius, with the help of Heereboord, refuted Trigland, pointing out that Aristotle himself had also made use of the method of doubt. Trigland, however, was not convinced, and because Heereboord did not stop discussing Cartesian ideas in his classes, only fuel was added to the flames. A new attack against the Frenchman's heretical ideas followed. This time it was Jacob Revius (1586-1658), regent of the Staten-college, who accepted the challenge. In a series of five successive disputations devoted to the Frenchman's philosophy, held between February 4 and March 20, 1647, Revius attacked Descartes's ideas, singling Descartes's method of doubt out as his prime target.⁵⁶

The fulminations of Trigland and Revius drove Descartes, who felt that his honour was at stake, to write a letter to the curators of the University of Leiden in which he asked them to stop the attacks against his person. The

⁵⁵ Otterspeer, *Het bolwerk van de vrijheid*, pp. 373-74.

⁵⁶ Verbeek, *Descartes and the Dutch*, pp. 39-40, and Van Bunge, *From Stevin to Spinoza*, p. 41.

curators responded, and in a meeting on May 20, 1647, they forbade both Revius and Heereboord to discuss Descartes's philosophy or to even mention his name in their lectures. In practice, however, this prohibition proved to be a death letter. In the summer of that same year Heereboord was already trying to include some of Descartes's ideas in his disputations and in December a disputation that dealt with 'certain new philosophers' who believed that 'philosophers could deny God and doubt His existence', presided over by the Scot and Aristotelian professor of philosophy Adam Stuart (1591-1654), ended in a small uproar.⁵⁷ Once again the curators stepped in, but again their measures failed to sort the right effect. In reality, they did little to nothing to block the spread of Cartesian ideas and in the decades to come 'Leiden university was to become largely dominated by Descartes' new philosophy'.⁵⁸

Against the background of the scholarly dispute over Descartes's ideas that infested the lecture halls of the Republic's oldest university some of Boxhorn's opening statements on the first two pages of the *Antwoord* become of interest. Rejoicing over the fact that, in reply to his treatise on the goddess Nehalennia, he had 'in this quarrelsome and blind century' received some questions 'from a good hand', Boxhorn begins the *Antwoord* with the contention that 'in discovering the truth, doubt must be the point of departure, because the end of it [i.e. doubt-JN] is, not to doubt',⁵⁹ a statement that he enforces by claiming that he only expects persons who are just to doubt, for to doubt 'is the right and main road to attain the truth someday'.⁶⁰ These are bold contentions, both clearly in line with Descartes's method of doubt that was defended by Golius and Heereboord in 1646 and 1647.⁶¹ But what are we to make of them? Do they stand on their own and did Boxhorn merely utter them to support Golius and Heereboord in their struggle with those meddling theologians, who, as Boxhorn scornfully puts it at the end of a long letter to one Johan Werner Blaespilius, dated August 1645, 'in these times, especially recently, have dared with such great indiscretion to disagree publicly not only with them, who are

⁵⁷ Frijhoff and Spies, *Hard-Won Unity*, pp. 303-5.

⁵⁸ Verbeek, *Descartes and the Dutch*, pp. 46-70, and Van Bunge, *From Stevin to Spinoza*, pp. 45-46.

⁵⁹ Boxhorn, *Antwoord*, p. 3. 'Twijfelen moet het beginsel zijn in het uytvinden van de waerheit, omdat het einde daer van is, niet te twijfelen.'

⁶⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 4. 'Twijfelen alleen hebbe ick van rechtsinnige verwacht. Dese is de rechte ende heerech om eenmaal tot de waerheit te geraecken.' 'Rechtsinnig' can also be translated as 'orthodox' or 'frank'.

⁶¹ In his *Discours* Descartes explained his method of doubt in four maxims of which the first reads 'never to accept anything for true which I did not clearly know to be such; that is to say, carefully to avoid precipitancy and prejudice, and to comprise nothing more in my judgment than what was presented to my mind so clearly and distinctly as to exclude all ground of doubt'. René Descartes, *A Discourse on Method. Meditations on the First Philosophy. Principles of Philosophy*. Translated by John Veitch and an Introduction by A.D. Lindsay (Dent; London, 1st ed. 1912, 1975), p. 15.

of the same order, but also with others, and to act so violently against other people's reputation and good name, that they show themselves to be more skilled in any other area than in the teaching of Christ?'⁶² Or is there more to them than meets the eye?

In order to answer these questions it is crucial to know what Boxhorn actually means when he speaks of 'doubt' or 'to doubt'. The first pages of the *Antwoord* provide the answer. For Boxhorn to doubt means to ask questions. He praises his anonymous respondent for his honest questions and promises that he would not waste words on a long introduction. 'Fine words, they say, butter no parsnips. This questioning then pleases me. One reaches Rome as one questions; and we shall also, in like manner, eventually make the truth shine most bright.'⁶³ To doubt is to ask questions, and by asking questions and discussing them, as Boxhorn does in the *Antwoord*, the truth concerning a certain matter of debate can be attained. This is quite similar to the belief that, given the weakness of the human mind, discussion was the only way of attaining truth upon which Heereboord grounded his defence to discuss Cartesian philosophy in his disputations.⁶⁴ As Theo Verbeek has already shown, to plead for discussion and debate as a mean or a method of attaining knowledge and truth was contrary to Descartes's 'conception of method as the orderly arrangement of self-evident truths'.⁶⁵ But it was in line with how teaching was conducted at Leiden University and with the University's aim of training students and preparing them for their future role in society. Disputations and debates were seen as the best means of preparing students for the real world, and so long as their content remained within the walls of

⁶² Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, pp. 274-75. 'Delictum enim aliorum, ut egregiè ille olim, respiciendum est ut opprobrium, non ut exemplum. Sed hos justus dolor, & superata, si quidem sapientis illa, quam invictam esse oportet, superari patientia unquam possit, forte excusaverit. Illi autem plane non ferendi qui priores maledicunt, & non lacessiti. Nam nequidem id hominis. In Theologis autem tam monstruosum est, quàm inauditum. Ex his enim quidam hac aetate, inprimis nuper, tam ab his, qui ejusdem ordinis, quam aliis, tanta immodestia publice dissentire, ac in famam aliorum & existimationem tam atrociter grassari, ausi sunt, ut in quavis potius alia, quam Christi schola ostenderint sese eruditos.'

⁶³ Boxhorn, *Antwoord*, p. 4. 'Woorden, seght men, vullen geen sacken. Dit vragen dan, behaeght my. Al vragende komt men tot Roomen; ende wy sullen oock, soo doende, de waerheit ten laetsten op het helderste doen blinken.'

⁶⁴ Adriaen Heereboord, *Meletemata philosophica in quibus pleraeque res metaphysicae ventilantur* (A. van Hoogenhuysen; Nijmegen, 1664), p. 31. 'Several eyes see more than one; iron is sharpened by iron; man by man, not only because the search for truth makes men engage in struggle but also because it is hoped that truth will arrive from conflict. If the whole of truth were known by itself, and if the naked child were already a philosopher, there would be no need for disputations. However, the condition of man speaks for their necessity, indeed the very nature of his intellect asks for it. Man is a social being and passes his life in mutual conversation. Of course, nobody speaks or feels the same. On the contrary, what is approved by the one is disclaimed by the other. Can both be right?' Verbeek, *Descartes and the Dutch*, pp. 39, 65-66, with quote on p. 65. As I will show in chapter 8, Boxhorn differs from Heereboord in that he does not see man as a social being.

⁶⁵ Verbeek, *Descartes and the Dutch*, p. 66.

the lecture hall much could be debated. Heereboord's plea for the freedom of philosophy, which 'included an unusually vehement defense of the freedom to conduct academic disputations according to one's own insights', and Boxhorn's claim that to ask questions and to debate 'is the right and main road to attain the truth someday' must be seen in that light.⁶⁶ What makes Boxhorn's statements about doubt in the *Antwoord* special is not so much their content, but the fact that he expressed them outside the walls of the lecture hall and in the vernacular for everyone to read.⁶⁷

This, however, is not the end of the story. For scattered among Boxhorn's works and letters can be found small remarks, comments, and phrases that can be linked to his defence of the method of doubt in the *Antwoord*. Although few and relatively terse, they give us an insight into how Boxhorn looked at some of the most important scholarly developments of his time, the breakthrough of Cartesian ideas and, closely associated with it, the advancement of Copernicus's heliocentric model of the cosmos.

In 1670 an English translation appeared in London of Pierre Borel's short biography of René Descartes.⁶⁸ Attached to Borel's biography was an epitome of Descartes's life written by 'Marcus Zurius Boxhornius, *Historiographer in the University of Leyden*'. In the epitome Boxhorn praises Descartes as a man 'who by his wit and experiments surveying the Universal Nature of things, and making a diligent and serious inspection into her closest cabinet counsels, was not satisfied with those things that were ancient, for their antiquity; nor did those that were modern dissatisfy by reason of their novelty for he was sensible that what is now old was once new, and what is now new will in process of time become old, but as he found them either true or false; therefore, a new and true way of Philosophizing was set up, which will continue, and in time grow old'.⁶⁹ The Descartes that Boxhorn depicts here is an innovator.

⁶⁶ For Heereboord, see Frijhoff and Spies, *Hard-Won Unity*, pp. 306-9.

⁶⁷ Willem Otterspeer, "Polderen in academicis", in Bos, Ebben and Te Velde (eds.), *Harmonie in Holland*, pp. 119-21, 129-33. See also chapter 3.

⁶⁸ Pierre Borel, *A Summary or Compendium, of the Life of the Most Famous Philosopher Renatus Descartes* (E. Okes; London, 1670). Original Latin title, *Vitae Renati Cartesii summi philosophi compendium*. Pierre Borel (c.1620-1689) was a doctor and personal physician of Louis XIV. He showed an interest in a wide variety of subjects, including history and philology.

⁶⁹ Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn, "Epitome of the Life of Descartes", in Borel, *A Summary or Compendium, of the Life of the Most Famous Philosopher Renatus Descartes*, pp. 60-61. A Latin version of this epitome can be found in a work called *Specimina Philosophiae Cartesianae*. The work was published by the Lübeck professor Daniel Lipstorprius (1631-1684) during his first stay in Leiden ((1652-53; after a stay at the court of Duke Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar (1598-1662), he returned briefly to Leiden in 1656)) and was dedicated to Descartes and the Frenchman's philosophical and scientific legacy. Rienk Vermij, *The Calvinist Copernicans: The Reception of the New Astronomy in the Dutch Republic, 1575-1750* (Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen; Amsterdam, 2002), pp. 142-46, and Daniel Lipstorprius, *Specimina Philosophiae Cartesianae. Quibus accedit Ejusdem Authoris Copernicus Redivivus* (Johan and Daniel Elzevier; Leiden, 1653), pp. 91-93. 'Qui aequaequam naturae rerum philosophiam, et sic veram ac antiquam, reddidit, ean-

From our modern perspective, to praise someone for his innovations is nothing out of the ordinary. But in the seventeenth century, where continuity and antiquity were highly thought of, innovation was looked at with suspicion. For reasons that will become clear in the next three chapters Boxhorn thought differently. For now it will suffice to note that 1) it had been Descartes's great intellect (*animus magnus*), empirical research (*ausus*), and insight that all things are temporary that had led the Frenchman to his new philosophy and that 2) Boxhorn judged approvingly of Descartes's new philosophy. However, what this 'new and true way of Philosophizing' actually involves the epitome does not tell, nor does it mention or refer to Descartes's method of doubt.

In the Dutch debate about Descartes's new philosophy the question if the earth revolved around the sun or if the sun revolved around the earth became a major point of discussion. In his *De revolutionibus orbium coelestium* (*On the Revolutions of Heavenly Bodies*) of 1543 Copernicus had come to the conclusion that the former was true, a conclusion that Galileo later on further substantiated with new astrological discoveries. Most orthodox Protestants, however, pointed out that a heliocentric model of the cosmos stood in direct contrast with some crucial passages in the Bible that seemed to suggest that the sun revolved around the earth, a view, moreover, that could also count on the approval of Aristotle.⁷⁰ In the first four decades of the seventeenth century there seemed to have been enough room in the Dutch Republic for both models to peacefully coexist. Most Dutch astrologers and mathematicians, such as Simon Stevin (1548-1620), could grasp and appreciate the practical advantages the heliocentric model held over the geocentric model.⁷¹ At Leiden University Burgersdijk had treated the idea

demque, post foedissimam tot saeculorum servitutem in libertatem tandem asservit, et quasi manum-sit, cui universam rerum naturam animo magno ac ausu, et sine ullo duce, circumeunti, intimosque ejus recessus serio ac diligenter inspicienti, neque antiqua placuerunt, quia antiqua, neque displicuerunt nova, quia nova, cum quae nunc antiqua sunt, aliquando fuisse nova, et quae nunc nova sunt, aliquando futura antiqua, non ignoraret, sed quia falsa aut vera deprehendebantur, nova condita est ac vera philosophandi ratio, et iccirco duratura, ac antiqua aliquando futura.' This Latin version is attached to the 'monument' that Pierre Chanet (1600-1662), the legate of Louis XIV, erected at Stockholm in Descartes's honour. The Royal Library in The Hague holds a manuscript of this 'monument' and Boxhorn's epitome. Pierre Chanet, *Monumentum Holmiae positum Renato des Cartes, nobili gallo* (? , ?). KB, 75 C 48, folios 91-92. Pierre Chanet was a Protestant doctor. In 1643 he had given one of the 'more elaborate and complete statements' of the 'Aristotelian type of rejection' of the scepticism of the *nouveaux pyrrhoniens*. According to Richard Popkin, Chanet belonged to those thinkers who, in the second quarter of the seventeenth century, 'in trying to show the reliability of some sense information, or the justification of rational procedures ... had appealed to Aristotle's theory of the natural functioning of the senses and reason and the need for proper conditions for the employment of our faculties'. Popkin, *The History of Scepticism*, pp. 105-6.

⁷⁰ According to Psalm 104:5, God had 'laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever'. I Chronicles 16:30, Psalm 93:1, and Psalm 96:10 confirm this view. The sun, on the other hand, is depicted in the Bible as a moving object, for example in Ecclesiastes 1:5. 'The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to his place where he arose.'

⁷¹ Eric Jorink, *Wetenschap en wereldbeeld in de Gouden Eeuw* (Uitgeverij Verloren; Hilversum, 1999), pp. 1-60.

that the earth revolved around the sun with great sympathy, although he did not dismiss the geocentric model outright. But most Dutch scholars, such as Heerboord, do not seem to have been much interested in the astrological debate.⁷² However, with the eruption of the scholarly dispute about Cartesian philosophy, the Dutch academic landscape changed. Since Descartes agreed with Copernicus and Galileo that the earth revolved around the sun, the question if this contention was true suddenly became of great philosophical and theological importance.⁷³ A choice for the heliocentric cosmology of Copernicus now came to be seen as a choice for Descartes and the Frenchman's heretical ideas.

There are some clues that Boxhorn, like Stevin and his former tutor Burgersdijk, was favourably disposed towards the heliocentric cosmology advocated by Copernicus and Galileo. In one of his first published orations, the *Oratio de eversionibus rerumpublicarum et earum caussis* (*Oration on the Destructions of Commonwealths and their Causes*), for example, Boxhorn describes the earth as a moving object in a continuous cycle of growth and decay.

The world is a play, in which man puts on and takes of a mask, until he reveals [his] real persona. For all things are lost in this cycle of growth and decay. Nothing of great age in this machine is eternal. Lift up [your] eyes with me, and behold the changing circumstances of human affairs. It goes almost unnoticed that the revolutions of the stars change and that, as the astrologers now say, the earth forwards, that the sea is stirred by the tides, that large structures are hit by ruin, [and] that even kingdoms and empires are brought to an end by the sword, wars, [and] crimes.⁷⁴

Besides the strong Platonic overtone, the fact that he describes the earth as a moving object in a cycle that is depicted as a 'machine' at least seems to suggest that Boxhorn was aware of the mechanical worldview that was making headway in his days.⁷⁵

⁷² Van Bunge, *From Stevin to Spinoza*, pp. 32, 48.

⁷³ Jorink, *Wetenschap en wereldbeeld in de Gouden Eeuw*, p. 59ff, and Vermij, *The Calvinist Copernicans*, p. 158ff.

⁷⁴ Boxhorn, "Oratio de Eversionibus Rerumpub. et Earum caussis", pp. 1-2. 'Ita agitur cum rebus humanis ut occulto quodam naturae instinctu subinde immutentur. Orbis Fabula est, in qua personam, & accipit homo, & deponit: donec veram absolvat. Abeunt quippe omnia in hunc nascendi et pereundi gyrum. Longaevum aliquid in hac machina nihil aeternum. Attollite mecum oculos & rerum humanarum vices videte. Parvum est, syderum cursus mutari, &, ut astrologi jam dicunt, terram moveri, mare aestu agitari, moles ruina consumi, regna etiam & imperia per clades, bella, flagitia ad metam feruntur.' Thus, the oration was published in the same year of Galileo's famous trial and the open condemnation of the heliocentric model of the cosmos by the Roman church.

⁷⁵ Descartes, for example, believed the whole universe to be one, big mechanical clockwork, of

Another clue can be found in Boxhorn's letters. They reveal that Boxhorn held Galileo and the Italian's work in high esteem. When, in November 1638, he heard from Golius that Galileo had probably died, Boxhorn's reaction is one of sorrow. 'If that is true, then the mathematical disciplines have suffered the greatest loss by the death of that very sharp man.'⁷⁶ Some seven years later, in his letter to Blaespilius, Boxhorn makes it perfectly clear that the contribution of the Italian to the sciences could not be underestimated. 'Nobody in our age, or in the age of [our] forefathers, has revealed the structure and secrets of nature more profoundly than he, or has with more zeal discovered new things, which from now on will serve the interests of men.'⁷⁷ The letter does not reveal what new discoveries Galileo had made, but since Boxhorn mentions them in reference to Galileo's *Dialogo* (*Dialogue*, 1632), a link with the heliocentric cosmology of Copernicus is obvious.⁷⁸ The remark in the *Oratio de eversionibus rerumpublicarum et earum causis* that the sea is moved by the tides further points in that direction, for Galileo had considered the movement of the tides as the physical proof that the earth moved. Finally, it should also be noted that Boxhorn was an enthusiastic supporter of the translation project of Martin Bernegger (1582-1640) to translate and publish a Latin edition of Galileo's *Dialogo*.⁷⁹

which all parts were somehow connected to each other. Jorink, *Wetenschap en wereldbeeld in de Gouden Eeuw*, pp. 57, 65-75.

⁷⁶ Boxhorn in a letter to Pontanus, November 24, 1638. Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, p. 121. 'Superioribus diebus apud me Hortensius noster fuit, quem in Italiam ante menses aliquot abiisse acceperam. Narravit dilatatum iter in proximi anni veram tempestatem. Iturus tamen non est, si verum sit, quod ex Collega meo Golio audivi, Galilaeum de Galilaeis pluribus additum. Quod si verum, maximam in acutissimi illius viri morte jacturam disciplinae Mathematicae fecerunt.' The rumour proved to be false. Galileo would die on January 8, 1642.

⁷⁷ Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, p. 259. 'Quomodo fine Dialogi I. de mundi Systemate loquitur Galilaeus Galileo, quo homine nemo nostrâ, aut majorum aetate ordinem naturae ac arcana altius indicavit, aut majori studio inveniendi nova, quae humanis porro inservirent utilitatibus, exarsit.'

⁷⁸ Galileo Galilei, *Dialogo sopra i due massimi sistemi del mondo Tolemaico e Copernicano* (Giovanni Battista Blandini; Florence, 1632).

⁷⁹ Bernegger's Latin edition of Galileo's *Dialogo* appeared in 1635 at Strasbourg. *Systema cosmicum* or *Dialogus de systemate mundi* (Elzevier; Strasbourg, 1635). In a letter, dated April 14, 1635, to Elia Diodati (1575-1651), an Italian lawyer and a good friend of Galileo, Bernegger, who was a German professor of eloquence at Strasbourg, writes that Boxhorn had urged him, also on behalf of Martinus Hortensius (1605-1639), professor of mathematics at the 'Amsterdam Illustre', to produce the Latin translation of the *Dialogo*. Alexander Reifferscheid, *Quellen zur Geschichte des geistigen Lebens in Deutschland während des siebzehnten Jahrhunderts*, Vol. 1: *Briefe G.M. Lingelsheims, M. Berneggers und ihrer Freunde* (Gebr. Henniger; Heilbronn, 1889), p. 936. 'Verum enim est ... Leydensum illum Boxhornium suo et Hortensii nomine ad versionem Systematis me adhortatum est.' Shortly thereafter, Bernegger had completed his translation. In his foreword, Bernegger further reveals that Boxhorn had also urged the Elzevirs in Leiden to print the book. Benjamin Engelcke from Danzig, who had provided Bernegger with a copy of the *Dialogo* from Italy, had travelled to Leiden with Bernegger's translation. There he '... submittendos existimavit, qui torpescenti stimulum admoverent Elzevirios, Leidenses typographos, artis nobilissimae facile principes, universis de studiis praeclare meritos, qui cum ipsi me perhumaniter ad hanc operam, impensis etiam impressionis oblati, invitarunt, tum ipsorum, ut arbitror, instinctu v.c. Marcus Boxhorn-Zuerius, florentissimae Batavorum academiae doctor ... excitandum hortamine putavit, et pondus addidit ab

Conclusion

The publications on the statue of Nehalennia and his posthumously published *Originum Gallicarum liber* secured Boxhorn's place in the history of philology. The 'Scythian' thesis Boxhorn proposed in these works proved to be the way forward; long after Boxhorn's death it remained a source of inspiration for future generations of philologists to come. How original and innovative his ideas were, remains a matter of debate. They do, however, represent the accumulative philological knowledge at the University of Leiden at that moment in time. They stand out as prime examples of the philological-historical approach that was so dominant at the University of Leiden and the rest of the Dutch academic world in the first half of the seventeenth century.

In the second half of the seventeenth century this dominance became contested by the new natural philosophy, associated first with Descartes and later, more notoriously, with Spinoza, that promised a complete understanding of the world along mathematical lines.⁸⁰ By taking the opening statements on the first two pages of the *Antwoord* that suggest that doubt should 'be the point of departure in discovering the truth' as our starting point, we have tried to gain an insight into Boxhorn's opinions on some of the latest scholarly developments of his time, most notably the intrusion of Cartesian ideas in the Dutch *academiae* and, closely connected to that development, the spread and popularisation of the heliocentric model of the cosmos. Admittedly, there is not much evidence to go on, and what there is, is scattered and relatively concise. Yet it is also true that the evidence we do have all point out that Boxhorn took a positive stand on the new developments taking place in his time in the field of philosophy and the sciences. Both Descartes and Galileo receive praise from Boxhorn for their contributions to philosophy and the sciences. More importantly, they are especially praised because of their discoveries of 'new things' and their new ideas.

We can try to explain Boxhorn's positive attitude towards these new developments by pointing out to the 'open', 'flexible', and 'eclectic' character of the Aristotelianism taught at Leiden University, where there was room for

auctoritate collegae sui, Martini Hortensii, celeberrimi mathematici, quem scripsit idem expetere, nec dubitare, quin maximam eo labore gratiam ab horum studiorum cultoribus sim initurus'. Ibidem, p. 937. See also Boxhorn's letter to Pontanus, November 24, 1638. Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, p. 121. Rienk Vermij describes Hortensius as 'probably the first full-fledged Copernican to hold a Dutch chair' and 'one of the most outspoken Copernicans in the Dutch Republic', who 'also appears to have genuinely admired Galileo'. Vermij, *The Calvinist Copernicans*, pp. 126-28.

⁸⁰ See, for example, Van Bunge, *From Stevin to Spinoza*, p. 65ff; Israel, *Radical Enlightenment*, esp. pp. 23-29; Jorink, *Wetenschap en wereldbeeld in de Gouden Eeuw*, p. 57ff; Vermij, *The Calvinist Copernicans*, p. 156ff.

a figure like Heereboord to combine 'the best of the Aristotelian tradition, Baconian empiricism, and Descartes's rationalism'.⁸¹ However, as recent research has shown, the 'openness' and uniqueness of this Leiden Aristotelianism must not be exaggerated.⁸² Like universities elsewhere in Europe, Leiden University had two specific tasks: to educate servants for the public church, the state and the army, and to train technical specialists.⁸³ The discovery of new knowledge was not seen as essential to fulfil these tasks nor did contemporaries think it important that clergymen or statesmen possessed the skill to discover new knowledge; they were expected to know and obey Holy Writ and the ancient laws of the land, not to invent new ones. In the philological-historical tradition in which Boxhorn was educated, research primarily focused on the *rediscovery* of ancient knowledge now lost. In general, most humanist scholars did not aim for discovering new things, since they had the strong conviction that everything that could and should be known about the world had once already been known to the ancient Egyptians, Jews, Greeks, and Romans. Subsequently, research had to be directed in finding that ancient knowledge among the ruins of the past and to pass it on to the next generation. In their works Scaliger, Heinsius, and Vossius all gave evidence of this scholarly approach. Heereboord did not differ very much from these men. Despite the praise he showered on the 'new' philosophy of 'modern' anti-Aristotelians such as Francis Bacon (1561-1626), Jan Amos Comenius (1592-1670), and Descartes, he still proved himself to be a man of tradition by equating the 'new' philosophy of Bacon, Comenius, and Descartes with the 'reformed' philosophy of Dante Alighieri (1265-1321), Francesco Petrarca (1307-1374), and Erasmus. What the 'new' and the 'reformed' philosophy had in common was that they both returned to the principles of the 'true' philosophy of the 'ideal' philosopher Aristotle instead of slavishly following the content of his texts as the 'old' scholastics did.⁸⁴

Boxhorn's stand, however, is less clear. Where Heereboord tries his best to emphasise the continuity between the 'old' and the 'new' philosophy, between Aristotle and Descartes, Boxhorn seems to do exactly the opposite when he praises Descartes for his courage to break away from the past and to set up 'a

⁸¹ Frijhoff and Spies, *Hard-Won Unity*, p. 308.

⁸² *Ibidem*, p. 283ff, and Grafton, *Athenae Batavae*.

⁸³ For the broader European context, see De Ridder-Symoens (ed.), *Universities in Early Modern Europe (1500-1800)*, passim.

⁸⁴ H.A. Krop, "Scholam naturae ingrediamur: Adrianus Heereboord als geschiedschrijver van de filosofie", in *Geschiedenis van de wijsbegeerte in Nederland*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (1993), pp. 3-13. Heereboord believed that an impartial search for the truth and taking nature and the nature of things as the true objects of philosophy were the two key principles of Aristotle's philosophy.

new and true way of Philosophizing'. But from which past did Descartes break away, antiquity, the Middle Ages, or both? And why was that a good thing? The first question we will probably never be able to answer for we would at least have to know what Boxhorn thought was new about Descartes's ideas. Unfortunately, on this point the sources are silent. To answer the second question, we would first have to find out how Boxhorn thought about and valued the past, and how he saw the relationship between the past and the present. That will be the subject of our next chapter.

Chapter 7

The mistress of life

In the previous chapter we have seen that his work on the interrelationships between the different European and some non-European languages has earned Boxhorn a premier place among the discoverers of the Indo-European language. However, Boxhorn was first and foremost a historian.¹ Yet this side of Boxhorn has often been neglected.² His historical thought has never been closely examined, to the detriment of the understanding of both his historical *and* political thought. For, as will become clear in this chapter and in chapters 8 and 9, Boxhorn's historical and political thought are closely related, both with regard to content and their epistemological principles. So much so, that it is justifiable to say that without a clear understanding of Boxhorn's histori-

¹ In the large and highly heterogenous corpus of Boxhorn's works, works of a historical character are prominently present. Boxhorn published and annotated the works of several classical historians such as Caesar's *Gallic War* and *Civil Wars*, *C. Julii Caesaris quae extant* (Bonaventura Elzevier; Leiden, 1635), Tacitus's *Annals*, *Histories*, *Germania* and *Agricola*, *C. Corn. Tacitus et in eum M.Z. Boxhornii observationes* (Johannes Janssonius; Amsterdam, 1643), and Justin's *Historiarum Philippicarum libri XLIV* (Johannes Janssonius; Amsterdam, 1644). He wrote or edited at least four historical-topographical works. *Respublica Moscoviae et urbes* (Johannes Maire; Leiden, 1630); *De Leodiensi republica* (Isaac Commelinus; Leiden, 1632); *Theatrum sive Hollandiae comitatus et urbium nova descriptio* (Hendricus Hondius; Amsterdam, 1632); *Respublica et status Imperii Romano-Germanici* (Bonaventura Elzevier; Leiden, 1634). He also wrote various, more narrative historical works such as his description of the capture of Breda in 1637, the *Historia obsidionis Bredae*, his *Nederlantsche historie* (1649), and his world history, the *Historia universalis* (1652), that covered the history of the world from the birth of Christ to the execution of king Charles I of England.

² The one exception being Herman Kampinga, who, in his Ph.D. thesis of 1917, attributed Boxhorn an important place among the Dutch historians of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Kampinga, *De opvattingen over onze oudere vaderlandsche geschiedenis*, passim. Boxhorn is also given his due place in the 'Repertoire of Dutch historians'. E.O.G. Haitsma Mulier, G.A.C. van der Lem and P. Knevel, *Repertorium van geschiedschrijvers in Nederland, 1500-1800* (Nederlands Historisch Genootschap; The Hague, 1990), pp. 65-67. Otherwise, the attention has been limited to only a few remarks in some works and articles. Meijer Drees, *Andere landen, andere mensen*, pp. 65-67; E.O.G. Haitsma Mulier, "Het begrip 'vaderland' in de Nederlandse geschiedschrijving van de late zestiende tot de eerste helft van de achttiende eeuw", in N.C.F. van Sas (ed.), *Vaderland: een geschiedenis vanaf de vijftiende eeuw tot 1940* (Amsterdam University Press; Amsterdam, 1999), pp. 171-72; Langereis, *Geschiedenis als ambacht*, passim; Raingard Esser, "'Concordia Res Parvae Crescunt': Regional Histories and the Dutch Republic in the Seventeenth Century", in Pollmann and Spicer (eds.), *Public Opinion and Changing Identities in the Early Modern Netherlands*, pp. 229-48, esp. pp. 239-45. Boxhorn is also mentioned in passing by Johan van der Zande for his contribution to world history. Johan van der Zande, "De universele geschiedenis: een onbehaaglijke omgang met de wereld", in Tollebeek, Verschaffel and Wessels (eds.), *De palimpsest*, Vol. 1, p. 107. On the same topic, Meijer, *Kritiek als herwaarderling*, pp. 180-81, and Peter Burke, "America and the Rewriting of World History", in Karen Ordahl Kupperman (ed.), *America in European Consciousness, 1493-1750* (University of North Carolina Press; Chapel Hill/London; 1995), p. 37. There is also a short article on the town descriptions in Boxhorn's *Theatrum* by W.E. Penning, "Balthasar Florisz. van Berckenrode en de plattegrondjes in het *Theatrum* van Boxhorn", in *Caert-Thresoor: Journal for the History of Cartography in the Netherlands*, No. 4 (1997), pp. 85-87.

cal thought, his political thought can never be fully grasped. Indeed, in an age when the political was historical and the historical political, it seems almost impossible to try to understand the one while at the same time neglecting the other. This chapter, therefore, has two aims. First, it will attempt to do justice to Boxhorn the historian. Second, by delving into Boxhorn's historical thought, this chapter will lay the groundwork that is necessary for understanding Boxhorn's political thought, which will be discussed in chapters 8 and 9. By taking Boxhorn as a test case, the next three chapters will not only shed light on how seventeenth-century Dutchmen struggled with time and the events that occurred in time, but also how these two aspects influenced their thinking about man and his relationship to society.

On history

From the beginning of his professional career at the University of Leiden in 1632 until his death in 1653 Boxhorn wrote, edited, and published many historical works. In the last five years of his life Boxhorn also lectured on history. However, unlike Gerard Vossius,³ he never wrote any work on the *ars historica* in which he explained his views on the nature, goals, and value of history,⁴ or in which he laid down protocols for how to read, measure, and apply works of history.⁵ Thus, we lack a single theoretical work from which we can infer Boxhorn's views on these issues.

However, this does not mean that we are left in the dark. There is other material available that can provide us with information on how Boxhorn thought about the value of history, its nature, and the way history should be written

³ Vossius was professor of eloquence and universal chronology at Leiden University between 1622 and 1631, when he moved to Amsterdam to help found the Athenaeum Illustre. During his stay at Leiden Vossius published several works that clearly belong to the *artes historicae*, respectively the *Ars historica, sive, De Historiae, et historicae natura, historiaeque scribendae praeceptis commentatio* (Johannes Maire; Leiden, 1623), the *De historicis Graecis libri IV* (Johannes Maire; Leiden, 1623), and the *De historicis Latinis libri III* (Johannes Maire; Leiden, 1627).

⁴ The *artes historicae* were 'a variety of works of uneven sophistication' that appeared from 'the late sixteenth century ... to make some sense of historical genres and to prescribe principles for the writing, or at least the reading, of history'. See the entry "Historiography", in Jonathan DeWald (ed.), *Europe 1450 to 1789: Encyclopaedia of the Early Modern World*, Vol. 3: *Gabrieli to Lyon* (Charles Scribner's Sons; New York, 2004), p. 171.

⁵ Nor for that matter did Daniel Heinsius. Although Heinsius was a great philologist, he was a poor historian. The only historical work Heinsius ever delivered was his description of the siege of 's Hertogenbosch, captured by Frederik Hendrik in 1629. Daniel Heinsius, *Rerum ad Sylvoam-Ducis atque alibi in Belgio aut a Belgis anno MDCXXIX gestarum historia* (Bonaventura Elzevier; Leiden, 1631). The work met with heavy criticism by Gerard Vossius and Hugo Grotius and disappointed Frederik Hendrik, the leading figure in Heinsius's tale and to whom Heinsius had dedicated the work. See Ter Horst, *Daniel Heinsius (1580-1655)*, pp. 68, 104-6, and Sellin, *Daniel Heinsius and Stuart England*, pp. 37-39.

and read. First, we have the inaugural oration that Boxhorn delivered after he was given the task to hold public lectures on history. This oration contains valuable information and will be the centrepiece of the following discussion. Second, his private letters to colleagues and friends contain several remarks and comments that are related to the writing and reading of history. Third, the prefaces that are attached to many of Boxhorn's historical works also hold information about how Boxhorn thought about history and the way historical research should be conducted. Last, there are other speeches written by Boxhorn that merit attention for their remarks on history, most notably his speech on Tacitus, the most prominent classical historian in the seventeenth century.⁶

Before we proceed, however, a warning is in order. All four of the above named sources were written for a specific purpose and for a specific audience, namely to awe and please an audience that was at least fairly literate if not highly educated in the humanistic tradition of the age. This means that rhetoric plays an important part, a part which every reader of early modern European works must take into account. Yet this does not mean that we are left with mere petty words, or that the people of the early modern period did not mean what they said when they couched their thoughts in commonplaces. Rhetoric indeed played an important role, but by looking at what people said and by comparing this to what they actually did I believe we can come as close as is humanly possible to people's thoughts and ideas. Therefore, the first part of this chapter will be devoted to how Boxhorn formulated his ideas about history and to the language he chose to communicate his ideas to the world he lived in. In the second part of this chapter I will discuss three of Boxhorn's historical works at length. I will look at the topics they address, the ideas that Boxhorn expressed in them, and the way Boxhorn actually conducted 'history'. Together these two parts, theory and practice, will give us a deeper and clearer insight into Boxhorn's historical thought.

On November 19, 1648, Boxhorn held his inaugural oration on 'history and the way of reading and teaching it'.⁷ That same year Heinsius, who was by now in his late sixties, had 'received a temporary dispensation from teaching'.⁸ The

⁶ For Tacitus as the most prominent classical historian in the seventeenth century, see chapter 2.

⁷ Molhuysen, *Bronnen tot de geschiedenis der Leidsche Universiteit*, Vol. 3, p. 13. 'Eadem sessione visum est D. Boxhornio concedendum esse diem eiusdem mensis 19 ad habendam auspicalem professionis Historiarum orationem.' Boxhorn's oration carries two titles. The title on the frontispiece reads: *Oratio inauguralis, dicta in Illustri Batavorum Academia, cum, Ex auctoritate publica, historiarum professionem aggrediretur*. The title on the first page reads: *Oratio inauguralis de historia, ejusque legendae ac tradendae ratione*. The oration was later published under a different title with various other public speeches of Boxhorn. Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn, "De Historiarum lectione ac usu", in idem, *Orationes, Varii Argumenti*, IX, pp. 305-37.

⁸ Sellin, *Daniel Heinsius and Stuart England*, pp. 64-65.

curators decided that it was time for the once very gifted child to follow in his master's footsteps and granted Boxhorn permission to give public lectures on history.⁹ Although Boxhorn's new task was meant to be temporary, it did bring him a step closer to officially succeed Heinsius as professor of history. His inaugural oration gave Boxhorn an opportunity to show his skills and to prove to the curators that when Heinsius departed from this world, he was the man to officially and permanently take over Heinsius's office.

However, when reading Boxhorn's oration one cannot help to feel some disappointment. The oration lacks the sound theoretical underpinning that is so clearly present in the inaugural speech that Vossius presented on the 'usefulness of history' at the opening of that new academy of learning, the *Athenaeum Illustre*, in Amsterdam in 1632.¹⁰ For example, nowhere in his oration does Boxhorn define history. Nor is it as eloquent as the speech Heinsius delivered on the same topic, in which history is praised for the knowledge it entails for that 'fretful animal we call man'.¹¹ Boxhorn seems to skip the *laus historiae* altogether when he kicks off by saying that he does not want to say anything 'about the whole past, and the great and by wise men much praised advantage of events that have occurred in the past, a subject that others have covered so many times, and have by now exhausted'.¹² Boxhorn only wants to warn his audience that 'although all the arts and disciplines that are ruined and, so to speak, utterly destroyed, can always be restored and represented to you and [your] offspring by the diligence and wisdom of the next generation of talented men, nobody's talent or skill or any other human power is able to recover the once lost memory of events that have already occurred'.¹³ But this is just a cover-up, because at the moment that Boxhorn starts explaining why this memory should not be lost, the value of history immediately pops up.

First and foremost, history is important for those people to whose care the people's souls are entrusted, because 'there are, according to the actual verdict of the immortal God, also writings handed down to us among the first and very old beginnings of events, [and] among the very recent beginnings

⁹ Molhuysen, *Bronnen tot de geschiedenis der Leidsche Universiteit*, Vol. 3, p. 20. See also chapter 3.

¹⁰ Vossius, *De historiae utilitate oratio*. For his oration Vossius heavily depended on his *Ars historica* of 1623. See Vossius, *Geschiedenis als wetenschap*. According to Cor Rademaker, Vossius's basic principles concerning history and his way of reasoning did not change over the years. *Ibidem*, pp. 36-39.

¹¹ For Heinsius's oration, see chapter 3.

¹² Boxhorn, *Oratio inauguralis ... cum ... historiarum professionem aggredetur*, p. 2. 'De Historia vero omni, multoque ac sapientibus laudatissimo rerum ante gestarum usu, toties occupato ab aliis, & exhausto jam argumento nihil hic dicam.'

¹³ *Ibidem*. 'Id modo vobis nunc ego praedixerim; quod, cum sepultae & quasi deperditae aliae omnes artes ac disciplinae, sequentium ingeniorum industria ac sapientia semper reddi vobis posterisque possint ac repraesentari, amissa semel rerum jam gestarum memoria nullius ingenio, solertia, aut alia humana ope, queat redonari.'

of these events, in order that the sacred magnitude of God's providence and supervision, that surpasses every human magnitude, be recognised'.¹⁴ But Boxhorn does not pursue the matter. Although he ends his speech with a long praise of the 'eternal God', 'the Commander of all', who 'holds the hearts of the kings in His hands' and 'commands the winds', the importance of God's providence for explaining historical events or its manifestation in time is not Boxhorn's primary concern.¹⁵

What is of importance is the value of history for those people 'who are devoted to the fatherland and to the governing of men's affairs therein'.¹⁶ For them, history recollects the 'verdicts, examples, and conclusions of the entire ... human race that only the memory and the good faith of the annals keeps intact and presents very widely'.¹⁷ 'Because what else, I ask of you, are all other people's examples to us, than precepts? What else, but mirrors, in whom we see ourselves and not only our past and our present, but also, what is

¹⁴ Ibidem, p. 3. 'Equidem, si eos tantum ego hic videam, quibus animarum cura, onus gravissimum sanctissimumque, demandanda est, ad hos inprimis imperatas mihi nunc curas attinere sentio. Cum enim, ipso immortalis Dei iudicio, inter prima & antiquissima tradita etiam nobis sint rerum, inter recentissima earum exordia gestarum, monumenta, ut ex iis augusta, & majora humana omni, providentiae ejus ac curae magnitudo agnosceretur.'

¹⁵ Ibidem, pp. 19-20. 'Te autem, omnium regnator, aeternae Deus, Deus Sebaoth, Deus exercituum & legionum; cujus bella, aliaeque ubique nationum res sunt, quae geruntur; in cujus manu sunt corda regum ... qui imperas Orienti ut in Occidentem, & Occidenti ut in Orientem se effundant, mox accincti se effundunt ...' Nor, for that matter, are they in any of Boxhorn's historical works or letters. I have found only three occasions where an explicit connection is made. The first is in a letter to Adriaen Hofer, in which Boxhorn elaborates on the difference between primary and secondary causes, the role of providence, and predestination. July [1638?]. Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, pp. 105-10. The second is in his observation on the Reygersberch's chronicle of Zeeland, where he praises 'histories and chronicles' because they show that God always punishes the wicked. Jan van Reygersberch, *Chroniick van Zeelandt, eertijds beschreven door d'Heer Johan Reygersbergen, nu verbeterd, ende vermeerdert door Marcus Veruius van Boxhorn*, Vol. 1 (Zacharias and Michiel Roman; Middelburg, 1644), p. 11. In his inaugural oration on history Boxhorn pays lip service to this thought, pointing out that princes who have violated God's laws and human laws have suffered very heavy punishment, and that these princes should therefore serve as an example for the princes of his own age. Boxhorn, *Oratio inauguralis ... cum ... historiarum professionem aggrederetur*, p. 7. The third occasion is in the *Institutiones politicae*, where Boxhorn, in a discussion about the causes of the collapse of commonwealths, explains the importance of recognising (*agnoscere*) God's providence because 'commonwealths are often changed contrary to human reasoning'. Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I.16, p. 254. 'Egimus §. 4. de causis Eversionum Rerump. quarum I. diximus esse abstrusam quandam necessitatem providentiae Divinae, quam agnoscere oportet, cum saepe contra humanae rationis dictamen Resp. conversantur.' However, in the *Oratio de eversionibus rerumpublicarum et earum causis*, which also discusses the causes of the collapse of commonwealths, providence is not mentioned at all. As we will see later on, Boxhorn attributed no great role to God's handling in human affairs. This contrasts sharply with the importance Vossius contributes to history's value in showing God's providence and the true faith. Indeed, the last part of Vossius's *De historiae utilitate oratio* is almost completely dedicated to these issues. Vossius, *De historiae utilitate oratio*, pp. 13-19.

¹⁶ Ibidem, pp. 3-4. 'Vos quoque ego cum video, qui patriae et curandis hominum in ea rebus estis devoti.'

¹⁷ Ibidem, p. 4. 'Quid, quod cum in Republica non incidant de tigno tantum aut stillicidio lites, sed identidem etiam, & hercle, gravissimae de imperio, bello, pace, foederum religione, aliisque, in quibus salus gentium & opes versantur, de his quidem nihil rite recte, nihil sancte, statuatur, nisi totius, ut sic dixerim, humani generis iudicia, exempla, consensus, quae sola Annalium memoria ac fides conservat atque amplissima exhibit, serio et cum cura inspiciantur.'

almost divine, even our future?'¹⁸ The future can only 'be sufficiently known or estimated' by looking at the past. Therefore 'we must without any doubt direct our eyes to events that have already occurred. Among them the obvious similarity of the fortunes of men, counsels and [their] results present itself everywhere'.¹⁹ This similarity also helps human beings to make a distinction between right and wrong and to understand the truth. It is for this reason that we read in Boxhorn's observation on the Reygersberch's chronicle of Zeeland Cicero's famous praise of history as 'the witness of the ages, the illuminator of reality, the life force of memory, the teacher of our lives, and the messenger of times gone by'.²⁰ This 'truth' is 'the soul of history' and must not be damaged by silence or flattery.²¹

Other important values of history are that history incites to imitation and 'cures' that 'awful and completely untameable disease or ignorance'.²² To these values can be added that historical works allow people access to the princes and the courts, thereby revealing the secrets that are connected to the art of ruling, the famous and equally notorious 'mysteries of command' (*arcana imperii*), without exposing the reader to the dangers that the people at the court are usually exposed to.

¹⁸ Ibidem, pp. 4-5. 'Nam quid, quaeso vos, aliud omnia aliorum exempla nobis sunt, quam praecepta? Quid aliud quam specula, in quibus nos & nostra, nec praeterita tantum ac praesentia, sed & quod prope divinum est, eventura etiam intuemur?' Vossius speaks about history as 'the mirror of human life'. 'Vitamque humanam, cujus historia speculum est.' Vossius, *De historiae utilitate oratio*, p. 14. Hermann Conring shared the same opinion. Hammerstein, "Die Historie bei Conring", p. 221.

¹⁹ Ibidem, p. 5. 'Quippe cum nihil providenter aggreantur homines, nisi in futura introspererint; et agnoscari aut aestimari satis futura nisi ex praeteritis non possint, haud dubie ad jam facta circumferendi nobis sunt oculi, in quibus obvia humanorum casuum, consiliorum, eventorumque similitudo passim offertur.'

²⁰ Reygersberch, *Chronick van Zeelandt*, Vol. 1, p. 10. Cicero, *On the Ideal Orator*, p. 133. In Boxhorn's oration, however, any reference to, or quotation of, famous authors on the value of history or its nature and essence are missing.

²¹ Boxhorn in a letter to Rochus Mogge, February 8, 1638. Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, p. 104. 'Laedere aliquem intuitum est, nec tamen fas est vel silentio vel assentione impingere in normam veritatis. Quae ut anima historiae est, ita solius ejus rationem habere decrevi.' Here, clearly, we see the influence of Tacitus. Compare this sentence, for example, with Tacitus, *Historiarum libri*. Recognovit brevique adnotatione critica instruxit C.D. Fisher (Clarendon Press; Oxford, 1st ed. 1911, 1967), I.1, p. 1. '... sed incorruptam fidem professis neque amore quisquam et sine odio dicendus est.' Or with Tacitus, *Annalium ab excessu divi Augusti libri*, III.65. '... quod praecipuum munus annalium reor ne virtutes sileantur utque pravis dictis factisque ex posteritate et infamia metus sit.' For the sake of completeness, it must be mentioned that in his inaugural oration on history Boxhorn calls viewing 'the deciding moments of the most important historical events' the soul of history. Boxhorn, *Oratio inauguralis ... cum ... historiarum professionem aggrederetur*, p. 9. '... vos circumducam exempla, quae saepe voluptatis plus habent & subinde admirationis, quam utilitatis; sed, quod inprimis necesse & ipsa Historiae anima est, rerum maximarum praecipua momenta.'

²² Boxhorn, *Oratio inauguralis ... cum ... historiarum professionem aggrederetur*, p. 5. 'Tot enim majores illi in exemplum nobis vivere, quemadmodum & nos futuris; quorum bona et malaque eligit semper iudicii rectitude aut declinat. Ex quo enim ingenia hominum ad foedam hanc, & prope omnium ac pene indomabilem sive infirmitatem, sive inscitiam, damnata sunt, ut nunquam satis sua circumspectant, & plerumque adulenter ac sic insidias struant sibi, necessario recurrendum est ad egregia omnia aut praecepta aut exempla.'

Only the annals lay out an easy and royal way for anyone and to anything. Thus, as often and in any way he pleases, every private citizen is admitted to the sanctuaries themselves, to the more hidden corners of deliberations and councils, and even to the mysteries of command and of the household themselves, without scornful contempt, without any pangs of conscience, [and] without any risk or danger, to whom the attendants of the courts are commonly subjected.²³

However, the authors of historical works should also be prudent. Not everything that happens at the courts or in the senates should be revealed: sometimes the historian must keep silent if this is in the interest of his 'commonwealth or the times'.²⁴

The best author available to reveal the mysteries of command is Tacitus, the 'most reliable writer of Roman history and all civic prudence'.²⁵ Boxhorn thinks very highly of Tacitus. In an oration on the Roman author he describes Tacitus as the 'most important and accurate writer of Roman history'. According to Boxhorn, 'no people has ever extended its empire wider than the people of Rome, and no one describes the very large commonwealth of the Roman people, that during the time of those first Caesars was indeed very, very large, more accurate or with more evidence and honesty than Tacitus'.²⁶

Tacitus was able to deliver the most evidence because he himself had held high positions within Rome's governmental body and because he had a direct access 'to the letter boxes and the writings of the Caesars themselves'.²⁷ Thus,

²³ Ibidem, p. 6. 'Addite enim, quod, cum vix obvia sit principum comitas, vix prompti ad eos aditus, & difficillimae admissiones, quae nunc pene omnium superbia aularum est, cujus causa ianitores etiam, & saepe frustra, coluntur, soli Annales facilem & regiam, ac cuivis, & ad quidvis, viam sternant; quo fit, ut ad ipsa sacraria, ad interiores deliberationum consiliorumque recessus, ipsaque adeo arcana imperii ac domus, sine fastidio, sine ulla animi querela, sine periculo ullo aut discrimine, cui plerumque obnoxij sunt asseclae aularum, & quoties, ac quomodo lubet, privatorum quisque admittatur.'

²⁴ Boxhorn, *Historia obsidionis Bredae*, p. 34. 'Quae enim alia, inter haec consiliorum arcana, mihi, rerum tantum quae evenerint fidem professo, scrutari aut prodere non visum, dum Reipublicae & temporis servata adhuc teguntur.'

²⁵ Idem, *Theatrum*, p. 126. 'Ita Coloniae Agrippinae, celeberrimo Vbiorum opido, nomen inditum ex vocabulo Agrippinae Augustae; ut diserte testatur Historiae Romanae, atque civilis omnis prudentiae certissimus author Cornelius Tacitus lib. Annal. XII.'

²⁶ Idem, "Oratio, cum Cornelii Taciti interpretationem aggredereetur", p. 381. 'Circumspicienti vero id, & Romanorum florentissimae ac per tot passim totius terrarum orbis nationes, ac plurima sparsae saecula diffusaesque res, earumque gravissimus & accuratissimus auctor CORNELIUS TACITUS, imprimis mihi offeruntur. Neque enim gens ulla sum latius olim exporrexerat imperium, quam Romana, neque res ejus amplissimas, ut profecto sub primis illis Caesaribus longe fuere amplissimae, diligentius quisquam, aut majore indicio ac fide, persequitur, quam ille.' Sallust and Livy are also praised as 'very important writers' (*maximorum auctorum*). Ibidem, p. 384.

²⁷ Ibidem, p. 386. '... cum & ex praecipuis ipse, & summis dignitatibus functus, hujus etiam Belgicae nostrae Procurator, ac maximi Consulis gener, & ad scrinia scripturasque ipsorum Caesarum, ut passim indicat ipse, admissus, recondita quaeque & clausa aliis, penitus habuerit explorata.'

Tacitus not only knew what he was talking about, he also had access to the best primary sources that were available in his time, written by contemporaries who were actually involved in the events he was interested in.

Tacitus's honesty, on the other hand, was connected to the time he lived in, the happy days of the reigns of the Roman emperors Nerva (c.30-98) and Trajan (53-117), who had brought an end to the terror that had held sway under emperor Domitian (51-96), when the Romans were 'deprived by espionage even of the intercourse of speaking and listening to one another'. Under Trajan, however, 'public security has not merely inspired our hopes and prayers but has gained the assurance of those prayers' fulfilment and, from this, strength'. Taken together, Tacitus's own experience, his access to the sources that mattered, and his honesty contributed to the reliability of his works.²⁸

Besides being honest, four other qualities characterise the good historian: erudition (*eruditio*), talent (*ingenium*), the power of judgement (*judicium*), and 'an enormous diligence' (*industria immensa*).²⁹ These qualities come in handy when delving into 'that vast variety of so many events' that is so 'pleasant' and so 'necessary' if one wants to make an 'important and right judgement about human affairs'.³⁰ To make this 'vast variety of so many events' accessible, some kind of order is wished for, preferably a chronological one. Placing all the pieces of the historical puzzle in the right chronological order, however, is a laborious and tedious work.³¹

²⁸ Tacitus, *Agricola*, II.3, and III.1. Quoted in Boxhorn, "Oratio, cum Cornelii Taciti interpretationem aggrederetur", pp. 387-88 [391-92]. English translations quoted from Tacitus, *Agricola* and *Germany*. Translated with an Introduction and Notes by Anthony R. Birley (Oxford University Press; Oxford, 1st ed. 1999, 2009), p. 4.

²⁹ So we read in Boxhorn's letter to Magnus Gabriel de la Gardie of May 1643. Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, p. 204. 'Eruditio quippe et ingenium, iudiciumque, ac industria immensa, quae ut egregiae omnis disciplinae, ita hujus primis omnium prudentissimi Scriptores suam fecere possessionem ...' 'Hujus' in this sentence is most likely to refer to history, since the topic of the letter is the value of Tacitus's historical works in offering advice in matters of state. These advices were drawn from history. During the reign of queen Christina of Sweden (1644-1654), Magnus Gabriel de la Gardie (1622-1686) was one of the leading Swedish nobles. Later he became the head of the Privy Council of king Charles X (1654-1660).

³⁰ Boxhorn, *Oratio inauguralis ... cum ... historiarum professionem aggrederetur*, p. 7. 'Quid enim, rogo vos, iucundius, & gravi rectoque de hominum rebus iudicio magis necessarium, illa tam vastâ, tam profutura vobis, tot rerum varietate?'

³¹ In his letter to Mogge of February 8, 1638, Boxhorn expresses the difficulties he encountered in putting all the events that had occurred during the siege of Breda and the year 1637 in a good chronological order. Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, p. 104. 'Accedit de Bredana obsidione, spissum ac lentum opus, quod ut gloriae saeculi est destinatum, ita in singular serio, & accurate exquirenda totum me impendo. Operosae diligentiae res est, nec minus invidiae se cum trahit, praesertim temporum gesta fide Annalium complecti.' Not every work of history needs to be composed according to a right chronological order. In a letter to Pontanus, December 20, 1632, Boxhorn defends the works of the Roman historians Florus and Velleius Paterculus (c.19 BC-c.31) against the critique that they had not compiled their work along chronological lines. Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, p. 20. 'Florum sub minibus habet [i.e. Salmasius-JN]. Totus in eo est, ut florentissimi illius scriptoris admissos passim in Chronologia errors indicet, atque emendet. Quanquam me quidem sententia, eo nomine Floro adeo non sit insultan-

Another problem facing the historian is a lack of sources. With regard to the earliest of times this lack constitutes a real problem. All the more so, since Boxhorn believes that in order to truly understand historical events, it is necessary to unearth their origins.³² Thus, the understanding of European history has been greatly damaged because of ‘that long period of time ... that lies between the sixth and tenth century of the Christian era’, a period ‘almost devoid of any memory of [public] events, or corrupted by mere fables’, ‘where, as it were, the first foundations of most of the kingdoms and commonwealths have been laid, which are now being celebrated throughout the whole of Europe as the principal and most prosperous [ones]’.³³ ‘The true beginnings of the principal nations of especially our Europe’ have ‘disappeared by the silence of the annals or miraculously corrupted by old wives tales and ridiculous fables.’ It is therefore no surprise that ‘even the origins of the most famous peoples are often obscure’.³⁴

dum, qui compendium hoc, sive potius florilegium Historiae Romanae, non juxta accuratum temporis seriem, sed, declamatorum more, per capita quaedam, et locos communes digessit. Sic uno eodemque capite omnium pene seditionum Historias complexus est, inter quarum nonnullas saeculorum aliquot intervallum est. idem etiam à Velleio Paterculo factum videmus, qui subinde in unam pagellam rejectit quidquid ad idem argumentum spectaret.’

³² Boxhorn, “Dedication to the States General”, in idem, *Nederlantsche historie*, v-vi. ‘Nothing is more useful for the right and thorough understanding of even the truth, than to turn up and to have a careful look at these first if small origins, from which, however, like the outcome has amply shown, great and wonderful changes, above and against all expectations, have emanated.’ In the text Boxhorn comments that ‘while the big and outpouring rivers are seen and known by many, only a few [have seen and know] their first birth and origin’. In other words, the historian has to go ‘ad fontes’. Boxhorn, *Nederlantsche historie*, p. 8. Vossius recommended the same approach. ‘It is not enough that we should explain the immediate causes of an event; we must often go back to more ancient times, from which the rest of what happened flowed as from a fountain.’ Wickenden, *G.J. Vossius and the Humanist Concept of History*, p. 126. From Vossius, *Ars historica*, p. 26. ‘Nec satis est, causas rei proximas exponamus: sed saepe ascendendum ad antiquiora tempora, unde caetera, tamquam a fonte, fluxerunt.’ Heinsius told his students that ‘the political man’ needed to follow the same procedure. See chapter 3. There is an undeniable Aristotelian ring to this stand. See, for example, Aristotle, *Politics*, 1252a1 [I:2], pp. 11-12. ‘He who thus considers things in their first growth and origin, whether a state or anything else, will obtain the clearest view of them.’ But see also Tacitus, *The Annals*, IV.32.2, p. 137. ‘It will nevertheless not be without benefit to have gained an insight into what at first sight are trivialities, from which the movements of great affairs often spring.’

³³ Boxhorn, *Oratio inauguralis ... cum ... historiarum professionem aggrederetur*, p. 14. ‘Quoties ego illud longi temporis spatium cogito (cogito autem saepissime) quod inter sextum aerae Christianae saeculum & decimum intercedit, omni propemodum rerum tunc gestarum memoria viduatum, aut solis fabulis corruptum, totum illud pene periisse nobis intelligo. Quae jactura tanto major est, Auditores, quia illa haec sunt tempora, quibus jacta constat plerumque regnorum ac Rerumpub, quae per Europam nunc omnem praecipua & florentissima celebrantur, prima quasi fundamenta.’ For historians of Dutch history the problem is even worse, because there are no sources written before the tenth century. Boxhorn, “Dedication to the States of Holland”, in idem, *Theatrum*, i. See also Boxhorn’s dedication to the States of Zeeland in Reygersberch, *Chronick van Zeelandt*, Vol. 1, ii.

³⁴ Idem, *Originum Gallicarum liber*, pp. 4-5. ‘Origines celeberrimarum etiam gentium ut plerumque obscurae sunt, ita in iis eruendis operae multum ac studii praeclarae ingenia olim hodieque merito posuere. Ceterum cum desint fere, & jam pridem defuerint, paria aut proxima earum initiis scriptorum, aut alia antiquitatis monumenta, fit, ut saepius incerta pro compertis, & falsa pro veris in medium adferantur. Auctas enim florentesque vetustissimorum populorum res plurimi, primas origines nulli, vel serius, & incerti, aut delusi fabulis, tradidere. Qua de re identidem & serio cogitanti mihi, visum est

Confronted with a vast variety of events, on the one hand, and a lack of sources, on the other, the student of history 'must stick to those [writings] from which, by making a comparison between our times and those old times, the true causes, the origins, and the advancements, and also the downfalls of indeed all the migrations and changes ... can be discerned at a single glance'.³⁵ Boxhorn does not mention, however, how this comparison between his times and 'those old times' should be made.

The many works that Boxhorn devoted to Dutch history make clear that Boxhorn had a preference for contemporary and 'national' history. That preference can also be seen reflected in his letters. For example, in one of his letters Boxhorn praises Willem de Bont, the bailiff of Leiden, because De Bont 'always examines the history of the fatherland more closely, especially [the history] of these times. What must be praised all the more, when it is of more use'.³⁶ For the same reason Wilhelm Goes receives praise from Boxhorn, 'because you have an accurate knowledge of the law, of the human sciences, and of the history of [our] fatherland. That knowledge makes for a correct judgement'.³⁷ In a letter to Gabriel Oxenstierna (1618-1647), Boxhorn puts it more firmly. 'He, who has only paid attention to antiquity, passes a bad judgement on this age'.³⁸

In his oration Boxhorn's preference for contemporary history and 'national' history is accompanied by critique on the ancient Greeks and Romans. While in the first part of the oration Boxhorn concentrates on the value of history,

diligenter & accurate circumspicere, qua potissimum alia ratione in hac vetustissimorum temporum nocte facem aliquam accendere, & praecipuarum Europae maxime nostrae, nationum vera exordia, annalium vel oblitterata silentio, vel anilibus & ridiculis narrationibus mirum in modum corrupta, aliquando proferre liceret.'

³⁵ Idem, *Oratio inauguralis ... cum ... historiarum professionem aggrediretur*, pp. 11-12. 'Nam quemadmodum qui calculus ponunt, non tam illorum, quam eius quod ex illis conficitur potissimum habent rationem, ita indaganti res gentium ac tradenti iis potissimum, & serio ac diligenter, inhaerendum est, ex quibus, instituta nostrorum cum vetustis illis temporum comparatione, migrationum mutationumque adeo omnium, quae multiplices & plerisque, plerarumque saltem & nobilissimarum passim gentium, hactenus non observatae sunt, verae causae, origines, atque incrementa, etiam occasus, statim possint agnosci.'

³⁶ Boxhorn in a letter to Willem de Bont. Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, pp. 67-68. 'Non ingratum certe futurum tibi, opinor, qui in res patriae, praesertim horum temporum, propius semper inquiris. Quod tanto magis laudandum est, quando plus habet utilitatis.' The letter in question is not dated and is in fact Boxhorn's dedication to the *Apologia*. See Boxhorn, *Apologia*, p. 184.

³⁷ Boxhorn in a letter to Wilhelm Goes, November 1640. Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, p. 166. 'Nam in te & juris, & humaniorum litterarum, & rerum patriae exacta peritia, eaque iudicii rectitude est.' Boxhorn is here probably addressing Wilhelm Goes, lord of Bouckhorst, who was a member of the court of Holland. Another option could be Wilhelm Goes, the husband of Daniel Heinius's daughter Elizabeth, who was a well-known lawyer at the time. Ter Horst, *Daniel Heinsius*, p. 75.

³⁸ Boxhorn in a letter to Gabriel (Gabrielsson) Oxenstierna, February 24, 1639. Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, p. 129. 'Cum male de hoc saeculo iudicet, qui ad vetus tantum adtendit.' Gabriel Oxenstierna was a son of baron Gabriel Oxenstierna (1587-1640), the brother of the Swedish Chancellor Axel Oxenstierna (1583-1654), who, after the death of king Gustavus Adolphus (1594-1632), practically ruled Sweden. Gabriel Jr. had studied in Leiden between 1637 and 1639, where he probably had lived at Boxhorn's house, for whom he had a particular affection. Wrangel, *De betrekkingen tusschen Zweden en de Nederlanden op het gebied van letteren en wetenschap*, pp. 170-71.

especially for future office-holders, the last part is devoted to the vindication of Europe's Germanic past.³⁹ 'Let Greece and Rome boast about the magnitude of their past, so much and as long as it pleases [them]. Yes, they are famous because of [their] mighty deeds, but they are arrogant and false. They have ruled over a smaller area, than the North of Germany or our Europe, "that womb of races and hive of nations", as Jordanes says, nor was their rule just as consistent.'⁴⁰ Paraphrasing Tacitus, the 'best of historians', Boxhorn continues that 'the Greeks and the Romans only admired their own'.⁴¹ Not only the ancient Germans had fell victim to this kind of 'injustice', but also 'some other very famous peoples', like the ancient Egyptians.

What kingdom was once more powerful or more renowned than that kingdom of the Egyptians? Once it held the people of God captive and was subjected to a very majestic lineage. The empire of that people, which once extended over the whole of Asia and a great part of Europe, is almost forgotten.⁴²

³⁹ In his oration Boxhorn addresses himself to his German audience. As we have seen in chapter 3, a large part of the student population at Leiden during Boxhorn's lifetime consisted of Germans.

⁴⁰ Boxhorn, *Oratio inauguralis ... cum ... historiarum professionem aggrediretur*, p. 9. 'tactent magnitudinem rerum suarum Graecia & Roma, illae quidem ingentibus factis inclytae, sed superbae & mendaces, quantum, & quamdiu lubet, arctius ab iis, quam Germaniae aut Europae nostrae Septentrione, vagina illa, ut iste loquitur, gentium & officina nationum, neque tantâ rerum constantia, imperatum est.' The quotation is from Jordanes, *The Gothic History of Jordanes*, IV.25, p. 57. See for this quotation also chapter 6.

⁴¹ *Ibidem*, p. 12. 'Et Graeci ac Romani, ut maximus auctorum, ubi de excessu Arminij, invicti quondam Germanorum ducis, magnifice loquitur, sua tantum admirabantur.' Boxhorn paraphrases Tacitus, *Annalium ab excessu divi Avgosti libri*, II.88. '... liberator haud dubie Germaniae et qui non primordia populi Romani, sicut alii reges ducesque, sed florentissimum imperium lacessierit, proeliis ambiguus, bello non victus. septem et triginta annos vitae, duodecim potentiae explevit, caniturque adhuc barbaras apud gentis, Graecorum annalibus ignotus, qui sua tantum mirantur, Romanis haud perinde celebris, dum vetera extollimus recentium incuriosi.' Tacitus, *The Annals*, p. 82. 'The liberator of Germany without a doubt, and one who challenged not the formative stages of the Roman people, like other kings and leaders, but the empire at its most flourishing, equivocal in battles but not defeated in war, he consummated thirty-seven years of life, twelve of power, and is still sung among barbarian races, though unknown to the annals of the Greeks, who marvel only at their own, and not celebrated duly in the Roman, since we extol the distant past, indifferent to the recent.'

⁴² *Ibidem*, pp. 12-13. 'Caeterum & eadem injuria alias quoque, nec non nobilissimas, afflixit nationes. Quod majus aut celebrius olim illo Aegyptiorum regno? quod & populum Dei captivum aliquando habuit, & gravissimae domus fuit servitutis. Ejus gentis imperium Asiam olim omnem, & magnam Europae partem exprorectum pene ignotatur.' To proof his point, Boxhorn proceeds by quoting Tacitus, *The Annals*, II.60.3-4, where Germanicus, adoptive son of Tiberius, is traveling through Egypt. 'Then he [Germanicus-JN] visited the vast vestiges of old Thebes. And on the massive structures there remained Egyptian letters, summarising its former wealthiness: one of the priest' elders, ordered to interpret his native language, reported that seven hundred thousand men of military age had once lived there and that with that army King Rhamses – having gained control of Lybia, Ethiopia, and the Medes and Persians, the Bactrian and Scythian, and the lands which the Syrians, Armenians, and adjacent Cappadocians inhabit – had held under his command the area from the Bithynian sea on the one side to the Lycian on the other. Also read out were the taxes imposed on various peoples, the weight of silver and gold, the number of weapons and horses, and gifts of ivory and perfumes to the temples, and the amounts of grain and of all the comestibles which each nation paid – contributions no less magnificent than those that are now at the bidding of the Parthians' might or Roman powerfulness.' Tacitus, *The Annals*, p. 71.

The stage is now set for an attack on the theory of the four monarchies.⁴³

Those people, who up to now, like most people, have limited the greatness of the most important subject within the boundaries and narrow passages of a worthless and pedagogical observation, or contemplation, or, what is more likely, imitation, with their fabrications of only four monarchies, [namely] those monarchies of the Assyrians and the Persians, and [those] of the Greeks or Macedonians, and [those] of the Romans, will find among the Egyptians something that is unnoticed to be amazed about.⁴⁴

The ancients, then, are not perfect, nor has 'worthless imitation' any value. Boxhorn's critique of the Greeks and the Romans is accompanied by a positive appreciation of Dutch and German history. 'It is of the greatest importance to you that our history is just as much shown to you as Roman and Greek history.'⁴⁵ With this statement Boxhorn puts Dutch and German history on par, at least in terms of importance, with Roman and Greek history, which were much venerated in his time. But this is not all. The areas of the past

⁴³ The theory of the four monarchies is based upon the Old Testament book of Daniel. The second part of the book contains the visions of Daniel, a Hebrew exile at the court of the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar (first half sixth century BC) concerning the end of times. In these visions Daniel had seen four animals that corresponded to four kingdoms that would be on earth until 'the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever'. Daniel, 7:18. According to the explanation of Jerome (c.347-419/20) of the book of Daniel (VII.1-8), the four monarchies corresponded with the empires of the Assyrians, the Persians, the Macedonians, and the Romans. The Roman Empire would be the last 'world monarchy' before Christ would return to earth and install his kingdom that would last forever. Augustine (354-430) paid lip service to this explanation (*De civitate Dei*, XX.23), although he did not follow it exclusively. During the Reformation the theory gained a new popularity, thanks to, amongst others, the work of the German Lutheran historian John Sleidan (1506-1566). Donald R. Kelley, "John Sleidan and the Origins of History as a Profession", in *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 52, No. 4 (1980), pp. 580-81, 596. However, the theory also suffered heavy criticism, most notoriously at the hand of Jean Bodin. Burrow, *A History of Histories*, p. 313, and Grafton, *What was History?*, pp. 167-68. Hermann Conring ridiculed the conventional explanation of the book of Daniel, claiming that 'the whole idea that there will be only four great monarchies or world empires is more a rumor than a fact'. Hermann Conring, *Discursus Novus de imperatore Romano-Germanico* (1642), chap. 54. Quoted from Fasolt, *The Limits of History*, p. 162. Petrus Valckenier would dismiss the theory of the four monarchies outright; for Valckenier, the four monarchies, including the Roman Empire (which, contemporaries thought, still existed in the conformation of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation), did not exist any more. Valckenier, 't *Verwerd Europa*, p. 26.

⁴⁴ Boxhorn, *Oratio inauguralis ... cum ... historiarum professionem aggrederetur*, p. 13. 'Qui hactenus, ut plerique, solas quatuor monarchias, Assyriorum illas & Persarum, & Graecorum sive Macedonum, atque Romanorum commentis, intra futillis & paedagogicae sive observationis, sive meditationis, aut, quod potius credendum est, imitationis terminus ac angustias summae rei amplitudinem continuere, quod inobservatum admirarentur in Aegyptiis inveniunt.'

⁴⁵ *Ibidem*, pp. 14-15. 'In quam ego curam tanto alacrior incumbam, quia vestra maxime interest non minus nostrarum vobis rerum, quam Romanarum Graecarumque memoriam representari.' As noted in footnote 39 above, Boxhorn addresses in this oration on history his German audience. Since it is likely that his audience also consisted of Dutch hearers and since the Dutch were seen at the time as belonging to the German peoples or as descendants from Germanic tribes, the 'our' in this sentence refers probably to both Dutch and German history.

that Boxhorn believes are of interest to his audience go even beyond Dutch and German history. Boxhorn also wishes that ‘the many changes of Asian and Oriental history after the fall of the Roman Empire shall [also] be learned more closely’.⁴⁶ For Boxhorn, then, the student or researcher of history should not only concentrate on the legacy of the Bible and the ancient Greeks and Romans, but should extend his view so that it would comprise almost the entire world. This, more than anything else, seems to be Boxhorn’s message on history, and the way it should be read and taught.

With such a Herculean task to fulfil, the silence on methodological issues in Boxhorn’s inaugural oration on history and in his letters becomes painfully clear. What tools, for example, are at the historian’s disposal to unearth the past? On what sources should the historian rely? The obvious answer would be sources with an unquestionable reliability.⁴⁷ But how can the historian determine the reliability of his sources? And how should the historian deal with the lacunae in his sources? In an attempt to answer some of these questions we will now have to take a look at some of Boxhorn’s historical works in order to see how Boxhorn actually conducted history.

Dutch history⁴⁸

The military and economic success of the Dutch Republic which enabled it to stand its ground against such formidable opponents as the king of Spain, the king of England, and the king of France is seen reflected in the large body of regional studies that appeared in the Dutch Republic in the course of the seventeenth century. These works tended to eulogise the fatherland (*patria*), to praise its present condition and to glorify its past. They express a new consciousness and pride of prowess and success. In the province of Holland there

⁴⁶ Ibidem, p. 15. ‘Utinam quoque (nam & plura sunt, quae desidero) Asiae ac Orientis rerum tot, post Romani imperii occasum, mutationes propius cognoscerentur?’ Boxhorn looked at Jacob Golius to fulfil this wish. See also chapter 3.

⁴⁷ See Boxhorn, “Preface of the author, in which an account is given of the intention [of the author]”, in idem, *Historia universalis*, iii.

⁴⁸ I use the term ‘Dutch’ here, and its Latin equivalent ‘Belgica’, in the broad sense as most contemporaries understood the term: namely to indicate that large amalgam of seventeen provinces that had once belonged to the House of Habsburg. Thus, we can give the *Theatrum* a place in seventeenth-century Dutch historiography. However, we have to keep in mind that contemporaries, both inside the Netherlands and abroad, did not reason *vice versa*. That is, they did not consider something that belonged to, or that was characteristic of, a certain province, as an asset or a characteristic of all seventeen provinces. Here, Cornelis Pieterszoon Hooft (1547-1626), the father of the famous playwright, poet, and historian Pieter Corneliszoon Hooft, comes to mind, who considered all non-Hollanders as ‘foreigners’. Gilbert, “Hooft as Historian and Political Thinker”, p. 137.

was a constant stream of publications that centred on Holland's newly won prosperity, or that of one of its towns, and that tried to give them a respectable historical background in order to provide them with the two attributes that counted the most in the seventeenth century: antiquity and continuity.⁴⁹ Boxhorn's *Theatrum Hollandiae* can be counted among these publications.⁵⁰

Like many of the regional studies that appeared in the seventeenth century, the *Theatrum* is a historical-topographical work along the line of the *Italia Illustrata* (*Italy Illuminated*, 1474) of Flavio Biondo (1392-1463) and the *Descriptione di tutti i Paesi Bassi* (*Description of the Low Countries*, 1567) of Ludovico Guicciardini (1521-1589). These historical-topographical works, or chorographies, tried to combine a 'Livian narrative' with a 'Varronian erudition', that is, a historical narrative written in accordance with the literary standards of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century humanism mixed with the scholarly approach and findings of an 'erudite antiquarianism'.⁵¹ The most distinctive characteristics of this antiquarianism can be briefly summed up as followed: a concern with origins, in particular of customs, languages, and peoples; a specific interest in non-political subject-matters, such as church or monistic history; a search for, and use of, ruins, coins, inscriptions, and the like; the importance of knowing, using, and studying primary sources such as church inventories, eyewitness accounts, and town charters; and an endless endeavour for reliable documentation.⁵²

The *Theatrum* is a typical product of this mixture of 'humanistic narrative' and 'antiquarian erudition'. It consists of two parts: the first eight chapters deal with topics such as the origin of the name of Holland, the topography of the province, and the character of its inhabitants. The remainder of the work is devoted to the descriptions and histories of some thirty of Holland's most important towns, discussed in the traditional order of seniority and impor-

⁴⁹ See, for example, E.O.G. Haitsma Mulier, "De zeventiende-eeuwse stadsbeschrijvingen van Amsterdam", in *Amstelodamum: maandblad voor de kennis van Amsterdam*, Vol. 85 (1998), pp. 107-15.

⁵⁰ Initially Boxhorn had thought of another name: 'Amphitheatre or Accurate Description of the County and the Towns of Holland'. Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, p. 9. 'Amphitheatrum, sive Accurata descriptio Comitatus et Urbium Hollandiae.' In 1634 a Dutch version of the *Theatrum* appeared at Amsterdam, whose full title reads: *Toneel ofte beschryvinge Der Steden van Hollandt Waer in haer Beginselen, Voortganck, Privilegien, Historie ende Geleghentheit veroot worden int Latyn beschreven by Marcus Zuerius Boxhornius Int Nederlands outgeset uyt de Copye, by den Autheur uerbetert, ende merckelyck en vermeerderd, door Geeraerdt Baerdeloos*.

⁵¹ Kelley, "Humanism and History", p. 242; Haitsma Mulier, "De zeventiende-eeuwse stadsbeschrijvingen van Amsterdam", p. 108; Langereis, *Geschiedenis als ambacht*, pp. 174-75.

⁵² See Ernst Breisach, *Historiography: Ancient, Medieval and Modern* (The University of Chicago Press; Chicago/London, 1st ed. 1983, 1994), pp. 193-95; Parry, *The Trophies of Time*, pp. 9-12; Langereis, *Geschiedenis als ambacht*, pp. 25-52; Reginald de Schryver, "De eruditie: betrouwbaarheid door geleerdheid", in Tollebeek, Verschaffel and Wessels (eds.), *De palimpsest*, Vol. 1, pp. 45-62. For early modern antiquarianism in general, see chapter 2.

tance.⁵³ The *Theatrum's* methodological principle is neatly summarised in the first chapter: 'the words themselves are accustomed to leading us to the real knowledge of things.'⁵⁴ True to his humanist education, then, Boxhorn's intention is to find out the real meaning of the words in order to get to 'the real knowledge of things'. He does so by applying the critical philological techniques available to him, although, it must be said, not so accurate and meticulously as his tutors did, the esteemed scholars and antiquarians Petrus Scriverius and Johannes Isacius Pontanus.⁵⁵

In short, Boxhorn's approach in the *Theatrum* comes down to this: first, he discusses the different opinions of ancient and modern scholars on the meaning of certain words, the origins of peoples or customs, or the dates of certain documents. Then he sets forth his own opinion, scrutinising the evidence by cross examining the available documents with other sources and authors that are closest in time, connecting disputed dates with chronological undisputed facts (e.g. the reign of some emperor or pope), and tracing words to their most likely etymological origin by comparing words of different European languages, old and new, and tracing the development of their meaning in time. This is accompanied by a hostile attitude towards those scholars that trace the names of towns or areas to such legendary figures as Bato, the supposed founder of Batavia.⁵⁶

⁵³ Thus, first comes a description of Dordrecht, then Haarlem, Delft, Leiden, Amsterdam, Gouda, Rotterdam, etc. There are some small differences between the Latin version of 1632 and the Dutch version of 1634. First, many poems that are attached to the descriptions of the towns in the Latin version of 1632 do not reappear in the Dutch version of 1634. Second, the Dutch version of 1634 contains more copies of documents, especially of town-privileges. Third, in the Dutch version of 1634 the descriptions of the towns Willemstad, Geertvliet, and Heenvliet have been left out.

⁵⁴ Boxhorn, *Theatrum*, p. 3 'Solent enim, uti docent Sapientes, ipsa nomina nos deducere in solidam cognitionem rerum.' In his oration on the value of history, Vossius made the same connection. Vossius, *De historiae utilitate oratio*, p. 2. 'Principiò penitus evellendus error, qui multorum animos insedit; perire, & potiori doctrinae rerum decedere, quicquid temporis, verbis impenditur. Atqui, ut sapientissimè à magno illo Stagirita olim dictum, vocabula sunt notae eorum, quae animo concepimus; conceptus, signa rerum: ut verba qui aspernantur ad rerum scientiam sibi iter praecludant. Praeterea non cogitant homines, cum literaturae partes sint duae, quarum in verbis una consistit, altera in rebus; non seorsim illam verborum parari, sed conjungi utramque.' The Stagirite is, of course, Aristotle, who discussed this relation between words and the meaning of things in his *Organon*.

⁵⁵ In the preface to the Reygersberch's chronicle Boxhorn admitted that much and apologised for the mistakes he had made in the *Theatrum*. Boxhorn, "Preface to the reader", i. Arnoldus Buchelius, the antiquarian from Utrecht, had several comments on the *Theatrum*. See Langereis, *Geschiedenis als ambacht*, pp. 186-87.

⁵⁶ Boxhorn, *Theatrum*, p. 95. 'De Dorotheo igitur illo viro, ut ipse [i.e. Joannes Gerbrandus -JN] vocat, nominatissimo, nihil certi habent nostri annales. Metuo ne fit a fabula & illorum haeresi, qui ubi Batonem Bataviae, Zialandum Zelandiae, Metellum Middelburgi, Vlisssem, Vlissingae, Syringum Siriczeae, Rotterum Rotterodami conditores, ipsi sibi, pessimo exemplo pepere, cornicum oculos confixisse se putant. Quae pestis superioris saeculi litteratos, si Dis placet, ita invasit, ut ex eorum cerebro, tamquam equo Trojano, innumeri prodierint ejuscemodi nunquam nati Heroes. Hoc pestilens sydus & politissimum illum Hadrianum Iunium quoque adflavit: qui Dordrechtum non Dorothe, sed Dureti cujusdam, gentilitia nota insignis olim viri, forum fuisse conjicit, cujus Historiis nostris, sed obscuram & exilem fieri mentionem tradit.'

As we have seen above, the lack of evidence constituted a real problem for the historian. In his preface to the States of Holland, to whom he had dedicated the *Theatrum*, Boxhorn expressed this problem and its consequences. Because there were hardly any sources left that were written prior to the tenth century it was hard to say anything about Holland's past. This had some major implications. It meant that 'the first infancy' of 'the extent and reign' of the States of Holland 'was covered in very thick clouds'.⁵⁷ This obscurity probably explains why Boxhorn, unlike most of his contemporaries, among whom most notably Hugo Grotius and his own tutor Petrus Scriverius, hardly pays any attention to Holland's famous Batavian past.⁵⁸ Thus, in the *Theatrum* we find hardly any traces of the so-called 'Batavian myth', the idealised view on the Batavian past of the Low Countries, which held that the Batavians, who were seen as the direct ancestors of the Dutch, had been a civilised and politically independent people, the one exception maybe being Erasmus's adage *Auris Batava* (*Batavian Ear*) that Boxhorn quotes at length.⁵⁹ Instead Boxhorn concentrates on the development of the county from the tenth century onwards, taking the installation of the first count as his point of departure.

The history of the county of Holland begins with the elevation of Dirk I (+939) to count of Holland. Dirk owed his elevation to his valliant efforts against the invading Normans, for which he was rewarded by the Frankish king Charles the Simple (879-929) with a piece of property in fief.⁶⁰ Thanks to

⁵⁷ Idem, "Dedication to the States of Holland", i. 'Potuissent haud dubie de antiquitate vestra longe majora referre, nisi ea aliquando tempora fuissent, quibus res fortiter gerere, quam eas ad nepotes suos transmittere majores vestri maluerunt. Nempe cogitabant illustres illae animae, res publicas bene à se constitutas satis magna virtutis & gloriae suae apud posteros futura documenta. Adeo ut prima tractus & imperii vestri infantia densissimis tenebris sit involuta. Non tam quid olim fuerit, quam quid non fuerit ex iis, quae insequitis temporibus facta sunt, scimus. A nato Christo decem saecula sunt, priusquam de rebus in Hollandia gestis a majoribus vestris ad posteritatis memoriam litterarum beneficio transmittendis coeptum est cogitari.'

⁵⁸ See chapter 3.

⁵⁹ Boxhorn, *Theatrum*, p. 46. For the 'Batavian myth', see Ivo Schöffer, "The Batavian myth during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries", in J.S. Bromley and E.H. Kossmann (eds.), *Britain and the Netherlands*, Vol. 5: *Some Political Mythologies* (Walburg Pers; Zutphen, 1975), pp. 78-101; Mout, "Ideales Muster oder erfundene Eigenart", pp. 185, 187-93; Haitsma Mulier, "De Bataafse mythe opnieuw bekeken", pp. 349-56. See also the introduction to Grotius, *The Antiquity of the Batavian Republic*, pp. 8-14.

⁶⁰ Ibidem, pp. 76-77. To substantiate his view, Boxhorn presents his readers a copy of one of the four so-called 'royal charters' that can found in the abby of Egmond and that were one of the oldest documents on the beginnings of the county of Holland. The accuracy and authenticity of the copies of these four royal charters caused a lot of confusion and disputes. One of the reasons for this confusion was that two of the copies contained some mistakes considering the dates when these chartes were first issued. In Roman letters the charter of 922 had become the charter of 863, making it the oldest of the four charters (while in fact it was the second in line). This document came to be seen as the founding charter of the county of Holland. See for this error Kampinga, *De opvattingen over onze oudere vaderlandse geschiedenis*, pp. 134-43, and D.E.H. de Boer and E.H.P. Cordfunke, *Graven van Holland: portretten in woord en beeld (880-1580)* (Walburg Pers; Zutphen, 1995), pp. 13-22. Boxhorn seems to be confused. On the one hand, he followed the Dutch scholar and statesman Janus Doua (1545-1604) in claiming that the date 863 was wrong and that the Roman letters should not read DCCCLXIII (863), but DCCCCXIII

good government and loyal service, the German king Otto III (980-1002) gave this fiefdom, together with some other pieces of land and properties, to the (grand?)son of Dirk I, Dirk II (930-988), 'to be obtained thereafter in his own rights'.⁶¹ 'And in order that over the previously mentioned properties he possesses a free power to donate, share or to do with them what ever he would like, we have ordered by our authority that this commandment be written down, and be sealed by the mark of our ring.'⁶²

Whether the picture that Boxhorn draws of the early beginnings of the county of Holland and its first counts is true or false is a question with which I am not particularly concerned here. What is interesting is that it shows a close resemblance with the description of patrimonial rule that Boxhorn would give in the *De successione et iure primogenitorum*. First of all, the count was invested with his dignity by the Frankish king and the German emperor and not by the provincial States who are not even mentioned or referred to. Second, the first counts ruled without any participation of, or approval from, the States.⁶³ The count made the laws, granted privileges, and punished offenders. Furthermore, there is no sign or mentioning of any contract between the count and his subjects in these early times. Implicitly, then, Boxhorn slips sovereignty into the hands of the count who ruled over his subjects. These subjects were not the descendants of the ancient Batavians, but the descendants of the Normans, who had invaded Holland in the ninth century, a thesis for which

(913). On the other hand, he claimed that Dirk I 'acquired the county of Holland in the year 863'. Boxhorn, *Theatrum*, pp. 76-77. 'Didericus I Comitatum Hollandiae indeptus est anno 863.' Boxhorn's tutor Petrus Scriverius also stuck to the year 863. See Petrus Scriverius, *Beschrijvinghe van out Batavien met de antiquiteyten van dien* (Jan Janszoon; Arnhem, 1614), pp. 55-58, 80-82, and Tuynman and Roscam Abbing, "Two History Books that never appeared", pp. 86-98.

⁶¹ Ibidem, pp. 77-78. 'Exstat illustre Ottonis tertii Diploma, quo Diderico huic Comitatum, fiduciario hactenus titulo possessum, jure proprio deinceps obtinendum concedit.' In the Dutch version of 1634 it reads that all property formerly held as a fief was 'given as property' to Dirk II. Boxhorn, *Toneel ofte beschryvinge*, p. 6. '... tot eygendom gegeven.'

⁶² Ibidem, p. 78. 'Et ut de praedictis rebus liberam habeat potestatem donandi, commutandi, seu quidquid voluerit faciendi, hoc nostrae auctoritatis praeceptum conscribi, & annuli nostri impressione sigillari jussimus, manue propria subter firmavimus.' Boxhorn quotes here the fourth royal charter, given to the count of Holland by Otto III at Nijmegen, on August 25, 985. It must be said that in the Latin version of 1632 Boxhorn claims that this document must be deemed false, because Otto was only named emperor in 993, while the charter is from 985. 'Notandum est falsum esse Diploma hoc, ut ex anno, quo datum dicitur, satis evincimus. Otto enim tertius imperator demum factus est anno 993.' In the Dutch version of 1634, however, this warning is left out, perhaps because the document that Boxhorn quotes does not mention Otto III as emperor but as king, which Otto indeed was at that time.

⁶³ This is not entirely true. Boxhorn does give credit to the nobility, without whom the counts 'almost never undertook anything'. Boxhorn, *Theatrum*, p. 59. 'Nunc primam eorum originem innuisse suffecerit. Nobiles hic, si alibi, maximae semper auctoritatis & dignitatis fuere. Nihil fere moliebantur olim Comites, nisi ex eorum voluntate ac consensu: ut acta, monumentaque publica passim testantur.' This, however, must rather be seen as flattery than as a true recognition of the early importance of Holland's nobility, because only in the reign of count William III (1287-1337) is there in the *Theatrum* any mentioning of the nobles actually participating in government.

Boxhorn not only supplied etymological evidence, but also archeological findings such as coins, pots and pans, and excavated foundations of ancient buildings.⁶⁴ The first counts had conquered the Normans and had ruled over their descendants and the other inhabitants of the county whose rights and privileges were not described at all.⁶⁵

In the course of time, however, the political relationship between the count and his subjects changed. The count entered into discussion with his nobles and the delegates of the major towns about the most important issues concerning the province.⁶⁶ This change is reflected in the many town charters, which the counts, out of self-interest or out of benevolence, gave to towns. Presented in chronological order, they become lengthier over time, giving ever more rights to the towns.⁶⁷

⁶⁴ Boxhorn refused to acknowledge that the Normans had been utterly vanquished. According to him, they had remained in the possession of the land and were in fact the ancestors of the Hollanders. An opinion that, according to Boxhorn, had the approval of Scriverius. Boxhorn, *Theatrum*, p. 7. 'Credibile igitur est Nortmannos uno alterove saeculo, de quo accurate non constat, ante institutum Comitatum, has oras bello infestasse & occupasse, ac alios quidem eorum, qui ex Hallandia Daniae advenerant, Hollandos dictos, atque ab illis hanc, quam insedere, regionem; alios vero, qui Zailandia profecti sunt, Zailandos dictos, atque ab illis etiam hanc, quam incoluere, ditionem. Progressu vero temporis à Francorum Regibus bello impetitos, varia fortuna usos fuisse, nunc penitus expulsos, nunc partem Regionis illis ademtam. Initio autem principatus Diderici Comitis & serie & nomine primi, non ad internecionem usque deletos esse fugatosque, ut existimatum hactenus fuit, sed permansisse atque aborigines nostros. Quam meam sive conjecturam, sive sententiam mirum in modum probavi clarissimo doctissimoque Petro Scriverio, cui plurimum debent illustratae Bataviae Antiquitates, pluria adhuc debiturae.' There is no mentioning of the Batavians, the Hollanders' famous alleged ancestors.

⁶⁵ The early history of Holland continued to trouble Boxhorn. In the Reygersberch's chronicle Boxhorn excuses himself for the mistakes he had made in the past and claims that 'neither the emperors of the German empire, nor the kings of France ever had something to say about the princes of these countries'. Jan van Reygersberch, *Chroniick van Zeelandt, eertijds beschreeven door d'Heer Johan Reygersbergen, nu verbeterd, ende vermeerdert door Marcus Zuerius van Boxhorn*, Vol. 2 (Zacharias Roman; Middelburg, 1644), p. 16. '... noch den keyseren des Duytschen rijck, noch de koninghen van Vranckrijck, oyt yets te segghen ghehadt op de princen van dese landen.' Here, Boxhorn aligns himself with the thesis expressed by Hugo Grotius and Mathaeus Vossius (1610-1646), the son of Gerard Vossius. Both Grotius and young Vossius claimed that the States had elected Dirk I as count of Holland. In their view the four royal charters were false or they only expressed the resignation of a false claim made by the respective kings or emperors. Kampinga, *De opvattingen over onze oudere vaderlandsche geschiedenis*, pp. 130, 149-52.

⁶⁶ Thus, it was in collaboration with the nobles, the knights, and the towns of Holland and Zeeland that count William III exempted the nobles from paying toll. This exemption was William's reaction to the frictions that had arose between the nobles and the common people. Here we see the count acting as a broker between the different factions of society. Boxhorn, *Theatrum*, p. 60. It is also in the time of count William III that we for the first time hear of a gathering of the States. Only nobles and knights comprised these States. Boxhorn, *Theatrum*, p. 132. 'Anno mcccxx Wilhelmus quartus, re & cognomento bonus, celeberrima Comitum Harlemi indicij jussit. Ad quae ingens nobilium & procerum concursus factus est. Comites viginti numero, Barones centum, & mille Equites interfuisse illis dicuntur. Durabant autem diebus septem.' William IV (1307-1345) should be William III, who reigned from 1304-1337.

⁶⁷ In the *Theatrum* it are the counts who are the main actors behind the town charters. Thus, Boxhorn's view is 'top down'. In reality, however, the town charters were the result of a continuous interplay between incentives and initiatives from below (peasants and town-folk), and cooperation and steering from above (count and nobility). The crucial importance of the town charters was that they gave the towns administrative and judicial autonomy. The fact that it was the count who gave the town charters is a sign that Boxhorn attributed the count with sovereign power. See Peter Henderikx, "Graaf en stad in Holland en Zeeland in de twaalfde en vroege dertiende eeuw", in Reinout Rutte and Hildo

One charter Boxhorn mentions reflects the growing importance of wealth within Holland's urban communities. At Delft, Philip the Good of Burgundy (1396-1467) had issued a charter that stipulated that only the wealthiest and most honourable citizens (*Rijcxste, Eerbaerste, Notabelste, ende Vredelickste*) can sit on the town council (*vroedschap ende Rijkdom*) and that from among those only the wealthiest and most honourable can serve as alderman (*schepenen*) or burgomaster (*burgermeester*).⁶⁸

Town charters also redefined the relationship between the count and his subjects. They gave the towns of Holland certain rights which the count had to observe.⁶⁹ This changed political relationship is reflected in the oath of fidelity taken by both parties during the inauguration of Charles the Bold (1433-1477) as heir to his father Philip the Good as count of Holland on June 21, 1468. Charles swore to protect the Holy Church and to 'honour the rights and privileges once given by our ancestors', the nobles, knights, and towns of Holland and West-Friesland promised to recognise Charles as their lawful count and to assist him every time he needed help, which they were obliged to do 'according to law and reason'.⁷⁰

An important side effect of these charters was that they created the possibility of lawful resistance. If a count, or one of his representatives, deliberately violated the privileges and town charters that the count had sworn to uphold, the towns could defend themselves.⁷¹ This is precisely what happened when Philip II, in his attempt to enforce his religious policies on the Netherlands, oppressed his subjects, violated their rights, and deliberately hampered trade. He had violated Holland's 'public freedom' and was therefore deposed as count of Holland and Zeeland.⁷²

van Engen (eds.), *Stadswording in de Nederlanden: op zoek naar een overzicht* (Uitgeverij Verloren; Hilversum, 2005), pp. 47-62, and Hildo van Engen, "Geen schraal terrein: stadsrechten en het onderzoek naar stadswording", in *ibidem*, pp. 67-69.

⁶⁸ Boxhorn, *Toneel ofte beschryvinge*, p. 151. For the early development of the Dutch town councils, see Fruin, *Geschiedenis der staatsinstellingen*, pp. 68-74. According to Jonathan Israel, 'The Burgundian dukes, from the mid-fifteenth century onwards, had deliberately encouraged the development of closed regent oligarchies, reducing access to civic government and confining it to the hands of the richest segment of urban society'. Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, p. 125.

⁶⁹ Boxhorn's view on the changing relationship between the counts of Holland and their subjects shows a close resemblance with the theory of 'constitutional monarchy created by kings' that the English king James I had presented in a speech that he had made to Parliament on March 21, 1610. In this speech James I had explained that 'Kings in their first originall' had unlimited powers, but that in time they had given their subjects rights and had binded themselves 'by a double oath to the observation of the fundamentall lawes'. The result was that the powers of the 'settled Kings and Monarches, that doe at this time governe in civill Kingdomes' were limited. Quoted from Christianson, *Discourse on History, Law and Governance*, pp. 15-16.

⁷⁰ These two oaths do not appear in the 1632 Latin edition of the *Theatrum*, but in the 1634 Dutch edition. Boxhorn, *Toneel ofte beschryvinge*, pp. 57-58.

⁷¹ An early example is Boxhorn's discussion of the revolt of Dordrecht against baljuw Alundus (Aloud van Yerseke) and count John I (1284-1299) at the end of the thirteenth century. Boxhorn, *Theatrum*, pp. 100-1.

⁷² *Ibidem*, p. 86. 'Philippus III ob tyrannidem, & oppressam libertatem publicam, anno 1572, ab

On the other hand, illegal opposition to the person of the count or his rule could not find any justification in Boxhorn's view. In one of the big controversies in seventeenth-century Dutch historiography, namely the question if the murder of count Floris V (1254-1296) by the hands of the noblemen Geraerd van Velzen (†1296), Gijsbrecht van Amstel (c.1230-c.1303), and Herman van Woerden († c.1303) could be legitimised, Boxhorn sided with the count and explicitly condemned the murder of Floris V as an 'infamous assassination'.⁷³ Furthermore, Hollandisch towns that had resisted their count on illegal grounds had suffered just punishment, as in the case of Delft in 1359.⁷⁴ The political emancipation of the towns was not meant to undermine the count's power to rule but rather to give his rule a broader base against oppositional forces, both at home and abroad.⁷⁵

Besides this increasing political emancipation of the towns Boxhorn also detected a change in the character of the Hollanders. In the old days the Hollanders were 'rather simple'. 'Nowadays', Boxhorn claimed, 'the Hollanders exceed by far all other nations in cleverness and, during the planning and conducting of affairs, in diligence, dexterity, [and] prudence.' This change in character was the result of the commerce between the Hollanders, on the hand, and their neighbours and even faraway countries, on the other. Thanks to their favourable geographical position, their easy access to the sea, and

Hollandiae Ordinibus, judicatus est huic principatui suo excidisse.' In this context 'the oppressed public freedom' refers in the first place to the rights and privileges that were expressed in the town charters. In this reading Boxhorn was in line with his contemporaries. See Hans W. Blom, "The Great Privilege (1477) as 'Code of Dutch Freedom': the Political Role of Privileges in the Dutch Revolt and after", in Barbara Dölemeyer and Heinz Mohnhaupt (eds.), *Das Privileg in europäischen Vergleich*, Vol. 1 (Vittorio Klostermann; Frankfurt am Main, 1997), pp. 233-47; Martin van Gelderen and Wim Blockmans, "Het klassieke en middeleeuwse erfgoed: politieke vrijheid van de Romeinse Republiek tot de Bourgondische Nederlanden", in Haitsma Mulier and Velema (eds.), *Vrijheid: een geschiedenis van de vijftiende tot de twintigste eeuw*, pp. 21-25; Martin van Gelderen, "De Nederlandse Opstand (1555-1610): van 'vrijheden' naar 'oude vrijheid' en de 'vrijheid der conscientien'", in *ibidem*, pp. 27-39; G.O. van der Klashorst, "De ware vrijheid, 1650-1672", in *ibidem*, pp. 184-85; E.O.G. Haitsma Mulier, "Het begrip 'vrijheid' in de Nederlandse geschiedschrijving van de zeventiende tot de negentiende eeuw", in *ibidem*, p. 230; Martin van Gelderen, "'So Merely Humane': Theories of Resistance in Early-Modern Europe", in Annabel Brett and James Tully with Holly Hamilton-Bleakley (eds.), *Rethinking the Foundations of Modern Political Thought* (Cambridge University Press; Cambridge, 2006), pp. 156-57.

⁷³ *Ibidem*, p. 84. 'Caesus est Florentius infami parricidio à suis anno 1296, cum annis 42 & sub tutela, & per se praefuisset.'

⁷⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 163. The town of Delft had sided with the 'Hoekse' faction against duke Albrecht of Bavaria, brother of count William V, in whose name Albrecht reigned as 'ruwaard', since William was deprived of his mental senses and spend his days locked up in a cell for madmen. Delft had deliberately obstructed Albrecht's reign by, amongst others, arresting the officials that Albrecht had send from The Hague. In 1359 Albrecht appeared for Delft with a great army and took the town by storm. Delf was forced to pay a heavy fine and the town's castle and walls were reduced. De Boer and Cordfunke, *Graven van Holland*, p. 104.

⁷⁵ Many of the town charters are presented as gifts of the counts to the towns for their support in his struggles with rebellious noblemen or foreign aggressors, such as the duke of Brabant or the count of Flanders.

the many rivers that made for easy, vast, and cheap travel, commerce came almost naturally to the Hollanders. This commerce 'daily sharpened' the Hollanders 'just like whet-stones'. 'Because thus it is common that we take upon ourself the customs of them, with whom we frequently move about.'⁷⁶

Boxhorn was not unique in seeing this change. The young Hugo Grotius had also taken note of this in the *Parallelon rerumpublicarum* (*Comparison of Commonwealths*).⁷⁷ However, while Grotius had warned against the dangers of decadence and the loss of ancient virtues, Boxhorn only praised Holland's wealth and prosperity.⁷⁸ He believed that commerce and wealth benefitted both private individuals and the commonwealth.⁷⁹

Trade and prosperity were no dirty words for Boxhorn. On the contrary, they seem to be used as a yardstick alongside which the success of the towns of Holland is measured. Amsterdam ranked highest: it was the 'town of towns' (*urbs urbium*), the town that exceeded all other towns in multitude of people, merchandise and riches.⁸⁰ Amsterdam owed her prosperity not only to her favourable geographical location, but also to the many privileges the town had received over the years from the counts of Holland. In 1399, for example, the citizens from Amsterdam were exempted from paying toll by count Albert I (1336-1404) because of the loyalty they had showed to him during his war against the inhabitants of East-Frisia.⁸¹ His son William VI (1365-1417) granted Amsterdam the right to let its aldermen decide who could be a citizen of the town.⁸² And in 1456 Philip the Good issued a privilege that declared that ships passing to Amsterdam were exempted from paying toll, 'by which the resources of the town are substantially increased, as even now commerce and navigation flourishes ever more'.⁸³

The *Theatrum*, then, tells the story of the political and economic emancipation of a 'rather simple' people who had lived quietly and unnoticed under a count, to a clever and diligent people that had gained political 'freedom' and

⁷⁶ Boxhorn, *Theatrum*, pp. 46-47. 'Hodie certe Hollandi, quanto olim simpliciores, tanto solertiâ, & in rebus moliendis gerendisque industriâ, dexteritate, prudentia omnes alias gentes longius antistant: dum commercii, quae non modo cum vicinis suis, sed cum remotissimis nationibus, atque alio sole calentibus contrahere solent, velut cotibus, indies accuntur. Ita enim fieri solet, ut eorum mores induamus, quibuscum frequenter versamur.'

⁷⁷ Finished around 1602, the *Parallelon rerumpublicarum* was never published during Grotius's lifetime.

⁷⁸ Arthur Eyffinger, "Hugo Grotius' *Parallelon rerumpublicarum*", in Nellen and Trapman (eds.), *De Hollandse jaren van Hugo de Groot (1583-1621)*, pp. 91-92, and Meijer Drees, *Andere landen, andere mensen*, pp. 26-28, 47, 55, 59, 65-67.

⁷⁹ See chapter 4.

⁸⁰ Boxhorn, *Theatrum*, pp. 239, 252.

⁸¹ *Ibidem*, pp. 236-37.

⁸² *Ibidem*, p. 254.

⁸³ *Ibidem*. 'Quo opes civitatis, florentibus jam magis magisque commerciis & navigationibus, haud mediocriter auctae sunt.'

prosperity thanks to, and in the form of, town privileges that had grown ever more numerous as time had passed.⁸⁴ It was in defence of these privileges, the political independence they stood for, and the economic prosperity they had ensured that the Hollanders went to war with the king of Spain.⁸⁵

Less than a year after he had been given the task to hold public lectures on history, Boxhorn published the *Nederlantsche historie* (*Dutch History*, 1649).⁸⁶ In a letter to Constantijn Huygens he expressed his hopes that this work would give him a shot at the office of historiographer of the States General.⁸⁷ If this was his goal, then Boxhorn gave a bad performance. Instead of writing the book in eloquent Latin, he had written the book in Dutch, just like his contemporary Pieter Corneliszoon Hooft had done seven years before.⁸⁸ However, Boxhorn's *Nederlantsche historie* lacks Hooft's Dutch prose of the *Nederlandsche Historiën* (*Dutch Histories*, 1642).⁸⁹ Furthermore, the narrative in the *Nederlantsche historie* is obscured by the geographical and chronological distances that Boxhorn tries to cover. But beside these disadvantages the *Nederlantsche historie* has a lot to offer.

⁸⁴ In the *Institutiones politicae*, I.9, p. 131, Boxhorn admitted that the Dutch, while under their counts, had carefully saw to it that their fundamental rights were frequently augmented. As we have seen in the previous chapter, these fundamental rights were the privileges Philip II had sworn to uphold. In the next chapter we will see that these fundamental rights, embodied in privileges or charters, constituted the 'expressed freedom from obedience' [*expressa libertas obsequii*]. In his history of the Dutch Revolt Pieter Hooft explained that 'the independence of the nobles had gradually increased by military service while that of the towns by placidly complying with taxes'. P.C. Hooft, *Nederlandsche Historiën: een keuze uit het grote verhaal van de Nederlandse Opstand*. Samengesteld, hertaald en toegelicht door Frank van Gestel, Eddy Grootes en Jan de Jongste (Uitgeverij Bert Bakker; Amsterdam, 2007), p. 37. For a rather similar view on the political freedom gained by German cities, see Machiavelli, *Discorsi*, II.19.9-11.

⁸⁵ In certain cases Boxhorn made a direct connection between the institution of a new privilege and a town's economic prosperity. For example, after count William II (1228-1256) had granted the brewers of the town of Delft the privilege to buy hop from other people than the count himself against the payment of one 'stuiver' per ten barrels of beer, the wealth of the citizens of Delft had increased greatly. Boxhorn, *Theatrum*, p. 162. 'Hac Principis liberalitate brevi effectum est, ut ob cerevisiam ubique locorum expetitum, opes civium admodum auctae sint.' For Delft and its beer industry, see Douwe Wijnbenga, *Delft: een verhaal van de stad en haar bewoners*, Vol. 1 (Elmar; Rijswijk, 1984), pp. 26-27, 57-61. The theme that political freedom, expressed in privileges and town charters, and economic prosperity were closely connected and that therefore this freedom should be protected had already been forcefully expressed during the early years of the Dutch Revolt. Van Gelderen, "De Nederlandse Opstand (1555-1610): van 'vrijheden' naar 'oude vrijheid' en de 'vrijheid der conscientien'", pp. 31, 35.

⁸⁶ According to the catalogue of Boxhorn's books in Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, ii, the *Nederlantsche historie* was first published in 1644. This date can also be found in Van der Aa, *Biographisch woordenboek der Nederlanden*, p. 1125; Haitsma Mulier's supplement to Kampinga's *Opvattingen*, xviii; Haitsma Mulier, Van der Lem and Knevel, *Repertorium van geschiedschrijvers in Nederland, 1500-1800*, p. 65. However, 1644 is the wrong publication date. From a letter to Jacobus Basilius it becomes clear that Boxhorn was still in the process of writing the *Nederlantsche historie* in March 1649. Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, pp. 307-8.

⁸⁷ Augustus 9, 1649. Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, p. 308.

⁸⁸ Paulus Merula, Dominus Baudius (1561-1613), and Johannes Meursius (1579-1639), who had all occupied the office of historiographer of the States General, had all written their books in Latin.

⁸⁹ For the different meanings of the singular term 'historie' (history) and the plural term 'historiën' (histories) in early modern Dutch historiography, see Tom Verschaffel, "De dissertatie: onderzoek in een verlicht decor", in Tollebeek, Verschaffel and Wessels (eds.), *De palimpsest*, Vol. 1, p. 124.

In the *Nederlantsche historie* Boxhorn sets out to explain the Dutch Revolt against king Philip II of Spain. The immediate cause is easily indicated. The Revolt had ‘no other cause than the forced and wrested defence of our innocence and freedom’.⁹⁰ Dutch resistance had aimed at ‘no other price or reward, than the relief of its among many thousands of citizens banned, robbed, murdered, and from all sides violated and dishonoured freedom’.⁹¹ Thus, in the first instance the Revolt was about freedom (*haec libertatis*) and not religion (*haec religionis*).

But Boxhorn does not believe that the changes in the run-up to the Revolt are so easily comprehended. ‘... the change in religion and the worldly government in the Netherlands ... did not happen so suddenly.’⁹² Instead, ‘the present shape of the religious and also worldly affairs can best be judged from the area of the last past centuries’,⁹³ because ‘nothing is more useful for the right and thorough understanding of even the truth, than to turn up and to have a careful look at these first rather small origins, from which, however, like the outcome has amply shown, great and wonderful changes, above and against all expectations, have emanated’.⁹⁴ To truly understand these changes, the historian has to go ‘ad fontes’. ‘While the big and outpouring rivers are seen and known by many, only a few [have seen and known] their first birth and origin.’⁹⁵ The task of the historian is first to walk all the way up to the

⁹⁰ Boxhorn, *Nederlantsche historie*, pp. 4-5. ‘Eenen oorlooch, waer van ten laetsten geene andere oorsaeck is geweest als de opgedrongen ende afgeperste verdedinge van onse onnooselheit ende vryheit; scerpe ende geweldich druckende geboden der Vorsten, opgemaectt ende aenghepresen bij die, welcke in plaetste van de niet te verbreecken wetten, ingestelt ende heilichlijck besworen voor de vryheit, eene oneindelijcke ende onbepaelde heerschappye niet alleen van de Vorsten, maer oock van haer self, geweldichlijck sochten in te voeren; waer uyt met de tijdt gheboren sijn swaere ende bloedige vervolgingen, werdende van gequetste Goddelijcke ende Princelijcke Hoocheyt die beschuldicht ende aengesproocken, die daer aen gans niet schuldich waeren.’ The explanation is almost an exact copy of the one that can be found in the Dutch translation of Boxhorn’s *Oratio panegyrica de Belgarum pace*, making it likely that Boxhorn had translated and edited the Dutch translation himself. Boxhorn, “Oratie van de vrede”, p. 10. ‘Eenen oorlooch, waer van egeene andere oorsaeck is gheweest als de ophedrongen ende afgeperste verdedinge van onse onnooselheit ende vryheit; scherpe gheboden der Vorsten, ophemaectt ende aengepresen by die, welcke in plaetste van de niet te verbreecken wetten, opgesteld ende heylichlijck besworen voor de vryheydt, eene oneyndelijcke ende onbepaelde heerschappje niet alleen van de Vorsten, maer oock van haer self, gheweldichlijck sochten in te voeren; waer uyt onstaen sijn sware vervolginghen, werdende van gequetste Goddelijcke ende Conincklijke Hoocheydt die beschuldicht ende aengesproocken, die daer aen gans niet schuldich waeren.’ See also chapter 4.

⁹¹ *Ibidem*, p. 6. ‘... geene andere prijs oft loon, als alleen de ontsettinge van haere in vele dusenden der ingesetenen gebannen, beroofde, vermoorde ende aen allen kanten gesonden ende onteerde vrijheydt.’

⁹² Boxhorn, “Dedication to the States General”, v. ‘... veranderingen in de Godtsdienst ende het Weereltlijcke bestier in Nederlandt ... soo plotselijck niet gesciet wesen.’

⁹³ *Ibidem*, iii. ‘... dat van de tegenwoordige gestalte der geestelijcke ende oock weereltlijck saecken best geoordeelt kan werden uyt het bedrijf van de lest verleden eeuwen.’

⁹⁴ *Ibidem*, v-vi. ‘Tot rechte en grondige kennisse oock van de waerheid is niet dienstiger als op te staen ende naerstich in te sien dese eerste wel kleine beginselen, nemaer uyt de welcke, gelijk de uytcomste genoechsaem geleert heeft, groote ende wonderlijcke veranderingen, boven ende tegen aller verwachtinge, sijn voortgecomen.’

⁹⁵ Boxhorn, *Nederlantsche historie*, p. 8. ‘Want gelijk als de loop van groote ende sich verre uytstortende rivieren van velen gesien ende bekend werdt, maer der selver eerste geboorte ende oorspronck van weinige; alsoo is tot noch toe in het verhael van de Nederlandsche beroerten ...’

source of the river of past events to the time when the seventeen Dutch provinces came under the House of Burgundy and even beyond, and then to sail down again, explaining the events as they unfolded.⁹⁶ The *Nederlantsche historie* is Boxhorn's maiden voyage down that river.⁹⁷

Boxhorn traces the first origin of 'the change in religion and the worldly government in the Netherlands' to the twelfth century, to the time of emperor Frederick I Barbarossa (c.1123-1190). At that time Christianity was in a deep darkness. The 'pure teaching of the Apostels' had succumbed to 'the sudden and blindly accepted belief of the corrupted teaching of the See of Rome'.⁹⁸ It was at this religiously dark moment in time that the Waldensians, the followers of Peter Waldo († c.1205), a merchant from Lyon, made their first entrance into the Netherlands. The Waldensians had fled to the Netherlands on the run for the Church of Rome, who heavily prosecuted them because of their beliefs. They were attracted either by 'the peculiar freedom that they understood to belong to the inhabitants there; or the said and known character of this people', that is, the Dutch.⁹⁹

The arrival of the Waldensians in the Netherlands was quickly followed by that of inquisitory courts, newly instigated by the Church of Rome to suppress the Waldensians, who, as becomes clear, adhered to some kind of proto-Protestantism.¹⁰⁰ Boxhorn harshly criticises the inquisitory courts. In the first

⁹⁶ Most Dutch histories about the Dutch Revolt and the struggle that followed against the king of Spain all began their tale in the mid-sixteenth century, taking as their point of departure either the abdication of Charles V as lord of the Netherlands in 1555 or the 'miracle year' 1566. This goes for the *Belgische Ofte Nederlantsche Historie* (1599) of Emanuel Van Meteren (1535-1612), the *Oorsprongk, begin ende aenvang der Nederlantsche Oorloghen* (first three volumes in 1595, at the end of Bor's life the work consisted of thirty-seven books) of Pieter Bor (1559-1635), and the *Voornaemste Geschiedenissen in de Nederlanden ende elders* (published posthumously in 1626) of Everhard van Reyd (1550-1602). See A.E.M. Janssen, "A 'Trias Historica' on the Revolt of the Netherlands: Emanuel van Meteren, Pieter Bor and Everhard van Reyd as Exponents of Contemporary Historiography", in Duke and Tamse (eds.), *Clio's Mirror*, pp. 9-30. Grotius's *Annales et historiae* (published posthumously in 1657) starts in the year 1566 (as did Van Reyd's work). Waszink, "Tacitisme in Holland", p. 241. Just like Bor, Hooft begins in the year 1555. Boxhorn's approach is reminiscent of Hobbes's *Behemoth* (finished in 1668, first published in 1682), in which Hobbes traces the origins of the English civil wars to antiquity. Luc Borot, "Hobbes's *Behemoth*", in G.A.J. Rogers and Tom Sorell (eds.), *Hobbes and History* (Routledge; London, 2000), pp. 139-40.

⁹⁷ As can be gathered from the full title of the book, Boxhorn saw the *Nederlantsche historie* as the first volume of more to come. However, no further volumes followed, probably because Boxhorn did not obtain the office of historiographer of the States General. The complete title of the work reads: *Nederlantsche historie, eerste boeck, behelsende de eerste veranderingen in de Godsdienst ende leere, neffen de harde vervolgingen daer over ontstaen in de Nederlanden, voor ende tot de tijden toe van keiser Karel de Vijfde.*

⁹⁸ Boxhorn, *Nederlantsche historie*, p. 10. '... de suyvere Apostolische leere ... plotselijck ende blindelijck aengenomen geloove van de bedorven leere des stoels van Roomen ...'

⁹⁹ *Ibidem.* '... de sonderlinge vrijheit, die sij verstonden aldaer den ingesetenen toe te comen;'t sij de geseggelijcke ende bekende inborst van dit volck ...'

¹⁰⁰ To substantiate the view of the Waldensians as the predecessors of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Protestants, Boxhorn supplies the readers with some articles of faith. Thus, the Waldensians denounced the primacy of the bishop of Rome, pleaded for the destruction of images, and abhorred the worship of saints and the practices of Roman rituals. However, Boxhorn does not mention any sources. Boxhorn, *Nederlantsche historie*, pp. 12, 34-35.

place, and most obviously, they prosecuted adherents of the true faith, while spreading fear and enhancing superstition in the process. Boxhorn particularly singles out for attack the inquisitory courts's methods of interrogation: they were cruel and could in no manner be justified on Biblical grounds.¹⁰¹

Boxhorn's second point of criticism concerns the judicial procedures of the inquisitory courts. Or, to put it more precise, the breaking of these judicial procedures by the inquisitory courts. Boxhorn's discussion of the persecutions of witches in the town of Arras in the second half of the fifteenth century merits special attention in this case.¹⁰²

Trouble started in the year 1459 during the trial of a man named Robinet de Vaulx from the town of Langres. During his trial he accused a woman of Douay, who goes by the name of Denisetete, to be a 'vaudois'.¹⁰³ The inquisitor of Arras, the Jacobin Pierre le Breuffart, got wind of this accusation. He travelled to Douay and arrested Denisetete. After being read the laws of Douay Denisetete was brought to Arras, where she, under torture, confessed her sins. Her confession started an avalanche of accusations that soon enclosed every social strata of Arras, and in the end even targeted the duke of Burgundy.

The consequences of the witch trials proved to be disastrous. Soon the entire town of Arras was in the grips of fear. In their zeal, the inquisitors breached the laws: property was illegally confiscated 'not contrary to the privilege that those [citizens] of Arras have of old, with which they hold, that the property of a citizen of Arras may not be confiscated by the count of Artois. A privilege that they still daily honour'.¹⁰⁴ Another consequence was that 'the town of Arras acquired such an evil reputation ... that its merchants were refused lodging or credit out fear that, on the next day, they might be accused of witchcraft and lose all their possessions to confiscation'.¹⁰⁵ This insecurity, brought forward by the clergy's reign of terror over the town, lasted until 1491, when

¹⁰¹ The trial by water, for example, whereby the innocence of the defendant was tested by throwing the defendant in a river or lake with a heavy stone rapped to his body, originated from the old Germans, who were accustomed to throw bastard children in the Rhine. Here, Boxhorn explicitly links the inquisitory courts's methods to pagan practice in order to blacken the Roman Church. It also shows Boxhorn's interest in, and knowledge of, ancient customs and beliefs. Boxhorn, *Nederlantsche historie*, pp. 25-29.

¹⁰² Boxhorn attributes about fifty pages, almost one-fourth of the total amount of pages in the *Nederlantsche historie*, to this specific case. His primary source is the report of Jacques du Clercq (1424-c.1475), squire of Lord Beauvoir in Ternys, who lived in Arras at the time.

¹⁰³ Originally, 'vaudois' was the French word for an adherent of the teachings of Peter Waldo. In the fifteenth century it had become the common French word for magic or witchcraft. Johan Huizinga, *The Autumn of the Middle Ages*. Translated by R.J. Payton and Ulrich Mammitzsch (The University of Chicago Press; Chicago, 1996), pp. 288-90.

¹⁰⁴ Boxhorn, *Nederlantsche historie*, p. 73. '... niet tegenstaende het voordeel dat van outs die van Atrecht hebben, met welck sij staende houden dat eens burgers van Atrecht goet niet geconfisqueert mach werden door den Graeff van Artoys; Welck voordeel sij noch gelijk daegelijcx onderhouden.'

¹⁰⁵ *Ibidem*, pp. 58-59. Quoted from Huizinga, *The Autumn of the Middle Ages*, p. 289.

the Parlement of Paris finally decided to annul all further trials and previous sentences, and to restore the property that had already been confiscated.¹⁰⁶

The case of the witch trials at Arras is illustrative for the whole story that Boxhorn tries to tell in the *Nederlantsche historie*. Two central themes come forward in this story. The first theme is that of the danger of the clergy. They not only formed a threat to the true faith, but actually undermined the whole economic and political fabric of Dutch society. The source of the clergy's destructive force was their power over the people's minds. With their threats and curses of eternal damnation if the people would not obey them, they struck fear in the hearts of men, who were superstitious.¹⁰⁷ Therefore, the people preferred to pay the clergy above anyone else in order 'to obtain their favour'.¹⁰⁸ But the weakness and neediness of temporal rulers also played into the clergy's hands.¹⁰⁹ These three factors ensured that temporal rulers depended on the co-operation of the clergy for their rule. This dependence gave the clergy a strong bargaining position, which they abused for their own personal gain. Thus, it was possible for the abbot of Middelburg to impose his demands on count William II (1228-1256), who was at that moment also king of the Germans.¹¹⁰ The clergy also managed that they could only be judged by their peers in their own special courts, because the people thought that the clergy deserved special honour.¹¹¹ This greatly eroded the judicial power of temporal rulers, as did the fact that cloisters and monasteries were sanctuaries that did

¹⁰⁶ In 1226 the county of Artois was given by testament as an apanage to Robert (1216-1250), the second son of the French king Louis VIII (1187-1226). Through marriages and inheritances the county fell into the hands of the dukes of Burgundy. After the death of Charles the Bold, king Louis XI of France (1423-1483) tried to regain Artois, in which he succeeded with the Peace of Arras (1482), a peace treaty between him and Maximilian I of Austria (1459-1519), late husband of Mary of Burgundy (1457-1482), who was the only child and successor of Charles the Bold. Thus, in 1491, Artois and its capital town Arras fell directly under the French crown, which explains the authority of the Parlement of Paris to pass a verdict in the case of the Arras witch trials. With the Treaty of Senlis (1493), Artois became a possession of Philip the Fair, eldest son of Mary and Maximilian.

¹⁰⁷ Boxhorn, *Nederlantsche historie*, pp. 110-11.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 190. 'Daer quam by dat een iegelijck, groot ende cleyn, vreesde de Geestelijcke, ende haer de penninck gonde boven andere, om hare gonste te vercrijgen.'

¹⁰⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 108.

¹¹⁰ *Ibidem*, pp. 108-9. To proof his point, Boxhorn had inserted some charters William II had issued on the abbot's proposal. These charters confirmed the verdict made by some vassals of the abbey that their fief will return to the church upon their death. The truth of the matter, however, was slightly different. William II needed the support of the abbot, who was the most important landlord in Zeeland, in his struggle with the count of Flanders over the control of Zeeland. For the relationship between Flanders and Holland during William II's reign, see Ronald de Graaf, *Oorlog om Holland, 1000-1375* (Uitgeverij Verloren; Hilversum, 1996), pp. 157-60. The charters to which Boxhorn is referring can be found in J.G. Kruisheer, *Oorkondenboek van Holland en Zeeland tot 1299*, Vol. 2: 1222-1256 (Van Gorcum; Assen, 1986), pp. 469-71, 488-91, 550-51. For a short analysis of the relationship between the abbey of Middelburg, Middelburg, and William II, see Peter Sijnke, *Middelburg* (Fanoy Boeken; Middelburg, 1988), pp. 11-17, and M.P. Neuteboom-Dieleman, *De bezittingen van de abdij van Rijsburg in Zeeland, 1199-1579* (Nederlandse Genealogische Vereniging, afdeling Zeeland; Kapelle, 1991), pp. 14-28.

¹¹¹ *Ibidem*, pp. 112-13.

not fall under the authority of the magistracy. This made them a refuge for all kinds of criminals.¹¹² Another negative effect of cloisters and monasteries was the economic disruption they caused. Because the monasteries were exempted from paying taxes, the clergy could sell their goods at a lower price than lay people could, who were obliged to pay taxes. The ‘common man was robbed of all means to make an honest living’ and ‘the shops in the towns ran out of business’, while ‘there was a rush towards the cloisters’.¹¹³ But the poverty of the people carried with it an even greater danger: it threatened the well-being of the commonwealth itself. ‘The peace and quiet of the subjects cannot be maintained without war; and war cannot be waged without payment, and payment cannot be found elsewhere than from the means of the subjects.’¹¹⁴ Charles the Bold lost his wars with the French and the Swiss because his subjects lacked the means to support his war efforts. On top of that, the clergy, who were rich and had sufficient means, had stubbornly refused to give any financial aid, thereby putting the Dutch provinces in great danger.¹¹⁵ But then,

¹¹² Ibidem, p. 113.

¹¹³ Ibidem, p. 190. The charters ‘dan oock maecken mede gewach, ende doen verbot van allerhande neeringen, die in de Cloosteren doe ter tijdt overal in Nederlandt gedaen werden, sulcx dat de gemeine Man benomen wierde alle middel om eerlijck te conne leven. Ende voorwaer te deser tijdt was daer niet van weereldtlicke winste ofte het smaeckte ende wierde neerstich ingetrocken bij de Geestelijcke, in allen schijn gelijck of het hier voornamelijck toestondt sulck gewin, men onlijdelijcke vercortinge van de arme ende suchtende gemeinte, naer te jagen. Dit doen dructe des te meer den borger door dien de Geestelijcke hare waeren ende werck veel beter coop conden geven als andere alsoo sij den borgeren opgelegde lasten niet waren onderworpen. Daer quam by dat een iegelijck, groot ende cleyn, vreesde de Geestelijcke, ende haer de penninck gonde boven andere, om hare gonste te verrijgen. Dus raecten in de Steden de winckels neeringloos, ende de Cloosteren hadden den toeloop’.

¹¹⁴ Ibidem, pp. 207-8. ‘Dat de andere ondersaten vervallen waren van middelen, ende de Geestelijcke sulcx door hare alle instockende gierigheyt verrijckt, dat thans bij desen alleen, tot voorstandt van de algemeine Saecke ende voeren van lastige oorlogen, bequame middelen waren te vinden. Dat men ruste ende vrede der ondersaten niet konde behouden sonder oorlogh; ende den oorlogh niet voeren konde sonder soudije; ende dat dese niet gevonden konden werden als uyt de middelen der ondersaten. Dat dusdanige lasten den naem lasten niet redelijck en droegen onder den rijcken; voornamentlijck Geestelijcke welcker landt ende zandt bij naer oneindelijck wierden bevonden. Dat sij oock dien volgende haer thans niet wel beriepen op de eertijds opgemaecte Wetten tot voordeel ende ontlastinge van de Geestelijcke, die eertijds sittende in armoede ende met den honger en commer vechtende, thans alleen met de grooten rijckdom ende overvloedt van alles belast waren tegen de nootdrustigheyt van hare Vorsten?’ So reads the comment of ‘some lay people’ on the struggle between Charles the Bold, on the one hand, and the clergy in Flanders, Brabant and Holland, on the other. The quote contains a *sententia* derived from Tacitus. The *sententia* in question is a free transcription from the speech that the Roman commander Petilius Cerialis held to the Germans tribes of the Treviri and Lingones. ‘Tyranny and warfare were always rife throughout the length and breath of Gaul, until you accepted Roman government. Often as we have been provoked, we have never imposed upon you any burden by right of conquest, except what was necessary to maintain peace. Tribes cannot be kept quiet without troops. You cannot have troops without pay; and you cannot raise pay without taxation. In every other respect you are treated as our equals.’ Tacitus, *The Histories*, IV.74.1-2, p. 223.

¹¹⁵ The origin of the struggle between Charles the Bold and the clergy of Flanders, Brabant and Holland was Charles’s quest to find extra funding for his wars. In this quest he had first evaluated the possessions of the clergy and then had them taxed. However, the clergy in Flanders, Brabant, and Holland refused to comply to Charles’s wishes and sabotaged Charles’s endeavours by mounting all kind of counter-attacks. Boxhorn, *Nederlantsche historie*, pp. 200-7. For Charles’s policy versus the clergy, see

of course, the clergy had other objectives than the common good. 'The clergy had no other objective, than, either with lawful means or unlawful means, because under the guise of a holy rule, to completely subject the authority of the princes in the Netherlands to her wilfulness.'¹¹⁶

The second theme that comes forward in the *Nederlantsche historie* is the strong correlation between two developments that seem to be diametrically opposed: the growing oppression of the true faith and the related disruption of Dutch society by the clergy, on the one hand, and the increasing spread of the true faith in the Netherlands, on the other. Indeed, the harder the oppression became, the more widely the true faith spread.

One must believe, that the reason, why the light of the Gospels, and the loathing of the evil trade of the clergy, has broken through so powerfully about the year 1400, both somewhere else, as in the Netherlands, was this, that the darkness in the teaching of the Church of Rome, and the forcing of the fabrications of the stingy and domineering clergy, now had reached its height, and had become almost tangible.¹¹⁷

The crusade against the Hussites in Bohemen, aimed at their destruction, had the same effect; it only enhanced the spreading of their doctrines, which greatly resembled those of the Waldensians.¹¹⁸ In similar manner, Laurens Janszoon Koster (c.1370-1440), a citizen of Haarlem, had invented, 'by a special decision of the great God', the art of printing at a moment in time when the 'thick darkness of ignorance' oppressed the common man.¹¹⁹

Wim Blockmans and Walter Prevenier, *De Bourgondiërs: de Nederlanden op weg naar eenheid, 1384-1530* (Meulenhoff; Amsterdam, 1997), p. 217.

¹¹⁶ Boxhorn, *Nederlantsche historie*, p. 107. 'Dese soo trotse opset mishaech hoochlijk eenige van den verr'uytsienden Vorsten, die uyt dese maniere van doen wel lichtelijck conden afnemen, dat de Geestelijcke niet anders voor hadden, als 't waer met recht ofte onrecht, immers onder de schijn van een heylige heerschappye, het gesach der Vorsten in Nederlandt haeren moetwil geheelijck te onderwerpen.'

¹¹⁷ Ibidem, p. 134. 'De oorsaecke, waerom het licht des Evangeliums, ende de verfoeyinge van het snoede Geestelijcke bedrijf omtrent den jaere 1400, soo elders, als oock in Nederland, dus crachtich doorgebroocken is, moet men gelooven dese geweest te zijn, dat de duisternissen in de leere van de Roomsche Kercke, ende het opdringen van verdichselen der gierige ende staetsuchtige Geestelijcke, nu op het hoogste gecomen, ende gelijk als tastelijck geworden was.'

¹¹⁸ Ibidem, p. 154. '... sulx dat dese veldtocht der Nederlandender door eene besondere beschickinge van Godt, nergens anders toe streckte, als om het doe soo genoemde kettersche ende vervloecte gevoelens der Hussiten oock in dese gewesten wijdlijcker verbreyden.'

¹¹⁹ Ibidem, pp. 169-80. The legend that Laurens Janszoon Koster had invented the art of printing (typography) had become very popular in the Dutch Republic in Boxhorn's time. In the *Nederlantsch historie* Boxhorn closely follows the thesis put forward by Petrus Scriverius and which he himself had used a couple of times before, most notably in the *Theatrum* and in a dissertation devoted to this subject. Boxhorn, *Theatrum*, pp. 134-43, and Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn, *De typographicae artis inventione, & inventoribus, dissertatio* (Hieronymus de Vogel; Leiden, 1640). See also Lotte Hellinga-Querido and Clemens de Wolf, *Laurens Janszoon Koster was zijn naam* (Johan Enschedé en Zonen; Haarlem, 1988), pp. 34-49,

If we connect the correlation between these two developments to the primary goal of the *Nederlantsche historie*, the justification of the Dutch Revolt, then it seems that Boxhorn tries to explain the Revolt as a consequence of a convergence of two opposed yet closely related historical processes that reinforced each other and whose interrelation goes back at least several hundred years. The few references in the *Nederlantsche historie* to the Reformation period seem to confirm this view. In Boxhorn's opinion both Luther and Calvin had made important contributions to the 'restoration' of the true faith, but that is it.¹²⁰ They were two of the many people who had contributed to 'the restoration and improvement of religion', of which 'the first foundations' in the Netherlands had been laid a hundred years before the Reformation, 'in that dark century, by adherents of the Roman Church itself'.¹²¹

To summarise: in the *Nederlantsche historie* Boxhorn tries to justify the Dutch Revolt, and thereby the existence and independence of the Dutch Republic, by putting the Revolt against a historical background, which Boxhorn depicts not so much as an epic battle between the forces of good and evil or a graveyard of martyrs who had died for the good cause, but more as a path towards the liberation of the Netherlands from superstition, lawlessness, and centrifugal forces.¹²² Boxhorn focuses not only on the religious, but also on the social, economic, and political consequences that the presence of the clergy in the Netherlands had had, for the one had greatly affected the others. The clergy's power over the people's mind, the weakness and need of temporal rulers, and the

and Nop Maas, "Laurens Janszoon Coster: opkomst en ondergang van een uitvinder", in N.C.F. van Sas (ed.), *Waar de blanke top der duinen en andere vaderlandse herinneringen* (Uitgeverij Contact; Amsterdam/Antwerp, 1995), pp. 81-82.

¹²⁰ Ibidem, p. 36. See for this theme Peter Raedts, "Ter verdediging van kerk en vaderland: het middeleeuwse verleden tussen Renaissance en Verlichting", in *Tijdschrift voor geschiedenis*, Vol. 115, No. 3 (2002), pp. 358-59.

¹²¹ Ibidem, pp. 184-87. 'Over sulx sal het te pijnje waerdich ende niet vreemd wesen yet sonderlinghs, ende bij andere niet te lesen, te verhaelen aengaende de herstellinge ende verbeteringe van den Godsdienst, in dese tijden hier ten lande voorgevallen, werdende de eerste grondsteenen, algereets in die duistere eeuwe, bij de voorstanders van de Roomsche Kercke selve, geleght van die reformatie, de ontrent hondert jaeren daer naer is gevolght.' In this context Boxhorn specifically mentions Nicolas of Cusa (1401-1464), at that time papal legate for the German countries, who, according to Boxhorn, had preached against indulgences and idolatry. As evidence, Boxhorn presents the eyewitness account of Frederic of Heilo (†1455), a scholar from Holland, who lived in the first half of the fifteenth century and who had occupied several offices at different monasteries in Holland. The eyewitness account to which Boxhorn is referring could be the chronicle that goes by the name 'liber de fundatione domus regularium prope Haerlem' that Frederic had written at the end of his life. The chronicle, of which we have now only some fragments, tells the moral conditions of the period and Nicolas of Cusa's trip to the Netherlands and Germany. For Nicolas of Cusa, see *NNBW*, Vol. 1, pp. 661-64, esp. pp. 662-63. For Frederic of Heilo, see Philip Schaff, *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, Vol. 4 (Baker Book House; Grand Rapids, 1952), pp. 374-75.

¹²² It is striking, for example, that the more dubious actions of secular princes, like those of king Philip IV of France (1268-1314) against the Knights Templar, receive hardly any comment, while the 'autonomous' actions of clerical princes and the local nobility suffer heavy criticism. Boxhorn, *Nederlantsche historie*, pp. 126-27.

subsequent dependence of these rulers on the clergy to exercise their authority gave the clergy extraordinary power, which they wielded with destructive force to the dismay of both the private Dutch citizen and the commonwealth. Viewed from this standpoint, the *Nederlantsche historie* can be read as a plea for the liberation of the political realm from clerical interference.¹²³

The *Theatrum* and the *Nederlantsche historie* give a clear impression of two ways in which Boxhorn approaches and discusses Dutch history. The differences between the two works are obvious. The *Theatrum* is a historical-topographical work that combines a 'humanistic narrative' and an 'antiquarian erudition' in an attempt to exalt the glory of Holland. It is written in learned Latin and contains many scholarly digressions that reveal a strong philological approach to history. The *Nederlantsche historie*, on the other hand, is a historical narrative, written in Dutch, that is constructed with one specific purpose in mind, namely to legitimise the Dutch Revolt by placing it in a larger historical context.

However, besides these and other differences, and although there is a seventeen year gap between their publications, the *Theatrum* and the *Nederlantsche historie* share some common features. One of the most outstanding features that the *Theatrum* and the *Nederlantsche historie* share is that in both works the provincial States, and in particular the States of Holland, play a minor role, if they play any role at all. Indeed, compared to the attention Boxhorn pays to brave princes, rebellious nobles, and obnoxious clergymen the provincial States and their constituent parts, the nobility and the town councils, come off badly. Second, and in line with the previous point, is that neither in the *Theatrum* nor in the *Ned-*

¹²³ Boxhorn's anticlericalism in the *Nederlantsche historie* shows some great similarity to Hobbes's treatment of the clergy in the *Behemoth*. In the *Behemoth* Hobbes heavily criticised the clergy's power over the people's mind as one of the greatest dangers that threatened the power of the sovereign. Because 'as much as eternal torture is more terrible than death, so much' the people 'would fear the clergy more than the King'. Since people's opinions and beliefs determine what people do with the physical power that their bodies are capable of, controlling people's minds is controlling their physical force. And since controlling and directing physical force, most notably that physical force of soldiers in the *militia*, is the hallmark of sovereignty, controlling people's mind is the pillar on which the power to govern rests. Therefore, 'the power of the mighty hath no foundation but in the opinion and belief of the people'. Thomas Hobbes, *Behemoth or the Long Parliament* (University of Chicago Press; Chicago, 1990), respectively pp. 14-15, 79-80, 98, 102, 16. See also the excellent introduction by Stephen Holmes to this work, especially xiv, xxxviii-xlv, xlix-l. See also Jeffrey R. Collins, *The Allegiance of Thomas Hobbes* (Oxford University Press; Oxford, 1st ed. 2005, 2007), pp. 82-83. If this makes Boxhorn a follower of Erastian principles, like Hobbes himself, or like his fellow countrymen Grotius, Cornelis Hooft, the brothers De la Court and Spinoza, is hard to say. Boxhorn's critical attitude towards the clergy should not automatically lead us to the conclusion that Boxhorn was an advocate for a state-regulated church. However, as we will see in the next chapter, Boxhorn held a strictly utilitarian view on the role of religion in society. For the Erastian principles of Cornelis Hooft, the brothers De la Court, and Spinoza, see E.O.G. Haitsma Mulier, "The Language of Seventeenth-Century Republicanism in the United Provinces: Dutch or European?", in Anthony Pagden (ed.), *The Languages of Political Theory in Early-Modern Europe* (Cambridge University Press; Cambridge, 1987), pp. 182, 194.

erlantsche historie are there much traces to be found of the 'Batavian myth' that was so popular in the Dutch Republic at the time. Boxhorn's silence on the Batavian past may have something to do with the third feature both works share, namely the great value Boxhorn attaches to primary sources. He discusses them extensively and he relies on them to provide him with the materials for his narratives. As a consequence, both in the *Theatrum* and the *Nederlantsche historie* the focus lies on the Middle Ages rather than antiquity. As Boxhorn's comments in the *Theatrum* make clear, the great attention that he pays to the medieval history of the Netherlands is partly born out of necessity. The lack of primary sources that contain reliable data about the earliest of times makes it very hard for the historian to obtain certain knowledge about the distant past and forces him to seek safety in later times that are better documented. This is one possible explanation for Boxhorn's silence on the Batavian past. It is, however, only half the story. Boxhorn's interest in the medieval past of the Netherlands seems to be genuine. It is in the Middle Ages where he locates the origin, economic growth, and political emancipation of the towns of Holland. It is in the Middle Ages where he locates the transformation of the people of Holland 'from rather simple' peasants and town folk to clever and diligent businessmen. And, most telling of all, it is in the Middle Ages where he locates the origins of the changes that brought forth the Dutch Revolt. This brings us to the fifth feature the *Theatrum* and the *Nederlantsche historie* have in common, namely that in both works Boxhorn draws not a static picture of Dutch history, but a dynamic one, in which long-term changes play an important role. Boxhorn does not judge all these changes as negative; he clearly views some of them in a positive light, like the economic growth and the political emancipation of the towns of Holland, or the spread of the true faith. For Boxhorn Dutch history constituted a mixture of continuations and changes, both good and bad, which had a profound and lasting effect on Dutch society and its political structure. In this sense, Dutch history reflects the history of ancient Rome, as we will now find out.

The history of Rome

Although Boxhorn criticised the ancient Romans for being arrogant and self-centred, the history of Rome did occupy a very important place in his work and thought.¹²⁴ Therefore, it is only fair to give Boxhorn's view of Roman his-

¹²⁴ As mentioned before, Boxhorn had edited and published the works of Caesar and Tacitus. He had also published and commented the works of Suetonius, *Caii Suetoni Tranquilli quae extant* (Johannes Maire; Leiden, 1632); that corpus of biographies of later Roman emperors that is known to us as the *Historia*

tory the attention it deserves. We will do that by looking at Boxhorn's *Dissertationes politicae de regio Romanorum imperio* (*Political Dissertations on the Regal Rule of the Romans*), a corpus of sixteen dissertations that tell the history of Rome from the founding of the city until the reign of Tiberius (42 BC-37), when the 'monarchy of the Caesars' (*monarchia Caesarum*) was definitely secured.

As the title indicates, the sixteen dissertations that constitute this history of Rome are not a formal work of history. The dissertations were originally held by Boxhorn's students between 1643 and 1645 or 1646.¹²⁵ The primary goal of such political dissertations was to train students in rhetoric. Therefore, style was of importance. The style in the dissertations is an attempt to imitate Tacitus's stylistic technique of 'variation': long, sometimes eloquent sentences take turn with short sharp remarks that state an important point; symmetry seems to be lacking, while the many negations, double negations, and counter-propositions force the recipient to be constantly on his toes.¹²⁶

The adjective 'political' makes clear that these dissertations also had a second goal, namely to draw political lessons from Rome's glorious past, just as Machiavelli had done in his *Discorsi*.¹²⁷ This was entirely in line with the 'philological-historical method' that, as we have noted in chapter 3, was so dominant at the University of Leiden in the first half of the seventeenth century. In this chapter, however, attention not so much goes out to the political lessons Boxhorn thought a student could or should learn from Rome's past.¹²⁸ Rather, we are more interested in Boxhorn's version of Rome's history. Which themes do occur? On what sources does Boxhorn rely? And with what historical explanations does Boxhorn come up to explain the vicissitudes that had

Augusta, Historia Augusta scriptorum latinorum minorum (Johannes Maire; Leiden, 1632); some works by Pliny the Younger, *C. Plinii Caecilii Secundi Epistolae et Panegyricus* (Johan and Daniel Elzevier; Leiden, 1653); and also probably the works of Sallust, *C. Salustius Crispus cum veterum historicorum fragmentis* (Elzevier; Leiden, 1634). In 1637 Boxhorn published a work on Roman rituals and religion, based on the works of Plutarch, *Quaestiones Romanae, quibus sacri et profani ritus, plurima etiam antiquitatis monumenta explicantur* (David Lopez de Haro; Leiden, 1637). As will become clear in the next two chapters, Boxhorn's works on politics are heavily documented by examples, quotes, and *sententiae* drawn from Roman authors.

¹²⁵ Several of these dissertations were published separately in 1643, 1644, and 1645 under the name 'Disputationes politicae de regio Romanorum imperio'. The sixteen dissertations were first brought together in 1651 in Boxhorn's *Emblemata politica: accedunt dissertationes politicae de Romanorum Imperio et quaedamaliae*, pp. 139-355. They were reprinted in Boxhorn, *Varii Tractatus Politici*, pp. 409-533, under the name 'Dissertationes politicae, de regio Romanorum imperio'. See Van de Klashorst, Blom and Haitsma Mulier, *Bibliography of Dutch Seventeenth Century Political Thought*, pp. 42-43, 46, 65. See also Molhuysen, *Bronnen tot de geschiedenis der Leidsche Universiteit*, Vol. 2, p. 279.

¹²⁶ See for this style A.J. Woodman's introduction, xx-xxi, to Tacitus's *Annals*. For its popularity in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, especially among Dutch authors, see the various contributions by Jan Waszink on 'Tacitism' in the early modern period.

¹²⁷ See the introduction by James Atkinson and David Sices to *The Sweetness of Power*, xxi-xxvii.

¹²⁸ Some of them will be treated in the next two chapters, where they will be incorporated in the discussion of Boxhorn's two most important political works, the *Institutiones politicae* and the *Disquisitiones politicae*.

befallen that eternal city? Although formally not a historical work, in what follows it will become clear that these sixteen dissertations can be seen as forming a more or less coherent narrative that gives us an interesting seventeenth-century view on the history of Rome. A view that, as will be argued here, was influenced by Boxhorn's understanding of Dutch history and the working of Dutch society.

The *Dissertationes politicae de regio Romanorum imperio* can be divided into three parts. The first seven dissertations discuss the reigns of Rome's seven kings, beginning with Romulus and ending with Tarquinius Superbus. The next six dissertations treat the history of Rome from the establishment of the consulate after the expulsion of the last king, Tarquinius Superbus, to the instalment of the censors at the end of the fourth century BC. Together, these first thirteen dissertations form a descriptive narrative, constructed in a chronological order, in which one event leads to another. In the last three dissertations, that all carry the same head title, Boxhorn takes on a more analytical approach.¹²⁹ In these last three dissertations Boxhorn's main aim is to explain the fall of the Republic and the rise of Julius Caesar, Octavian (63 BC-14), and Tiberius as sole rulers of Rome.

Following Livy, Boxhorn begins with the foundation of Rome by Romulus, the son of the Vestal priestess Rhea Sylvia and fathered by Mars, the god of war, a fable that Boxhorn contributes to the custom common among the ancients to sanctify the beginnings of their Commonwealths and princes in made-up stories.¹³⁰ Romulus instituted a monarchy since this was more in conformity with the rather wild nature of the people, who until then had lived in a state of 'complete license'.¹³¹ Under Romulus, Rome became a sanctuary for all people, providing safety for both the good and the bad.¹³² The effect

¹²⁹ 'De mutatione reipublicae, sive initiis Monarchiae Caesarum' ('On the change of government, or the beginnings of the monarchy of the Caesars'). The first part of this title is from Florus's *Epitome*, I.3. Florus, however, used the title to refer to a precisely opposite change, namely the change from the reign of Rome's first seven kings to the establishment of the consulate.

¹³⁰ Boxhorn, *Emblemata politica: accedunt dissertationes politicae de Romanorum Imperio et quaedamaliae*, I.2, p. 140. 'Primus id habuit Romulus; Rhea Sylvia, virgine Vestali, & Marte, ut ferunt, genitus; callidè recepto inter veteres more, ut narrationibus in miraculum corruptis initia Rerumpublicarum ac Principum consequerent.' This critical approach towards such fables is maintained throughout all sixteen dissertations.

¹³¹ *Ibidem*, I.1, pp. 139-40. '... primam ejus formam Monarchiam sive Regiam fuisse, apud omnes in confesso est; et hanc potius, quàm Aristocraticam aut Democraticam, illius tum ferocioris populi ingenio convenisse. Minor enim libertas, quod in Monarchia usu venti, concedi illis debuit, qui per omnem licentiam hactenus vitam egerant; & ad constituendam novam Rempublicam vocabantur.' The same reasoning reoccurs in Boxhorn's dissertation on the Achaean league. Boxhorn, "De Veteri Achaeorum Republica", 2, p. 569. This theme can also be found in the *Institutiones politicae*, I.2, p. 12, and II.2.1, p. 264. Thus, Romulus seems to have adapted his plans to the nature of the people.

¹³² *Ibidem*, I.4, p. 143. 'Condità urbe deesse visus est, idoneus civium numerus, ac iccirco Asylum apertum. Ad quod, impunitas praemio propositio, undique plurimi confluxere, boni, mali, servi, debi-

was a great influx of men. However, Rome lacked women, which explains the robbery of the Sabine virgins since without them Rome would have died out before it got even started. Romulus's greatest merit was the founding of the Senate. This enabled him to bind the majority of the people to his rule, because 'those things that the multitude holds to be ordained by the decision of the many are easier accepted'.¹³³

Romulus's successors all contributed to Rome's early growth and success. Numa famously instituted 'a complete form of worship of the Gods, with priests'.¹³⁴ This religion was the 'chain of the commonwealth' (*vinculum Reipublicae*). Tullus Hostilius was the founder of Rome's legendary military discipline,¹³⁵ while Servius Tullius introduced laws that gave the people a share in government and bounded even the kings themselves.¹³⁶ Just as in the *Theatrum*, then, we see a gradual descent from a *patrimonial principate* to a *legal principate*, where slowly but progressively the people became a participant in the body politic.¹³⁷

Tarquinius Superbus, the last Roman king, turned out to be a tyrant because he had willingly transgressed the laws that he had sworn to uphold.¹³⁸ An enemy of all, Superbus ceased to be a prince. He was, therefore, justly deposed.¹³⁹

tores, latrones, alii facinorosi. Et quosvis Romulus excepit, nec servum domino, nec creditori nexum, nec Magistratui reum, quanquam rogatus, reddit, ut in ejus vita author est Plutarchus.' See Plutarch, *Lives*. With an English Translation by Bernadotte Perrin, Vol. 1 (William Heinemann/G.P. Putnam's Sons; London/New York, 1914), *Romulus*, 9, pp. 112-15.

¹³³ Ibidem, I.10, p. 149. 'Praecipuum Romuli domi institutum est Senatium ... Nam & sic plures demereri potuit sibi, quod in novo praesertim imperio necesse; & quae ex plurium consilio decreta vulgo videntur, facilius admittuntur.'

¹³⁴ Ibidem, II.8, p. 159. 'At cum inelyta esset religio viri, omnis Deorum cultus, cum Sacerdotis, institutis ac distinctus, omnium ejus operum pulcherrimum & maximè necessarium fuit.'

¹³⁵ Ibidem, III.2-3, pp. 165-66.

¹³⁶ Ibidem, VI.4, pp. 206-7. 'Dehinc consilia omnia eò convertit, ut populo placeret; primusque omnium regum condidit leges, quibus partem imperii cum populo communicavit; iisque observandis non se modò, sed & sequuturos reges.'

¹³⁷ This in contrast to the views held by ancient observers of Rome's political constitution. The Greek historian Dionysius of Halicarnassus (c.60 BC-after 7), for example, contended that Romulus had already granted the people three privileges: 'to choose magistrates, to ratify laws, and to decide concerning war whenever the king left the decision to them ...' Dionysius, *Roman Antiquities*, II.14.1-3. See Fergus Millar, *The Roman Republic in Political Thought* (Brandeis University Press/Historical Society of Israel; Hanover/London, 2002), pp. 13, 42, 186, with quote on p. 42, and reference on p. 186. Although Boxhorn did not deny that the people of Rome possessed some sort of freedom under Romulus's 'legitimate supreme command', he followed Tacitus's claim that 'the command of Romulus had depended merely on whim'. Boxhorn, *Emblemata politica: accedunt dissertationes politicae de Romanorum Imperio et quaedamaliae*, I.2, p. 141. 'Auctor est idem lib. Ann. III. Nobis, inquit, Romulus ut libitum, imperitaverat ... Certe in quovis legitimo imperio, subditis sua esse debet libertas; ac proinde etiam in illo summo.' Tacitus, *The Annals*, III.26.4, p. 96. In a footnote to this sentence Anthony Woodman points out that it 'is unclear' 'whether the whim is Romulus' or his subjects'. Ibidem.

¹³⁸ Tarquinius Superbus's greatest crime was that he denied his subjects a fair trial. Boxhorn, *Emblemata politica: accedunt dissertationes politicae de Romanorum Imperio et quaedamaliae*, VII.4, p. 222. Boxhorn quotes here Livy, *The History of Rome from its Foundation*, 1.49.

¹³⁹ Boxhorn, *Emblemata politica: accedunt dissertationes politicae de Romanorum Imperio et quaedamaliae*, VII.7, p. 229. 'Talis enim, princeps esse desiit.' The analogy with Philip II of Spain is obvious.

After the deposition of Tarquinius Superbus the monarchy was abolished and the consulate founded. The first consuls held royal power, but this power soon dwindled due to the constant strife between the patricians and the plebeians.¹⁴⁰ The most important outcome of this strife was the institution of the tribunate, an act that decisively altered the balance of power within Roman society. It meant that although the Roman state was still a mixed constitution, ultimate power now rested with the people, because their representatives, the tribunes, could veto every decision made by the consuls or the Senate. Effectively, Rome had become a democracy.¹⁴¹

The installation of the tribunate was followed by the rule of the *decem-virs*, who founded the Twelve Tables,¹⁴² and the institution of the consular tribuneship.¹⁴³ With the institution of the consular tribuneship the higher levels of government were now open for plebeians.¹⁴⁴ This meant a new alteration in the balance of power, one that made the popular factor even more dominant. Finally, after the last consular tribunes were forced to abdicate, the Romans instituted the censors.¹⁴⁵ They formed an extra check on top of the already existing laws and legal punishments on both the magistrates and the people. With the founding of the censors, Rome's constitution seems to have reached its completion.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁰ Ibidem, VIII.3, p. 233. 'Consulatus est Regia potestas, eadem in duos collata & annuo imperii spatio definita.'

¹⁴¹ Ibidem, X.6, pp. 264-65. 'Itaque creatis Tribunis Democraticum planè Imperii Romani statum factum esse statuimus ... Mixtam enim Reipublicae formam neque hìc, neque alibi, necesse est agnoscere.' The same change was noted, amongst others, by Ptolemy of Lucca (c.1236-1327) in his *De regimine principum* (*On the Government of Princes*, c.1300). Millar, *The Roman Republic in Political Thought*, pp. 59-61.

¹⁴² Ibidem, XII.3-5, pp. 274-81.

¹⁴³ This last office was the result of the manipulations of Gaius Canuleius, tribune of the plebs in 445 BC, who, in his quest for ultimate power, stirred the plebs against the patricians. Canuleius was also responsible for the *Lex Canuleia*. This law allowed intermarriage between patrician and plebeian families (forbidden under the laws of the Twelve Tables) and allowed that one of the two yearly elected consuls to be a plebeian. See Livy, *The History of Rome from its Foundation*, IV.42-44.

¹⁴⁴ Like Livy, Boxhorn traces the main cause leading to the emergence of the tribunate to the economic hardship suffered by the plebs. The plebeians, who depended on farming for their livelihood, formed the core of Rome's army. But Rome fought so many wars, that the plebeians were unable to cultivate and farm their land. Since they did not receive any pay for their service as soldiers, they were left without any income to sustain themselves and their families or to pay their rents. The plebeians ran into heavy debts, were forced to sell their land, and were ultimately enslaved by their creditors, who were mostly of patrician origin. Boxhorn, *Emblemata politica: accedunt dissertationes politicae de Romano Imperio et quaedamaliae*, IX.5, p. 251. By leaving the city, the plebs forced the patrician oligarchy to give up their monopoly on holding administrative offices. Ibidem, X.3, p. 262.

¹⁴⁵ The last consular tribunes were forced to abdicate because they were elected without the approval of the gods. Thereafter the new consuls, Marcus Geganius Macerinus and Titus Quintius Capitolinus instituted the censors.

¹⁴⁶ Here, one is reminded of Machiavelli's judgement of the institution of the censors in the *Discorsi*, I.49.1-2, p. 129. 'The evolution of the Roman republic shows clearly how difficult it is when establishing a republic to provide all the laws that will keep it free. Despite the fact that many laws were established, first by Romulus, then by Numa, Tullius, Hostilius, Servius, and finally by the ten citizens designated for that task, nevertheless in the management of the town new needs were constantly discovered and it

Then, Boxhorn takes a giant leap in time to the mid-first century BC to discuss the fall of the Republic and the rise of the Julian-Claudian house to supreme power, a rise which he sees as instigating a new form of monarchical rule at Rome.¹⁴⁷ To understand the causes of 'this so famous change' Boxhorn decides to concentrate on two aspects: the condition of the Roman Republic at that specific moment in time, that is, the first century BC, and the person of Julius Caesar.¹⁴⁸

In the mid-first century BC Rome, a mixed constitution, dominated by its democratic element, the people, was at its heights. It was the undisputed master of the world, 'the prince of nations' (*princeps gentium*). Internally, however, Rome had become extremely corrupt. The rule of law and the power of justice had ceased to exist; ambition and factions thrived widely to the destruction of the people.¹⁴⁹ The great cause behind the rise of these factions is expressed in the words of the Roman historian Florus: 'The cause of this great calamity was the same which caused all our calamities, namely excessive good fortune.'¹⁵⁰

Rome's 'excessive good fortune' had led to a great concentration of power in the hands of only a few men. This was possible because the *mos maiorum*, the custom of the forefathers, was first ignored and later abandoned. There was no longer any equality before the law (*aequalitas*); the normal yearly rotation of office had been given up;¹⁵¹ and too many offices had been handed down

was necessary to establish new institutions. That is what happened when they created the Censors, who were one of the provisions that helped keep Rome free as long as it did continue in freedom. Because when they became the arbiters of Rome's mores, they were a very potent reason why the Romans put off becoming corrupt for so long.'

¹⁴⁷ Thus, the third and second centuries BC, the period of the 'classical Republic', in which Rome became the dominant power in the Mediterranean world, are left out of the picture. This same neglect can be found in Machiavelli's *Discorsi* and in *The Excellency of a Free State* (1656), written by the English journalist Marchamont Nedham (1620-1678). See Millar, *The Roman Republic in Political Thought*, pp. 68, 84.

¹⁴⁸ Boxhorn, *Emblemata politica: accedunt dissertationes politicae de Romanorum Imperio et quaedamaliae*, XIV.3, p. 314. 'Caeterum illius tam celebris mutationis, qua in omnium optime constituta & tot pro libertate repertis legibus ac magistratibus confirmata Republica unius imperium factum est, quod omnium fuerat, cum initia jam nobis breviter explicanda sint, & quae huc faciunt prope sint infinita, neque nunc singulatim expendemus omnia, neque praecipua, ex quibus facile colliguntur caetera, praetermittemus. Quod postremum facile obtinebimus, si in duo, cum statum Reipublicae Romanae, qualis tunc fuit, tum Julium Caesarem ... propius inspicimus.'

¹⁴⁹ Ibidem, XIV.4, pp. 314-15. 'Et faciem quidem Reipublicae inspectantibus haud alia quam corruptissima offertur; in qua non jus, non leges, non pax valebant, sed studia tantum, eaque acerrima & infestissima nunc surgentium, nunc succumbentium factionum, per quas armato in exitium populo.'

¹⁵⁰ Ibidem, p. 315. '*Causa mali*, ut recte Florus lib. IV. cap. II. *eadem, quae omnium, nimia felicitas*.' Florus, *Epitome*, II.13, p. 268. '*Causa tantae calamitatis eadem quae omnium, nimia felicitas*.' See also John Thomas Quinn, *Studies in the Historiography of Florus* (UMI Dissertation Services; Ann Harbor, 1999), p. 74.

¹⁵¹ Ibidem, XIV.5, p. 318. 'Contempta exutaque aequalitate ac vicissitudine parendi et obsequendi.' See for this theme Sallust, *Jugurthine War*, XXX.4. Following Aristotle, *Politics*, 1317a1-1318a1 [VI:2], Boxhorn claimed that the *ius aequalitatis* was the foundation of any democratic regime; it ensured a rotation of offices, which were (in theory) accessible for every member of the body politic. See for this principle also Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I.5, p. 55.

to one and the same person, giving ambitious men the opportunity to seize power.¹⁵² It is here that the importance of the person of Julius Caesar comes forth. Not only was Caesar ambitious, but his virtues far exceeded those of his fellow Romans. Therefore Caesar should have been ostracised, 'for not only in a popular form of government, but also in an aristocracy the equality of its members ... must be looked to, especially by those in whose interest it is ... and ... this equality also excludes excessive virtue'.¹⁵³ Caesar's fellow Romans abandoned the principle of equality, and this mistake would cost them dearly.

The concentration of power in the hands of only a few men had led to a struggle between these few men, who wanted to keep their power, and others, who, out of envy, strove to obtain it. During this struggle some men had aligned themselves with the Optimate faction in the Senate, some with the people and others with the army. From these alliances factions had emerged that would in the end cause the downfall of the Republic.

The first time these factions had become visible was during 'the fury of Marius and Cinna', which was followed by 'the thunder of the storm raised by Sulla'.¹⁵⁴ After that came the alliance between Caesar, Pompey (106-48 BC), and Crassus (c.115-53 BC). These three men had an easy time to 'overthrow the Republic, because it was almost destroyed by the conflicts of earlier times'.¹⁵⁵ The deaths of Crassus and Julia, Caesar's daughter who was

¹⁵² Ibidem, pp. 317-20. In a previous dissertation Boxhorn had stated that it was not the dictatorship that had enabled Sulla and Caesar to oppress the Republic, but desire and the scorning of the laws. Ibidem, IX.3, p. 248. 'Sylla enim ac Caesar non tam Dictatura hac, quàm libidine, spretis legibus, Rempublicam oppressere.'

¹⁵³ Ibidem, pp. 318-19. 'Quare non in populari tantum, sed & optimatum statu pro aequalitate partium, ut rectissime observat & in Oratione de C. Caesare Dictatore loquitur illustris Heinsius, ab iis, quorum interest, inprimis vigilandum est, quae non dignitates modo nimias ac opes, sed nobilitatem, aliaque id genus, ac, ut Aristoteles praeclare sentit, virtutem quoque nimiam excludit.' Boxhorn quotes here Heinsius, "De C. Caesare dictatore", pp. 204-5. 'Ex Politicorum, nisi fallor, libris pridem didicistis, non in Populari tantum sed & Optimatum statu, pro aequalitate partium, ab iis quorum interest inprimis, vigilandum esse. Quae non dignitates modo nimias ac opes, sed nobilitatem, aliaque id genus, iam, si libere cum Aristotele dicendum est, virtutem quoque nimiam excludit.' For the reference to Aristotle, see Aristotle, *Politics*, 1284a1 [III:13]. Boxhorn also holds that Pompey should have been ostracised since, following the observation of the Roman senator Quintus Catulus (c.120-61/60 BC) given in Velleius Paterculus's *Roman History*, and quoted by Boxhorn, 'while Gnaeus Pompey was a man of distinction, he already had too much power for a free state, and that everything should not be placed in the hands of one man'. Velleius Paterculus, *Historiarum ad M. Vinicium consulem libri duo*. Recognovit W.S. Watt (Teubner; Leipzig, 1988), II.32, p. 32. 'Digna est memoria Q. Catuli cum auctoritas tum uerecundia. qui cum dissuadens legem in contione dixisset esse quidem praeclarum uirum Cn. Pompeium sed nimium iam liberae rei publicae, neque omnia in uno reponenda ...' English translation quoted from Velleius Paterculus, *The Roman History: From Romulus and the Foundation of Rome to the Reign of the Emperor Tiberius*. Translated, with Introduction and Notes, by J.C. Yardley and Anthony A. Barrett (Hackett Publishing Company; Indianapolis/Cambridge, 2011), II.32, p. 49.

¹⁵⁴ Ibidem, XIV.4, p. 315. 'Mariana quidem Cinnanaque rabies intra urbem praeluserat, ut Syllana tempestas latius intra Italiam tamen, detonaret.' Florus, *Epitome*, II.13, pp. 264, 266. 'Ac Mariana quidem Cinnanaque rabies intra urbem praeluserat, quasi si experiretur. Syllana tempestas latius, intra Italiam tamen, detonuerat.' English translations taken from Florus, *Epitome*, II.13, pp. 265, 267.

¹⁵⁵ Ibidem. 'Facile pauci caeteris majores, Caesar, Crassus, Pompejus de invadenda Republica, quo

married to Pompey, signalled the beginning of a new civil war. No longer restrained, Caesar, who could not tolerate an equal, and Pompey, who could not tolerate a superior, fought for supremacy.¹⁵⁶

After the civil war Caesar, whose cause was just since he set out to save the almost ruined Republic from total annihilation, changed the form of government into a monarchy, because 'the times and the character of the people' demanded this form of government.¹⁵⁷ But his desire and attempt to change everything immediately led to his downfall. Caesar's murder meant the end of his 'monarchical reign' and the restoration of 'Roman freedom'.

But this restoration was short-lived. Octavian, Caesar's adoptive son and heir, took up Caesar's cause to strengthen his own position and to 'expel the misery of those times', and, by tricks and cunning, became the sole ruler of Rome.¹⁵⁸ Once in control, Octavian, now Augustus, definitely changed Rome's form of government into a monarchical one. But in contrast to Caesar, he did this at a slow pace, while keeping the appearance of the Republic alive for the outside world.

Augustus changed the form of government into a monarchical one, not because monarchy was the best form of government, but because 'the interest of peace required that all power should be concentrated in the hands of one man'.¹⁵⁹ The fury of the people and the Senate made it suicidal to restore power to them: it would have meant endowing 'madmen with a sword'.¹⁶⁰

per priorum temporum dissensiones prope exstincta jam erat convenere.' Florus, *Epitome*, II.13, p. 268. 'Sic igitur Caesare dignitatem comparare, Crasso augere, Pompeio retinere cupientibus, omnibusque pariter potentiae cupidis de invadenda re publica facile convenit.'

¹⁵⁶ Ibidem, p. 316. 'Pompejo suspectae Caesaris opes, Caesari Pompejana dignitas gravis. Nec hic ferebat parem, nec ille superiorem. Inde fax belli civilis.' First part is quoted from Lucan, *Pharsalia*, I.125, and comes back in Florus, *Epitome*, II.13, p. 270. 'Iam Pompeio suspectae Caesaris opes et Caesari Pompeiana dignitas gravis. Nec ille ferebat parem, nec hic superiorem.' See for a similar view H.H. Scullard, *From the Gracchi to Nero: A History of Rome from 133 BC to 69 AD* (Routledge; London, 1st ed. 1959, 2004), p. 119. See also Ronald Syme, *The Roman Revolution* (Oxford University Press; Oxford, 1st ed. 1939, 2002), p. 42.

¹⁵⁷ Ibidem, XIV.8, p. 324. 'Non oppugnavit patriam, non evertit Rempublicam aut jugulum libertatis Caesar petiit, sed inter eos, qui magis sine legibus & magistratibus vivebant, quam in libertate, eam probavit ac praetulit imperii formam, quam tempora & mores hominum flagitabant, & quae ad publici egregii bonum reddendum sola erat comparata.'

¹⁵⁸ Ibidem, XV.1, p. 328.

¹⁵⁹ Ibidem, XV.2, pp. 329-30. 'Pacis interfuit ab uno Respublica regetur.' This is a mixture of Tacitus, *Annalium ab excessu divi Augusti libri*, I.9 ('... non aliud discordantis patriae remedium fuisse quam ut ab uno regetur.'), and Tacitus, *Historiarum libri*, I.1, p. 1 ('... postquam bellatum apud Actium atque omnem potentiam ad unum conferri pacis interfuit ...'). Both are quoted separately in Boxhorn, *Emblemata politica: accedunt dissertationes politicae de Romanorum Imperio et quaedamaliae*, XIV.8, p. 325. The vision that the change to a monarchical regime had been necessary to save the Roman *res publica* from total desolation was common ground in Boxhorn's days. See, for example, Grotius, *The Rights of War and Peace*, I.3.8, pp. 264-65. 'And sometimes the Situation of publick Affairs is such, that the State seems to be undone without Remedy, unless the People submit to the absolute Government of a single Person; which many wise Men thought to be the Case of the Roman Republick, in the Time of Augustus Caesar.'

¹⁶⁰ Ibidem, XV.6, p. 333. 'Contra verò alia omnia Mecenas apud Augustum disserebat, monebatque,

Augustus's measurements assured that power now firmly rested in the hands of the 'princeps'.

With the succession of Tiberius the fall of the Republic saw its completion. Contrary to Tiberius's assertion in the beginning of his reign 'that in a free state minds and tongues should be free',¹⁶¹ this freedom rapidly disappeared as Tiberius's behaviour became more and more tyrannical, only to end in a reign of terror and fear. With this last hallmark of the Republic gone, the Roman Republic was no more.¹⁶²

As stated before, the sixteen dissertations on 'the regal rule of the Romans' are not a formal work of history. But there is a dominant feature that holds these dissertations together, and that feature is the principle of causation. Boxhorn presents us a picture of Roman history, in which almost every event is somehow connected with, or the result of, events that happened before.¹⁶³ So, although every dissertation is a separate unit, collectively they form a more or less coherent narrative.¹⁶⁴ Only the 250 years gap between the institution of the censors in the thirteenth dissertation and the fall of the Republic in the fourteenth dissertation constitutes a clear breach.

ut, si quidem patriam amaret, pro qua tanta jam gesserat bella & feliciter confecerat, veterem Reipublicae formam mutaret, solusque ipse amplissimum imperium capesseret; ea potissimum usus ratione, quod imperium Senatui & populo reddere jam aut permittere nihil esset aliud quam impotes mentis, datis jam furoris utriusque plurimis documentis, gladio donare.' Here Boxhorn follows Cassius Dio. See Cassius Dio, *The Roman History: The Reign of Augustus*. Translated by Ian Scott-Kilvert. With an Introduction by John Carter (Penguin Books; Harmondsworth, 1987), LII.14, pp. 98-99. "... And so, if you care at all for your country, for whose sake you have fought so many wars and would gladly lay down your very existence, reform our life and order our affairs in the direction of greater moderation. The question concerns the privilege of doing and saying exactly what one pleases. Now if you examine the matter carefully, this freedom, if it is exercised by men of sound judgement, becomes a source of great benefit for all, but, if exercised by the misguided, leads to disaster. Accordingly, the man who grants such a licence to the latter is in effect putting a sword into the hands of a child or a madman; if he offers it to the wise, he is not only preserving their other privileges, but saving the incapable even in spite of themselves."

¹⁶¹ Ibidem, XVI.2, p. 344. 'In civitate libera linguam mentemque liberas esse debere.' This is a quotation from Suetonius's *Tiberius*. Suetonius, *Opera*, Vol. 1: *De vita Caesarum libri VIII*. Recensvit Maximilianus Ihm (Teubner; Leipzig, 1908), *Tiberius*, 28, p. 127. '... ac patiens subinde iactabat in civitate libera linguam mentemque liberas esse debere ...' English translation quoted from Suetonius, *Lives of the Caesars*. Translated with an Introduction and Notes by Catharine Edwards (Oxford University Press; Oxford, 1st ed. 2000, 2008), *Tiberius*, 28, p. 113.

¹⁶² In the *Metamorphosis Anglorum*, p. 466, Boxhorn depicts the instalment of the three-men committee in the new English Commonwealth 'that shall have power to Imprison and Sequester all such as shall actually adhere to any that shall raise or endeavour to raise Tumults and Insurrections; or shall speak or publish anything reproachful to the Parliament or their proceedings' as the end of England's freedom: 'Vale Anglica Libertas.' Walker, *The History of Independency*, pp. 90-91. See also chapter 5.

¹⁶³ The disposition of Tarquinius Superbus, for example, can only be fully understood against the background of the first six dissertations, in which we see Rome being transformed from a patrimonial principate into a legal principate.

¹⁶⁴ A 'grand design', however, seems to be missing. The changes in Rome's form of government are not only the results of the conflict between the patricians and the plebs, although this conflict plays a dominant part, which is not so surprising, since Boxhorn relies so heavily on Livy for the story told in the first thirteen dissertations. Reactions to rulers who turn into tyrants and the demands that Rome's foreign wars made on its inhabitants and constitution also play an important role. These are more *ad hoc* causes.

Besides this principle of causation, four other points attract attention. First, the way Boxhorn attests credibility. Boxhorn uses two directives: the opinion of all or the many, and logic. Thus, Boxhorn follows Dionysius of Halicarnassus's version of Romulus's death, because most ancient authors hold the same opinion as Dionysius's.¹⁶⁵ In a discussion between Livy and the Greek biographer Plutarch (46-after 119) on the duration of the highest power (*summa potestas*) in the hands of the senators who ruled Rome after the death of Romulus, Boxhorn sides with Livy, because his 'story is more consistent with reason, and therefore seems to us to be more truthful'.¹⁶⁶

Second, the importance of quotations. That each dissertation is full of quotations is not so surprising: they had, of course, in the first place a rhetorical purpose. The quotations serve two purposes: they form a part of the narrative, or they are used to support certain statements. So, after claiming that the tribunes's power to veto was bad and destructive, Boxhorn cites Quintus, one of the participants in Cicero's *Laws*: 'For with the birth of the tribunate the weight of the aristocracy diminished and the sheer force of the masses gathered strength.'¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁵ Boxhorn, *Emblemata politica: accedunt dissertationes politicae de Romanorum Imperio et quaedamaliae*, I.11, pp. 150-51.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibidem*, II.1, pp. 152-53, with the following quote on p. 153. 'At Livii narratio rationi magis convenit, ac idcirco verior nobis videtur.' In Boxhorn's version Plutarch had held that the highest power had rotated among the senators individually, who had to lay down their powers after six hours. Plutarch, however, tells a slightly different story, claiming that the senators had arranged 'that each of them in his turn should assume the insignia of royalty, make the customary sacrifices to the gods, and transact public business, for the space of six hours by day and six hours by night'. See Plutarch, *Lives*, Vol. 1, *Numa*, 2, pp. 308-13, with quote on p. 313. Livy, according to Boxhorn, had claimed that ten senators, who were elected from the ten *decuria* in which Rome's hundred senators were divided, held power without being bound by any time limit. Livy's report, however, is somewhat different. 'And so the hundred senators shared the power among themselves, setting up groups of ten and appointing one man for each group to preside over the government. Ten men exercised authority, but only one had the insignia of command and the lictors; the command was limited to a period of five days and passed to all in rotation.' Quoted from Livy, *The History of Rome: Books 1-5*. Translated, with Introduction and Notes, by Valerie M. Warrior (Hackett Publishing Company; Indianapolis/Cambridge, 2006), I.17, p. 27.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibidem*, X.10, p. 270. '... nata potestate tribunitia gravitatem Optimatum cecidisse, & convaluisse jus multitudinis.' Cicero, *De re publica, De legibus, Cato maior de senectute, Laelius de amicitia*. Recognovit brevique adnotatione critica instruxit J.G.F. Powell (Clarendon Press; Oxford, 2006), *De legibus*, III.17, p. 246. 'Magnum dicis malum; nam ista potestate nata gravitas optimatum cecidit convaluitque vis multitudinis.' English translation taken from Cicero, *The Republic and The Laws*. Translated by Niall Rudd. With an Introduction and Notes by Jonathan Powell and Niall Rudd (Oxford University Press; Oxford, 1998), III.17, p. 156. Here one has a good example of how Boxhorn, by taking a quotation out of its original context, manipulates a text in a direction favourable for his own argument. By citing from a work of Cicero, he seeks Cicero's authority to support his argument. But in the *Laws* Cicero actually defends the institution of the tribunate, something that becomes quite clear if one looks at the immediate response of Marcus, one of the other participants in the discussion, and the one who is actually expressing Cicero's standpoint of view. As Neil Wood has explained, Cicero saw the institution of the tribunate as an advantage, because it would institutionalise the conflict between the patricians and the plebeians, making it controllable. Neil Wood, *Cicero's Social and Political Thought* (University of California Press; Berkeley, 1988), pp. 165, 171. The fact that Boxhorn is omitting this response, indeed, the fact that he does not mention any source that defends the tribunate, serves as a warning that Boxhorn, who

Third, the sources that Boxhorn uses. Among them the historical works dominate. Most cited authors are Livy, Florus, and Tacitus. Cicero and Plutarch play an important role in the first thirteen dissertations; the Roman biographer Suetonius (69-c.122) and the Roman historian Cassius Dio (c.150-235) in the last three. The fact that the works of these authors contain the most valuable information about the specific topics that Boxhorn addresses in the respective dissertations can explain these preferences.¹⁶⁸

But what is most surprising is that in the last three dissertations the works of Cicero, Sallust, and the Greek historian Appian (c.95-c.165) are missing.¹⁶⁹ All the more so, since we have seen Boxhorn using Cicero in the first thirteen dissertations and because we know that Boxhorn had at least read the works of Sallust.¹⁷⁰ This brings us to the most striking feature of Boxhorn's history of Rome, namely that the period between 133 and 60 BC is almost totally concealed and that the traditional explanations of the fall of the Roman Republic, notably those of Sallust and Appian, are missing.¹⁷¹ These two facts, which are closely related, merit extra attention because, as I will claim, they can be connected to Boxhorn's view on the Dutch Republic.

In Sallust's thesis the fall of the Roman Republic was due to the moral decline that occurred after the destruction of Carthage in 146 BC, when Rome, left without any serious enemy, was overcome by leisure and the new won riches from the East.¹⁷² These riches had a devastating effect: inciting lust

normally gives both the arguments for and against a certain case before making a final decision on it (see, for example, his discussion on the righteousness of the deposition of Tarquinius Superbus (Boxhorn, *Emblemata politica: accedunt dissertationes politicae de Romanorum Imperio et quaedamaliae*, VII.7-8, pp. 226-31) or his discussion on the righteousness of certain laws of the Twelve Tables (ibidem, XI.3-4, pp. 276-79)), was not an unbiased historian who, as he self claims, follows the most logical option (ibidem, II.1, p. 153), but a historian who had certain preferences that guided his works.

¹⁶⁸ The first thirteen dissertations count 96 quotes and 34 references. In total, 29 different authors are mentioned. The other sources are for the greater part political works, such as Aristotle's *Politics*, biographies, or legal texts, such as Ulpian's commentaries in the *Iuris Corpus Civilis*. The last three dissertations count 30 quotes and 9 references.

¹⁶⁹ Instead, Boxhorn almost exclusively relies on Tacitus, Suetonius, and Cassius Dio. What these three authors have in common is that although they show a critical attitude towards the tyrannical behaviour of certain emperors, none of them questions the necessity that in the end 'the supreme authority in the Commonwealth had to be concentrated in the hands of one man'. Ronald Syme, *Tacitus*, Vol. 1 (Clarendon Press; Oxford, 1st ed. 1958, 1997), p. 408, with quote there; Fergus Millar, *A Study of Cassius Dio* (Clarendon Press; Oxford, 1964), pp. 74-75; Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, *Suetonius: The Scholar and his Caesars* (Yale University Press; London, 1983), pp. 139-41; Mellor, *The Roman Historians*, pp. 98-101.

¹⁷⁰ For example, in the *Institutiones politicae*, I.8, pp. 112-13, Boxhorn quotes from *Catiline's War*, chapter 47. In the *Institutiones politicae*, I.12, p. 196, Boxhorn quotes chapter 81 from *The Jugurthine War*. In this quotation Jugurtha states that Rome only wages war to expand its power (*imperium*) and wealth. Boxhorn was probably also responsible for the 1634 Elzevier (Leiden) edition of Sallust's works.

¹⁷¹ There is only one brief reference to the first civil war. See above, 'the fury of Marius and Cinna' and 'the thunder of the storm raised by Sulla'.

¹⁷² Especially Sallust, *Catiline's War*, VI-XIII, and *The Jugurthine War*, XXXXI-XXXII. Florus begins his story of moral decline with the Syrian war (191-188 BC) against king Antiochus III (241-187 BC) and the inheritance of the kingdom of Pergamon (133 BC). Florus, *Epitome*, I.47, pp. 214-15.

for power and avarice, they corrupted Rome's old virtues. 'Hence it was the desire for money first of all, and then for empire, which grew; and those factors were the kindling (so to speak) of every wickedness.'¹⁷³ These two factors led to factions, power struggles, civil wars, and, in the end, the fall of the Republic itself.¹⁷⁴

Alongside this process (and, depending on the author, interacting with it) was the conflict between the patricians and the people over control of the public land. Rome's Italian conquests had won her many lands. These, however, were unequally distributed: most of them were in the hands of the patricians, who, for fear of losing land, money, and power if public land would be redistributed among the masses, viciously opposed any land reform. This led them into conflict with the people, who, impoverished and 'oppressed by penury, taxes and military service', demanded their fair share of the public land.¹⁷⁵

This conflict over the distribution of public land became fiercer at the moment that power-hungry generals, in their search for ever more power, started to promise land to their soldiers. New factions emerged, cutting through all segments of society, allying patricians with plebeians and the legions, which became the private armies of their generals. These generals saw to the destruction of the state.

Both theories, the one with its emphasis on moral decline due to wealth, the other with its emphasis on the problem of public land and its distribution, or any combination of the two, were known and very much alive in the seventeenth century.¹⁷⁶ Heinsius, for example, Boxhorn's own teacher and patron

¹⁷³ Sallust, *Catiline's War*, X.3, p. 8.

¹⁷⁴ Cicero saw 'the unbridled pursuit of riches' as the cause of moral decline in his time. Wood, *Cicero's Social and Political Thought*, p. 112.

¹⁷⁵ Appian, *The Civil Wars*. Translated by John Carter (Penguin Books; London, 1996), I.7, p. 5.

¹⁷⁶ The thesis of moral decline comes back in the works of the English politician Algernon Sidney (1623-1683). '... valour had conquered their foreign enemies. Rival Carthage lay ignobly hid in its own ruin. The proudest kings had died under the weight of their chains ... Many of the most powerful and warlike towns were buried in ashes. This success followed with a prodigious affluence of riches, introduced ambition and avarice, raising some citizens above the power of the law. Then did that victorious people turn its conquering hand into its own bowels, and fell by its own sword. That unequalled commonwealth which had sat like a queen ruling the nations, fell under the feet of one of her wicked sons.' Algernon Sidney, *Court Maxims*. Edited by Hans Blom, E.O.G. Haitsma Mulier and R. Janse (Cambridge University Press; Cambridge, 1996), pp. 136-37. Quoted from Jonathan Scott, *Commonwealth Principles: Republican Writing of the English Revolution* (Cambridge University Press; Cambridge, 2004), p. 322. The English philosopher James Harrington (1611-1677) believed that while Rome neglected its 'equal agrarian', it 'allowed the profits of conquest to be appropriated by nobles'. Blair Worden, "English Republicanism", in Burns (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Political Thought*, p. 467. John Pocock states that it was commonplace among civic humanists in the seventeenth century that in the Roman Republic 'the distribution of lands fell under the control of soldier-politicians, so that armies became the clients and factions of their generals, who alone could reward them, until the most successful *imperator* emerged to rule Rome with his now mercenary army'. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment*, p. 211. In his recent work on Edward Gibbon, John Pocock has shown how strongly influenced both Lipsius and Harrington were by what he calls the 'Gracchan explanation' that was transmitted by the work of Appian. J.G.A. Pocock, *Barbarism and*

at Leiden, had agreed with Sallust that a 'desire for silver and gold', avarice and ambition had been the cause of the calamities that had befallen the eternal city in the period between the Second Punic War and the principate of Augustus.¹⁷⁷ In Boxhorn's view on the fall of the Roman Republic, however, these elements are missing. We hear nothing about the problem of avarice, nor do we hear of an agricultural crisis, deprived peasants or land distributions. While it is true that Boxhorn speaks of moral decline in the sense that the *mos maiorum* is neglected, he nowhere connects this with an influx of riches or with the problem of avarice, the two key elements in Sallust's theory. He does not even speak of them, nor does he mention or refer to any of the works of Sallust, Appian or Cicero for that matter. But Florus, on whom Boxhorn so much relies, does.¹⁷⁸

Indeed, when reading Florus, it becomes clear that Florus had quite an outspoken view about what had caused the fall of the Roman Republic, a view that shows a stark resemblance with the work of Sallust.¹⁷⁹ Since Boxhorn had read the works of Sallust and had published an edition of Florus's *Epitome* in 1632, which he had provided with his comments, he must have been aware of their authors' theses.¹⁸⁰ It is therefore somewhat surprising to see how vague Boxhorn's explanation is in comparison to Florus's. While Boxhorn follows Florus in seeing Rome's 'excessive good fortune' as the greatest cause of the Republic's decline, Boxhorn nowhere explains what had caused it, what Rome's 'excessive good fortune' exactly had entailed, or when it had started. He also fails to explain what had been the primary cause of the negligence of the *mos maiorum*. Boxhorn only states its features, not how it had come about. In short, we are left with a view on the fall of the Roman Republic that concentrates on certain short periods of time and that leaves out most of the traditional and common explanations, without offering a comprehensive and well-considered theory in return.¹⁸¹

Religion, Vol. 3: *The First Decline and Fall* (Cambridge University Press; Cambridge, 2003), pp. 276-303. See for a broader view also Andrew Lintott, *The Constitution of the Roman Republic* (Oxford University Press; Oxford, 1999), pp. 233-55, and Millar, *The Roman Republic in Political Thought*, pp. 50-99, 187-90.

¹⁷⁷ Heinsius, "De secunda & postrema Romanorum aetate", pp. 170-72.

¹⁷⁸ See, for example, Florus, *Epitome*, I.47, pp. 215-17.

¹⁷⁹ Quinn, *Studies in the Historiography of Florus*, pp. 68-78.

¹⁸⁰ These comments, however, are more text-critical, and do not comment on the actual content of what is said, unlike Boxhorn's commentaries on Tacitus.

¹⁸¹ That Boxhorn was quite capable of such a performance becomes clear from his *Oratio de eversionibus rerumpublicarum et earum causis*. Following the Greek theories on the rise and fall of empires, Boxhorn discusses some causes of the fall of empires. He distinguishes, amongst others, providence, natural disasters, vices, luxury, and love. 'Saepe luxuriae, et amori Magna imperia succubere.' (p. 9). He also refers to the fickleness of the plebs. 'Mitto iam publicae calamitatis causam, vulgi levitatem.' (p. 8). Furthermore, the characters of Augustus and Tiberius have done much in overthrowing the old Roman Republic. 'Augusti vero atque Tiberii ingenia quantum ad subvertendam Rempublicam contu-

A possible explanation could be that the rhetorical demands of the dissertations did not permit any sophisticated and long digression on the fall of the Roman Republic along the lines set forth by Sallust and Appian. Or maybe Boxhorn was simply not interested in economic aspects such as agriculture, trade or luxury.¹⁸² Here, however, I want to give a moment's thought to another possible explanation, which can be found if we connect Boxhorn's version of the history of Rome with his vision on Dutch history and the workings of Dutch society.

We have seen that both in the *Theatrum* and the *Nederlantsche historie* Boxhorn had observed and expressed the importance of trade and the possession of property for the well-being of both the individual Dutch citizen and the commonwealth. In the *Commentariolus* he had fully acknowledged this importance; according to Boxhorn, the domestic resources of the Dutch Republic were one of the three main pillars on which the independence of the Dutch Republic rested.¹⁸³ On their turn, these domestic resources rested 'chiefly ... upon the wealth of private individuals, and because these private individuals labour non-stop and tirelessly to acquire this wealth and to augment it once acquired, this commonwealth shall certainly have hardly any want'.¹⁸⁴

lere? Quorum ille industria sua imperium invasit, hic per occultas artes patrum animos fascinavit.' (p. 7). See also Wansink, *Politieke wetenschappen aan de Leidse universiteit*, pp. 158-59.

¹⁸² Both options can be refuted. The dissertations were in the first place meant to train students in rhetoric. How a student presented and defended his arguments was as important, or maybe even more important, as what a student actually said. Furthermore, within the humanist tradition there existed an intimate relationship between form and content. How one articulated one's story influenced the credibility of the story; the more eloquent an argument was put forward, the more convincing it would be. In other words, form was of the highest importance. Now it is possible that Boxhorn thought that the original goal of the dissertations did not go well with an elaborated theory on moral decline or economic downfall. To treat, for example, the history of Rome from the Gracchi via the death of Julius Caesar to the rise and sole rule of Augustus eloquently and coherently in one or two disputes was in Boxhorn's opinion maybe not possible. On the other hand, Boxhorn did not, for example, hesitate to treat at great length the official procedures that the *fetiales*, Rome's college of priests who represented Rome in diplomatic dealings, had to conduct when declaring war. Almost half of the dissertation covering the reign of king Ancus is dedicated to this discussion. Boxhorn, *Emblemata politica: accedunt dissertationes politicae de Romanorum Imperio et quaedamaliae*, IV.4-8, pp. 182-88. Boxhorn's treatment of the institution of the tribunate seems to contradict that he was not interested in economic phenomena and their possible effects on politics. In this treatment, which covers at least two dissertations, Boxhorn draws a direct connection between the economic hardship felt by the plebeians due to their military obligations, on the one hand, and political reforms, on the other.

¹⁸³ See Boxhorn, *Commentariolus*, IX.4-6, pp. 143-45. The other two pillars are the durability of the institutions of the Dutch Republic, by which Boxhorn means the preservation of the Dutch organisation of government as this was laid down in the Union of Utrecht, and the unequal distribution of power and wealth among the seven provinces, thanks to which they will stay mutually dependent. Boxhorn defends the first point by referring to Tacitus, *The Annals*, XII.11.3, p. 219. 'Frequent changes are not useful.' This quotation can be found twice in the *Dissertationes politicae de regio Romanorum imperio*. See Boxhorn, *Emblemata politica: accedunt dissertationes politicae de Romanorum Imperio et quaedamaliae*, I.11, p. 151, and XIV.9, p. 326. The same argument had been put forward by Grotius in his *Apology for the Lawful Government of Holland and West-Friesland*. See Geyl, *History of the Dutch-Speaking Peoples*, p. 366, and Blom, "The great Privilege as 'Code of Dutch Freedom'", p. 243. For the second point, see chapter 5.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibidem*, IX.6, p. 145. 'Si ad domesticas opes oculos quoque convertamus, cum illae praecipue consistant in opibus privatorum, atque eorundem infinita atque indefessa industria quaedam sit in iis

Private wealth was so important because it could be taxed. Equally important was the actual process of accumulation itself, since the greatest source of public income in the Dutch Republic were taxes raised on the sales of consumer goods and real-estate, and import and export duties. Transactions benefited the commonwealth: the more goods were sold and the richer the Dutch became, the more income the Dutch public authorities had.¹⁸⁵ And this income was necessary to pay for the military forces that protected the Dutch Republic against its enemies and safeguarded its independence.¹⁸⁶ Furthermore, in the *Nederlantsche historie* Boxhorn had praised the overseas empire the Dutch had recently acquired during their war with Spain, claiming that its riches provided the means to fight Spain.¹⁸⁷ For Boxhorn empire, trade, and the accumulation of private wealth formed the nucleus of the power of the Dutch Republic.

If, then, Boxhorn would have followed the classical Republican theory of moral decline he would have stumbled upon what at first sight seems to be a historical paradox: the primary causes behind the fall of the Roman Republic, namely the acquisition of a large empire and the influx of enormous amounts of wealth, were the same causes behind the strength of the Dutch Republic. It is maybe to avoid this apparent paradox that Boxhorn omitted the classical Republican theory in his political dissertations on the fall of the Roman Republic. But the possibility that this paradox was turned into a comparison carried an even greater risk: if empire, trade, and wealth had led to the downfall of the Roman Republic, could they not also lead to the downfall of the Dutch Republic? That the early modern Dutch at times felt uncomfortable about their economic success and feared that their 'excessive good fortune' could lead to their own demise has been argued before.¹⁸⁸ The main commercial rivals of the Dutch, the English, who portrayed their Dutch adversaries as sly, greedy, and egocentric tradesmen whose only motive was gain, constantly reminded the Dutch that empire and trade might have brought them economic success, but at the cost of their old virtues.¹⁸⁹ To these two points we

parandis, partisque augendis, nihil certè facilè huic Reipublicae est defuturum.'

¹⁸⁵ This is especially true for the province of Holland that paid for almost 60% of the Republic's expenditure. In the 1630s two-third of all the tax income of the province of Holland consisted of excise taxes (*accijns*). De Vries and Van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, pp. 96-113, esp. pp. 102-3.

¹⁸⁶ In this context Boxhorn frequently refers to Tacitus's famous *sententia* that 'tribes cannot be kept quiet without troops. You cannot have troops without pay; and you cannot raise pay without taxation'. Tacitus, *The Histories*, IV.74.1-2, p. 223. See, for example, Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I.9, pp. 132-33, and I.10, p. 156.

¹⁸⁷ Boxhorn, *Nederlantsche historie*, p. 6.

¹⁸⁸ See Simon Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age* (Harper Perennial; London, 1st ed. 1987, 2004), p. 326.

¹⁸⁹ Meijer Drees, *Andere landen, andere mensen*, pp. 116-31, and Conal Condren, "Beyond the Republic: Capability and the Ethics of Office", in Hartman, Nieuwstraten and Reinders (eds.), *Public Offices, Personal Demands*, pp. 237-51.

can add that three Leiden professors – Lipsius, Heinsius, and Cunaeus – had warned about the threat posed by the loss of ancient virtues and about the corruptive powers of wealth.¹⁹⁰ Taking all this into consideration, it is quite possible that Boxhorn deliberately omitted the classical Republican theory because of the possible critique it contained against what he believed to be the main pillars behind the success of the Dutch Republic.

Conclusion

In 1652 Boxhorn published the *Historia universalis*, a massive, more than 1200 pages thick book that covered the history of the world from the birth of Christ to the execution of Charles I.¹⁹¹ The work was dedicated to the States of Holland ‘for the eternity of your empire – which stretches and extends far and wide over peoples who were formerly unapproachable for the Greeks and the Romans, nor visited by them, or who were unknown to them, and that is daily increased’.¹⁹² In this book Boxhorn had ‘recorded some [matters] from Africa and America, many [matters] from Asia, but mostly [matters] from Europe, because the history of Europe has proved to be a history that is better known and handed over by many trustworthy annals’.¹⁹³ Once again, any methodological explanation on how history should be conducted is missing. However, we do get, though cautiously, a definition of what history entails. History is, ‘unless I am mistaken, the memory of all ages’.¹⁹⁴ But most of the attention goes out to the main goal of the book: to protect the past against the ‘unfairness of times and the passive idleness and the incredible negligence of men’.¹⁹⁵ Boxhorn defines his main task as to ‘show above all the origins, that is, as if [they were] founts and causes, from which the famous changes of commonwealths and empires have come forth’.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁰ See chapter 2.

¹⁹¹ The book is divided into two parts. The first and by far the largest part of the book is devoted to the period before 1500; the second part tells the history of the world ‘from the birth of Charles V’ up to the year 1650. Boxhorn, *Historia universalis*, II, p. 1. Thus, ‘modern’, contemporary history is distinguished, but not separated, from its pre-1500 roots.

¹⁹² Boxhorn, “Dedication to the States of Holland”, in idem, *Historia universalis*, iv. ‘Qualencunque opus hoc Vestrum facere, Dare vobis, Dicare ac Dedicare, Patres, nunc adeo; pro [aeternitate-JN] quorum Imperii, quod per inaccessas olim Graecis Romanisque nec visitatas gentes, aut incognitas, longe lateque, & majoribus indies incrementis, se exporrigit ac diffundit.’ This is yet another example that Boxhorn was aware that the knowledge of the ancients was not perfect or all embracing.

¹⁹³ Ibidem, iii. ‘Africae & Americae nonnulla, plura Asiae, plurima autem Europae prodidimus, quia hujus res notiores, fidelibusque plurium Annalibus traditae, offerebantur.’

¹⁹⁴ Ibidem, ii. ‘Historiam, id est, nisi fallor ego, saeculorum omnium memoriam ...’

¹⁹⁵ Boxhorn, “Preface of the author, in which an account is given of the intention [of the author]”, i. ‘... iniquitate temporum supinaque hominum ignavia ac incredibili negligentia ...’

¹⁹⁶ Ibidem, ii. ‘Mihi quoque id potissimum nunc curae fuit ... exhibere in primis Origines, hoc est,

History, then, is something worth remembering for present and future generations. The past is valuable because it provides lessons, examples, and maybe even answers to present questions. It shows God's involvement with this world, it incites people to do noble deeds, and it entertains people's minds.

It is the job of the historian to preserve this past, which has a global reach, for his and future generations. Preferably, he will present this past in some kind of chronological or geographical order. The relics of the past are the historian's subject. Written artifacts like books of history, declarations, or town privileges are his main sources. But other physical remains such as statues, epigraphs, coins, ancient ruins, and even pots and pans also belong to the large treasury that the historian can plunder in search for the truth about the past.¹⁹⁷

Although Boxhorn remains silent about the tools and methods that the historian can and should apply to recover and preserve the past, it is clear that his approach was, in the first place, philological. Like all humanists, Boxhorn had a special interest in words and languages, and the 'particularly meaning of words and the way that words acquired meaning'.¹⁹⁸ Finding out the exact and correct meaning of words was crucial for the historian because words formed the key to understanding the texts that were the historian's primary sources of information and his most valuable pieces of evidence. Boxhorn's contribution to the field of philology testifies that Boxhorn was aware that the meaning of words, and the 'matter' they referred to, depended upon the context, 'both in the sense of the surrounding words and that of the physical and historical context in which the text had been produced'.¹⁹⁹

fontes veluti ac causas, ex quibus insignes publicarum rerum imperiorumque exortae sunt mutationes.'

¹⁹⁷ In the *Theatrum* Boxhorn referred to drinking cups that had been found in the northern part of Brabant to prove that the inhabitants of the northern part of Brabant, that is, the place of his birth and youth, and the Hollanders had the same common ancestors. Boxhorn, *Theatrum*, p. 8.

¹⁹⁸ Stephen Davies, *Empiricism and History* (Palgrave Macmillan; Basingstoke, 2003), p. 16.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibidem*. A good example of this can be found in the letter from Boxhorn to Blaespilius. In this letter, which is by far the longest letter we have from Boxhorn, Boxhorn dwelled on the possible meanings of the Latin words 'subjicere' and 'circumdire' in Suetonius's *Life of Augustus*, 87-88. Boxhorn defended Heinsius's interpretation of these words against a certain Johannes Crojus, who followed a more stricter interpretation than Heinsius did. To prove his point Boxhorn presented an array of evidence, ranging from other passages in Suetonius's *Life of Augustus* (p. 271) to Roman inscriptions on graves (pp. 261-64), all in order that his reading of the words corresponded with the way how Romans, and specifically Augustus himself, actually wrote (Boxhorn also referred to an ancient manuscript of the *Res Augustae*, a work allegedly written by Augustus himself). In other words, he tried to explain the meaning of the words 'subjicere' and 'circumdire' by putting them in their context. Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, pp. 236-76. See also G.P.M. Knuvelde, *Handboek tot de geschiedenis der Nederlandse letterkunde van de aanvang tot heden*, Vol. 2 (Malmberg; 's-Hertogenbosch, 1948), pp. 184-85.

The importance of texts as primary sources of information becomes clear from both the *Theatrum* and the *Nederlantsche historie*, but also from Boxhorn's other historical-geographical works and his editions of classical authors. In the *Nederlantsche historie*, for example, eyewitness accounts, charters, and official documents

Furthermore, Boxhorn's historical works display a great antiquarian interest in customs, monuments, and settlement patterns. They also show an awareness of the importance of numismatics,²⁰⁰ geography, and chronology for the study of the past.²⁰¹ Although Boxhorn cannot be considered a 'professional' antiquarian like his tutor Scriverius, his antiquarian attitude is evidently present, which is not so strange, considering the fact that there is a thin line between the linguistic endeavours of a humanist scholar to get a grip on the world of the word and the efforts of an antiquarian to unearth the world where the people who employed the word lived in.

But Boxhorn not only focused on customs and places. He was predominantly interested in the religious and the political 'spheres' of the past. This had everything to do with his preoccupation with the present. Boxhorn travelled into the past in order to explain contemporary events and social relationships. Both the *Theatrum* and the *Nederlantsche historie* make clear that for Boxhorn contemporary events and social relationships were the outcome of long-term historical processes. This explains Boxhorn's obsession with 'origins'. Indeed, if only two words had to be given to characterise Boxhorn's historical works, 'origins' and 'changes' would take first place. Since changes 'do not happen suddenly', the historian always has to go the sources (*ad fontes*) because 'nothing is more useful for the right and thorough understanding of even the truth, than to dig up and to have a careful look at these first if small origins, from which, however, like the outcome has amply shown, great and wonderful changes, above and against all expectations, have emanated'.²⁰² In order to understand the present it has to be put into a framework of time, in which one event leads to another.

It is the primary task of the historian, then, to unravel these strings of events and thus explain the changes they lead to. This begs the question to what these changes actually amount, and why it is so important to understand them. In the humanist sense of the past there was no real difference between the past and the present. Understanding the past and changes that happened in the past had value because it meant understanding the present and the changes that people themselves formed a part of.

form an important and integral part of the narrative as well as serving as Boxhorn's main primary evidence.

²⁰⁰ For example, in a letter to Adriaen Hoffer, November 18, 1643. Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, p. 213.

²⁰¹ In 1660 a chronology appeared at Frankfurt that is attributed to Boxhorn. This chronology is ordered in accordance with the theory of the four monarchies and runs to the year 1640. Is this chronology wrongfully attributed to Boxhorn or is it just a 'worthless pedagogical' instrument? Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn, *Chronologia sacra et profana* (Thomas Matthias Goetsius; Frankfurt, 1660).

²⁰² Boxhorn, "Dedication to the States General", v-vi. 'Tot rechte en grondige kennisse oock van de waerheid is niet dienstiger als op te staen ende naerstich in te sien dese eerste wel kleine beginselen, nemaer uyt de welcke, gelijk de uytcomste genoehsaem geleert heeft, groote ende wonderlijcke veranderingen, boven ende tegen aller verwachtinge, sijn voortgecomen.'

In Boxhorn's works, however, we sense a tendency of viewing the past as something entirely different than the present. The Hollanders had transformed from 'a rather simple' people into cunning and diligent merchants, while the towns of Holland had gained political independence as time had passed and town charters mounted. In the *Nederlantsche historie* we have seen the breakthrough of the true faith and the disruptive effects of the ever growing power of the clergy. In both cases the changes were real and constituted a break with the past. What is more, in neither cases does Boxhorn mention, or hint at, that these changes amounted to a return to some glorious, once lost past, although it is likely that in the case of the *Nederlantsche historie* the changes in religion meant a return to the true teaching of the Gospels.

Even in the *Dissertationes politicae de regio Romanorum imperio* we see an awareness that there exists a clear break between the past and the present. For example, Boxhorn explains the fable of Romulus being a child of the god Mars by referring to ancient customs now gone. Likewise, he strongly objects to imitate the Roman institution of the censors because Christians have ministers to watch over the people's morals.²⁰³ Most importantly, the re-introduction of a monarchical form of government under Julius Caesar and Augustus was not a real return to the past. Romulus had founded a monarchy because the rather wild nature of the people who had never experienced any rule before could only be kept in check under a monarchical regime. Augustus, however, had opted for a monarchical regime in order to restore peace and tranquility among a people who had ruled themselves for centuries.²⁰⁴

Thus, at least in some cases, there is a difference between the past and the present, and certain events can constitute real breaks between what happened before and after them. It is these breaks that explain the importance of understanding the changes that brought them about. Not only do these changes

²⁰³ Idem, *Emblemata politica: accedunt dissertationes politicae de Romanorum Imperio et quaedamaliae*, XIII.9, pp. 309-10. 'Sunt qui urgent hodie etiam ad Romanorum exemplum in Rebuspublicis constituendos esse ejusmodi Censores. At haud satis illi meminisse videntur temporum, quibus nati sunt; quibus facilius multo est tutiusque illud veteris Romanae integritatis gravitatisque institutum admirari, quam imitari. Nos inter, qui Christo diximus sacramentum, penes praesides praestitesque sacrorum, per leges divinas ea potestas, qua dum alia merito puniunt, aut notant, quae merito non punit Magistratus; alia merito non puniunt, quae tamen merito punit magistratus; disciplinae morum ac honestati inter Christianos cives satis superque est provisum.' Here, Boxhorn takes position against Lipsius, who had demanded the reinstatement of censors. Lipsius, *Politica*, IV.11.11-18, pp. 485-95. See also Wansink, *Politieke wetenschappen aan de Leidse universiteit*, pp. 129, 162, and Oestreich, *Neostoicism and the Early Modern State*, p. 48.

²⁰⁴ This was the reason why Augustus had to introduce his monarchical regime under the veil of the principate. It can rightfully be argued that Boxhorn followed here a Polybian kind of reasoning, seeing the re-introduction of a monarchical regime as the Polybian *cyclus* coming full circle. However, it becomes clear from the description that follows in the *Dissertationes politicae de regio Romanorum imperio* that Augustus's Rome was something entirely different than Romulus's and that Rome's new monarchical regime had to be organised in a manner that fundamentally differed from the way the monarchy had been organised under Rome's first seven kings.

make clear that the present cannot always be seen as a repetition of the past, but this insight itself also leads to the conclusion that the present can only be understood as a product of events and changes that have happened in the past and lead up to the present. It is here that we come across a strong sense of causation. Especially in the *Nederlantsche historie* it becomes evident that Boxhorn possesses a notion of development that sees development as a patron in the changes that occur in time, and that he, unlike most Dutch historians of his time, does put the past 'in a broader framework of long-term structural change'.²⁰⁵ Indeed, in sharp contrast to Vossius, Boxhorn does not minimise the notion of change, but actually puts it centre stage.²⁰⁶ The consequences of this choice do not only confine themselves to his historical works, but are also visible in Boxhorn's political works. It is to Boxhorn's most important political work that we will now turn our attention.

²⁰⁵ Haitsma Mulier, "De humanistische vorm", p. 30. See also Raedts, "Ter verdediging van kerk en vaderland", p. 378.

²⁰⁶ Wickenden, *G.J. Vossius and the Humanist Concept of History*, p. 193.

Chapter 8

The science of politics.

The *Institutiones politicae*

In the previous chapter we have seen that although Boxhorn followed many of the historical commonplaces and topics of his time, he gave them his own particular twist that makes it hard to pin him down as a typical humanist historian. In this chapter I will try to show that the same reasoning holds good for Boxhorn's political thought. For we will see that beneath the many commonplaces he used in his political works and that earned him a classification among the examples of the monarchical, Aristotelian, humanist tradition that dominated the Dutch universities in the first half of the seventeenth century,¹ Boxhorn actually laid the groundwork for future Dutch political thinkers such as the brothers De la Court and Spinoza.² Indeed, a thorough analysis of his *Institutiones politicae* will make it hard to sustain that he, as Kossmann would have it, 'remained deliberately and with conviction within the traditional mould'.³ For a close study of the *Institutiones politicae* will make it clear that unlike Aristotle, but more like Hobbes and the brothers De la Court, Boxhorn saw fear, self-interest and necessity not only as the causes behind the establishment of political society, but also as the most important principles that should guide its organisation and endurance. Furthermore, anticipating the brothers De la Court and Spinoza's critique on Holland's oligarchical *regenten* regime, Boxhorn held a specific, although somewhat covert plea for the 'democratisation' of Holland's body politic in the *Institutiones politicae*.

In like manner, a close look at the *Disquisitiones politicae*, which we shall discuss in the next chapter, will show that Boxhorn took his historical thought into the realm of politics to the effect of criticising and undermining the prin-

¹ Kossmann, *Political Thought in the Dutch Republic*, pp. 41-43, and Wansink, *Politieke wetenschappen aan de Leidse universiteit*, pp. 156-83, 242-47.

² Ernst Kossmann has hinted that Boxhorn's 'modern' *raison d'état* thinking might have influenced Johan de la Court. Kossmann, *Political Thought in the Dutch Republic*, p. 42. Eco Haitsma Mulier has suggested that the brothers De la Court got acquainted with the works of Tacitus and Arnold Clapmarium through the works of Boxhorn. E.O.G. Haitsma Mulier, *The Myth of Venice and Dutch Republican Thought in the Seventeenth Century*. Translated by Gerard T. Moran (Van Gorcum; Assen, 1980), p. 123. As I will try to show, Boxhorn's influence on the political thought of the brothers De la Court was possibly much greater than thus far has been perceived.

³ Kossmann, *Political Thought in the Dutch Republic*, p. 42.

principle of *imitatio* that played an important role in the philological-historical tradition that was so dominant at Leiden University in the first half of the seventeenth century. The goal of the next two chapters, then, is to free Boxhorn from the mould other people have wrongly put him in and to give him his proper place in the history of seventeenth-century Dutch political thought.

Background to the *Institutiones politicae*

Boxhorn's main political work, and the one which earned him a place among the *politica* writers of the seventeenth century, was his *Institutiones politicae*. The earliest edition of the *Institutiones politicae* appeared in the Holy Roman Empire in 1656, some three years after Boxhorn's death.⁴ In the next fifty years at least seven more editions were published: four in the Dutch Republic and three in the Holy Roman Empire.⁵ There are some considerable differences between the editions. For example, the 1657 Leiden edition only consists of short and abstract *theses*, while the 1659 Leipzig edition, the 1668 Amsterdam edition, and the 1702 Utrecht edition include Boxhorn's explanation of these theses. Another difference is that the two Dutch editions of 1668 and 1702 share some extra features in comparison to the 1657 Leiden edition. First, they contain two extra chapters which have been added to book one.⁶ Second, certain chapters in the 1668 and 1702 editions count more theses than the same chapters in the 1657 edition.⁷ In addition, the 1668 and 1702 editions also contain the commentaries of George Hornius, professor of history at Leiden University between 1654 and 1670, in which Hornius gives his explanations of Boxhorn's theses.

⁴ Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn, *Institutionum politicarum libri duo* (Justus Hagemans; Hildesheim/Goslar, 1656).

⁵ Idem, *Institutionum politicarum libri duo: Editio altera, Priori longe emendatior* (Nicolaus Herculis and Abraham à Geervliet; Leiden, 1657); idem, *Institutionum Politicarum Libri Duo: Accessit Explanatio ab eodem auctore profecta, nunc ab interitu vindicata* (Johann Wittigau; Leipzig, 1659); idem, "Institutiones politicae", in idem, *Varii Tractatus Politici*, pp. 1-128; idem, *Institutionum Politicarum Libri Duo: Accessit Explanatio ab eodem auctore profecta, nunc ab interitu vindicata: Editio secunda, cui accessit Index rerum* (Johann Wittigau; Leipzig, 1665); idem, *Institutiones politicae cum commentariis ejusdem et observationibus G. Horni* (Caspar Commelinus; Amsterdam, 1668); idem, *Institutionum Politicarum Libri Tres: In Captiva sua Et Quaestiones Distincti, quibus Reipublicae Constitutio &c. diversae formae, rectaque ejusdem Administratio, succincte & nervose demonstratur* (Reich; Koenigsberg, 1678); idem, *Institutiones politicae cum commentariis ejusdem et observationibus G. Horni* (Johan Visch; Utrecht, 1702). Unless stated otherwise, in this thesis all references to, and quotations from, the *Institutiones politicae* refer to, and are quoted from, the 1668 Amsterdam edition.

⁶ These are chapters fourteen and fifteen, respectively 'on civil wars' (*De bellis civilibus*) and 'on secrets' (*De arcanis*). Thus, book I of the 1657 Leiden edition contains fourteen chapters in total, while in the later two Dutch editions of 1668 and 1702 book I contains 16 chapters. This difference has not been noticed by Harm Wansink. See Wansink, *Politieke wetenschappen aan de Leidse universiteit*, p. 168.

⁷ The most noticeable example of this expansion can be found in book II, chapter 4, dealing with tyranny; compared to the 1657 Leiden edition, the number of theses in the 1668 and 1702 editions is almost doubled.

As the title indicates, the *Institutiones politicae* should be seen as Boxhorn's 'personal compendium of knowledge' in the field of politics.⁸ After his death this 'compendium' saw at least three editions in Holland before 1672, the year that not only formed a watershed in the history of the Dutch Republic, but also in the history of the University of Leiden.⁹ These publications and the fact that Hornius adorned the *Institutiones politicae* with his own commentaries make it plausible that by the late 1650s and the 1660s Boxhorn's *Institutiones politicae* had become a university textbook,¹⁰ probably in addition to, or alongside, the works of his own tutor Burgersdijk.¹¹ If this is correct, then the 1668 edition of the *Institutiones politicae*, which is the edition that is used in this study, contains the political ideas to which an entire generation of students was exposed as they worked their way through the curriculum of Leiden University.

However, if we want to get a proper understanding of what Boxhorn had to tell these students, we first need to know when Boxhorn wrote the *Institutiones politicae* or taught them to his students. Unfortunately, this cannot be determined exactly. From the preface of the 1659 Leipzig edition of the *Institutiones politicae* we learn that Boxhorn's explanations of his theses cannot be older than 1641.¹² Thus, at least a part of the *Institutiones politicae* predates the

⁸ See footnote 10 below.

⁹ Otterspeer, *Het bolwerk van de vrijheid*, pp. 434-35.

¹⁰ See Brockliss, "Curricula", p. 567. Many of these personal compendia and cursus were eventually printed (often posthumously) and the most highly thought of often became recommended university textbooks themselves, the starting-point for future professorial exegeses. Frequently, to indicate the fact that they contained an ordered but relatively condensed abstract of available knowledge, they were given the title of "Institutiones", after the introductory Roman-law manual prepared for the sixth-century emperor Justinian.

¹¹ Burgersdijk's two most important works on ethics and politics, the *Idea philosophiae moralis* and the *Idea oeconomicae et politicae doctrinae*, were frequently reprinted. In this case it is interesting to note that George Hornius reprinted and annotated an edition of the political part of the *Idea oeconomicae et politicae doctrinae* in 1668, the same year that Caspar Commelinus printed Hornius's annotated edition of Boxhorn's *Institutiones politicae*. See Blom, *Causality and Morality in Politics*, p. 70.

¹² In the preface of the 1659 Leipzig edition Christian Friedrich Franckenstein (1621-1679), professor of eloquence and history at Leipzig, reveals that he had received Boxhorn's explanations of his theses seventeen years before from 'a very noble young man who had then just returned from the Netherlands'. The preface dates from the end of the year 1658, which means that Franckenstein had received Boxhorn's explanations around 1641. The young man Franckenstein is referring to could be one Johannes Fridericus Hanwaker, who, according to Franckenstein, had given him a handwritten copy of the *Institutiones politicae* to help him with his edition. The *album studiosorum* of the University of Leiden lists a host of 'Johannes Fridericus', but none of them has 'Han(e)wa(c)ker' as his last name. Christian Friedrich Franckenstein, "Preface", in Boxhorn, *Institutionum Politicarum Libri Duo: Accessit Explanatio ab eodem auctore profecta, nunc ab interitu vindicata*, i-iii. 'Vir longè Clarissimus Marcus Zuerius Boxhornius praefat. Histor. Universal. malum illorum morem accusat, qui inconsulto se ac invito rudimenta illa qualiscunque curae suae, quae cupidiae historiarum juventuti ante annos aliquot tradiderat, in lucem dare parabant, nisi ipse manum operi admooveret. Haec & ad illos pertinere accusatio videri potest, qui olim Politicas ipsius institutiones vulgaverunt, & ad me, qui jam earundem explanationem, (quam ante hos XVII. annos in vicinâ Academiâ agens à Nobilissimo juvene recens ex Belgio reduce nactus eram) subjunxi. Sed mihi eadem illa parata opinor excusatio est, quae auctori rudimenta historiae universal. publicanti. Facturi erant alii, quod ego impraesentiarum hortatu non unius suscepti, nullâ in

publication of Hobbes's *De Cive* (*On the Citizen*, 1642) and *Leviathan* (1651), and can be situated before or around the year that Johan de la Court matriculated at Leiden University.¹³ Internal evidence from Boxhorn's explanations reveal that at least some parts of them must be older than November 1635.¹⁴ Furthermore, a reference to the first Bishops' War, a conflict between Charles I and his Scottish subjects that ended with the Pacification of Berwick, signed on June 18, 1639, proves that a part of the content of Boxhorn's explanations cannot be older than 1639.¹⁵ Finally, there is also evidence that suggests that at least a part of Boxhorn's theses dates from around 1641 or before.¹⁶

Based on these pieces of evidence we take the period between 1639 and 1641 to be the period in which the content of the *Institutiones politicae* primar-

Nobilissimum virum injuriã, quem fati necessitas rebus humanis praematurè exemit. Accessit benevolentia juvenis à genere pariter & ingenio commendandi Johani Friderici Hanwakeri Meinungã-Franci, qui exemplar suum nitidã, & eleganti manu descriptum hunc in usum obtulit. In his edition of 1668 Hornius has left Boxhorn's explanations as presented by Franckenstein intact. Similarities in both literary style and content between Boxhorn's theses and his explanations as presented by Franckenstein, and between these two texts and other works by Boxhorn make it likely that the *Institutiones politicae*, both the theses and their explanations, are indeed from Boxhorn's own hand.

¹³ Johan de la Court enrolled on October 5, 1641. See the introduction, footnote 5.

¹⁴ In book I, chapter 12 Boxhorn makes an implicit reference to Selden's *Mare Clausum*, which was first published in December 1635. Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I.12, p. 192. 'Angli sunt, qui sibi maris imperium arrogant, scripsitque Seldenus pro jure Anglorum, sed ejus argumenta non sunt talia, ut propterea reliquae gentes juri suo renunciare debeant.' In that same chapter Boxhorn mentions Maarten Tromp in a context and a manner that suggests that Tromp was lieutenant-admiral of Holland at the time that this part of the *Institutiones politicae* was written down. Tromp was appointed lieutenant-admiral of Holland on October 27, 1637. *Ibidem*, p. 201. 'Experti id Batavi saepius, qui dum θαλασσιάρχῳ certa mandata dant, saepius eidem benè gerendae rei occasionem praeperuerunt. Modernus tamen Martinus Trompius liberiorum habet in mari imperandi vim.'

¹⁵ *Ibidem*, I.7, p. 90. 'Ultimo §. diximus etiam nihil temerè in sacris esse mutandum, quia quicquid novum cum mutatione veterum & saepè Reip. conjunctum est, quae interdum ex minimis oritur, ut testatur experientia. Recens hujus exemplum habemus in Anglia. Dum enim Archiepiscopus Cantuariensis quaedam in Religione mutare voluit, Scoti & Angli tantum non commissi sunt inter se.'

¹⁶ In a letter of Boxhorn to Constantijn Huygens, dated Februari 20, 1641, Boxhorn writes the following: 'Because if even commonwealths change when the music changes, as Plato thought they do (on this subject, which to my knowledge no ancient or modern author has ever treated sufficiently, I once wrote a little privately for myself), how much power, then, must we believe it has, if combined with the majesty and the training of all things divine, for converting, or, as he says, cleansing the mind?' Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, p. 175. 'Si enim mutatã Musicã, ut censuit Plato, etiam Respub. mutantur; (quo de argumento, à veterum aut recentiorum nemine satis, quod sciam, explicato, nonnulla olim privatim mihi sum commentatus) quantum illam posse credendum est, cum Majestate & meditationis divinarum rerum, conjunctam ad conversionem, sive, ut ille loquitur, purgationem animorum?' This theme returns in the *Institutiones politicae*, I.16.4, p. 253. 'Quod & significavit idem Plato, mutatis numeris, mutataque musicã, necessariò etiam Rempublicam everti, Musicae & numerorum nomine consensu publico intellecto, quam harmoniam alibi appellavit.' This thesis can already be found in the 1657 Leiden edition. This edition does not contain Boxhorn's explanations of his theses, which were first published in the 1659 Leipzig edition. Boxhorn, *Institutionum politicarum libri duo: Editio altera, Priori longe emendatior*, I.14.4, p. 133. 'Quod & significavit idem Plato, mutatis numeris, mutatãque musicã, necessariò etiam Rempublicam everti, musico & numerorum nomine consensu publico illecto, quam harmoniam alibi appellavit.' The reference is probably to Plato, *Republic*, 424c. 'The point is that caution must be taken in adopting an unfamiliar type of music: it is an extremely risky venture, since any change in the musical modes affects the most important laws of a community.' Quoted from Plato, *Republic*. Translated with an Introduction and Notes by Robin Waterfield (Oxford University Press; Oxford, 1st ed. 1993, 1998), p. 128. Unless stated otherwise, all references to, and quotations from, Plato's *Republic* refer to, and are quoted from, this edition.

ily took shape. It was a period of mixed blessings for Boxhorn. On the one hand, Boxhorn was flying high. In 1639 he married the daughter of a patrician from Middelburg. A year later he was promoted to ordinary professor of eloquence. On the other hand, Boxhorn also suffered misfortune during this period. In 1640 his twin brother Hendrik died.¹⁷ For the Dutch in general the period between 1639 and 1641 was marked by the expansion of their overseas empire and their ongoing war with the king of Spain.¹⁸ In addition to this, as noted before in our discussion of the *Commentariolus*, in the early 1640s there was also fear in the Dutch Republic that the Republic's whole fabric was about to fall apart as the Union, so it was suspected, was deliberately being undermined by the individual provinces. On the international level the period between 1639 and 1641 was dominated by war and conflict. The Thirty Years' War was still raging, there were rebellions in Catalonia and Portugal, and the British Isles suffered from conflicts, both on the battlefield and in Parliament. Its against this background of personal improvement and misfortune, fear in the Dutch Republic, and the wars that plagued Europe that the *Institutiones politicae* came into being.

Finally, one last point should be made here. Between 1639 and 1641 Boxhorn did not officially have the duty to teach politics. The origin of the explanations of Boxhorn's theses hint towards the possibility that Boxhorn taught the *Institutiones politicae* to his students during private lectures, which fell outside the official curriculum.¹⁹ Private lectures fulfilled an important educational function. It was at them that professors and scholars attached to the University could, with more freedom than was possible in public lectures, instruct their students 'in an ideal of freedom of thought and argument' that would later earn Leiden University the reputation of being the predecessor of the modern European 'research university'. The relative private environment (most scholars taught at home) and personal sphere (classes were often very small, consisting of only a few students) made scholars feel safe to say more than was officially allowed or publicly acceptable.²⁰ Therefore, it is possible

¹⁷ See chapter 3.

¹⁸ Between 1638 and 1641 the VOC managed to 'secure a large part of coastal Ceylon from the Portuguese ... and Malacca'. In 1641 a Dutch expedition to Africa led to the conquest of Angola. Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, pp. 536-37, with quote on the former.

¹⁹ As mentioned in footnote 12 above, Franckenstein had received Boxhorn's explanations from 'a very noble young man who had then just returned from the Netherlands'. This young man could have been Johannes Fridericus Hanwaker, who had given Franckenstein a handwritten copy of the *Institutiones politicae*. This Hanwaker probably came from the German town Meiningen in Thüringen. Most foreign students stayed one or two year years at Leiden. 'Such a short stay necessarily led ... to following private lectures ...' Otterspeer, *Het bolwerk van de vrijheid*, p. 264.

²⁰ Grafton, *Joseph Scaliger*, Vol. 2, pp. 389-92, 739-43, and idem, *Athenae Batavae*, passim, with quote on p. 27. Harm Wansink notes: 'At their private lectures professors were not only free in the choice of

to see the content of the *Institutiones politicae* not so much as a representative example of the politica that was *officially* taught at Leiden University when Boxhorn worked there, but more as the embodiment of the *personal* political ideas of a professor who taught at Leiden during the first half of the seventeenth century.

A first survey

The 1668 Amsterdam edition of the *Institutiones politicae* consists of two books. The first book is concerned with the origin, the nature, and the goals of the commonwealth (chapters 2-5), on the one hand, and the means to achieve these goals (chapters 6-13), on the other. The last three chapters of book one are concerned with the more gloomy side of politics: civil wars, the mysteries or secrets of command, and the inevitability of change and decline (chapters 14-16). The second book is dedicated to the classical discussion on the good and bad forms of government. Here, like most of his contemporaries, Boxhorn follows Polybius in distinguishing monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy as the three good forms of government, and tyranny, oligarchy, and ochlocracy (mob-rule) as the three bad forms of government.²¹ He also briefly deals with theocracy. Though unknown to the Greeks – ‘who brag that they are to be thanked for the reasons behind invented laws and for the earliest origins of public societies’ – this was ‘as far as age and sanctity of the law goes the first form of command’.²² This unique form of government, in which the power to

the method of teaching they wanted to follow, but they themselves could also determine the subject. This way they had a fairly large freedom of teaching, as a result of which they did not exclusively have to discuss the material that was sanctified by tradition.’ Wansink, *Politieke wetenschappen aan de Leidse universiteit*, p. 31.

²¹ In Aristotle’s constitutional typology the three good forms of government are monarchy, aristocracy, and ‘the polity’ (‘constitutional government’ or *politeia* in the specific sense of the word), while the three bad forms of government are tyranny, oligarchy, and democracy. Polybius changed the terminology, classifying the good rule of the many or the people as ‘democracy’ and the bad rule of the many as ‘ochlocracy’ or mob rule. Compare Aristotle, *Politics*, 1279a1-1279b1 [III:7], with Polybius, *The Rise of the Roman Empire*, VI.4. See also Wolfgang Mager, “Republik”, in Otto Brunner, Werner Conze and Reinhart Koselleck (eds.), *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe: historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland*, Vol. 5 (Klett-Cotta; Stuttgart, 1984), p. 563.

²² Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, II.1.5, pp. 258-59. ‘Atque ita quidem gentium sapientes tradiderunt, Graeci praesertim, qui rationes inventarum legum et primas origines publicarum societatum sibi debere gloriantur. Interim vero illi ignoravere aliam quandam, & antiquitate temporum, & sanctitate legum, primam Imperii formam extitisse, quam cum Josepho θεοκρατίαν appellamus. Est autem quasi Imperium aut Respublica Dei. Atque hac usus est populus Hebraeus.’ In this thesis Boxhorn seems to play with the double meaning of the adjective ‘primus’; it can both mean ‘the first in the time’ (i.e. the oldest) and ‘the first in order of importance’. With his critique on the Greeks Boxhorn followed in the footsteps of Petrus Cunaeus, who in his *De republica Hebraeorum*, which was probably Boxhorn’s source on the topic of theocracy, also criticised the bragging of the Greeks. Cunaeus, *The Hebrew Republic*, I.1,

command (*imperium*) and control (*regimen*) rested solely with God, had only existed among the Hebrews until its last remains had been destroyed in the days of the Roman commander Titus (39-81).²³

Throughout the two books Tacitus is by far the most quoted and frequently named author.²⁴ Especially the first six books of the *Annals* and the *Agricola* have been pillaged by Boxhorn to provide for historical examples and political *sententiae*. The influence of Aristotle is most notably felt in the first chapters of book one and the last chapters of the second book, while Plato (c.428/27-c.348/47 BC), Cicero, and the German scholar Arnoldus Clapmarius (1574-1605) have left their mark on the chapters that respectively deal with the rise and fall of commonwealths (chapter 16), the laws (chapter 9), the 'right of domination' (*ius dominationis*; chapter 6), and the 'mysteries of command' (*arcana imperii*; chapter 15). Other frequently cited or referred to authors are Livy, Suetonius, and Pliny the Younger (61/62-c.113). Considering the ample presence of the ancients, it will be no surprise that the *Institutiones politicae* is filled with classical examples. However, there are also many examples drawn from modern times, while some chapters are entirely written with the Dutch context in mind.²⁵ Indeed, according to Hornius in his preface to the reader 'Boxhorn has adapted his Instructions to the condition of the Dutch Republic; elsewhere there exists another method', indicating that the way 'politics' is taught depends on the circumstances where it is taught.²⁶

All in all, a first survey of the *Institutiones politicae* shows that it is a mixture of classical themes combined with the somewhat more contemporary and fashionable topics of 'reason of state', and with a keen eye for issues that were specifically relevant for future Dutch office-holders. The *Institutiones politicae*, then, fits well into the mould of that philosophical strand that is now known as 'political aristotelianism' and whose characteristics we have discussed in

p. 11. 'Certainly the Greeks when they arrogantly tally up the benefits they have bestowed on all the nations of the world, place their legislation at the head of the list ... But all their boasting is pointless, for Flavius Josephus the Jew has made this overblown nation swallow its pride.'

²³ Ibidem, II.1.5-7, pp. 258-59, and II.1, pp. 261-62. In 70 Roman troops under the command of Titus, eldest son of emperor Vespasian (9-79), had captured Jerusalem and destroyed its holy temple.

²⁴ Tacitus is cited or referred to in more than 200 occasions. Next in line is Aristotle (27), followed by Plato (19), Livy (18), Cicero (15), Suetonius (15), Pliny the Younger (12), and Clapmarius (7).

²⁵ Most notably in chapter 8 that discusses the importance, appointment, and regulation of lower magistrates; chapter 10 on the commonwealth's financial resources; and chapter 13 that deals with alliances.

²⁶ George Hornius, "Preface to the reader", in Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, ii. 'Sicut etiam ipse Boxhornius suas Institutiones ad statum Reipublicae Belgicae composuit; alibi alia ratio est.' This specific 'Dutchness' of the *Institutiones politicae* has been noticed by Wolfgang Weber. See Weber, *Prudentia gubernatoria*, pp. 93, 213, 259-63. Harm Wansink is less clear on this issue; on the one hand, he explicitly rejects that Boxhorn had written the *Institutiones politicae* 'with a view to the situation in Holland', on the other, he acknowledges that Boxhorn often comes up with examples drawn from 'Hollandish history' and that the *Institutiones politicae* is 'generally much "more Hollandish"' than the works of, say, Justus Lipsius or Daniel Heinsius. See Wansink, *Politieke wetenschappen aan de Leidse universiteit*, pp. 175-76.

chapter 3. In the more thorough investigation of the *Institutiones politicae* that follows next, I will show that Boxhorn indeed adhered to much of the principles attributed to this seventeenth-century scholarly Aristotelian tradition, but that he at the same time differed from this Aristotelian tradition on some crucial aspects. One of the most crucial differences is that Boxhorn does not seem to have believed in man's natural sociability. Rather, he saw man's ego-centric motives and necessity as the origins of political society and as the fundamental pillars upon which a stable and durable regime should be built. In this Boxhorn led the way for future Dutch political thinkers like the brothers De la Court and Spinoza who would shake the very foundations on which the *politica* tradition rested.

The nature of politics

As was common in the *politica* genre, Boxhorn begins his *Institutiones politicae* with a definition of politics. Politics 'is the science which deals with the theory and practice of founding, preserving, and enlarging a commonwealth'.²⁷ The theoretical side of politics consists of reason and examples.²⁸ Its 'foundations' can be found in the knowledge of what is right and good.²⁹ The practical side of politics learns, when, how, and to whom the examples that the theoretical side of politics delivers, must be applied.³⁰ Its 'foundations' can be found in prudence.³¹ Thus, although the theoretical and practical side of politics differ very much from each other, they are still intimately related.³² So much so, that the one would be meaningless without the other.³³

Boxhorn is aware that in practice the relationship between the two opposite sides of politics could become so estranged that this relationship often stood on the verge of collapsing. Since the practical side of politics should always adapt itself to the characters (*ingenia*) of those who are being ruled, and since

²⁷ Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I.1.1, p. 1. 'Politica, scientia est, quae constituendae, conservandae, augendaeque Reipublicae curam ac rationem tradit.'

²⁸ Ibidem, I.1, p. 2. 'Nam scientia ex ratione et exemplis constat.'

²⁹ Ibidem, I.1.4, p. 1. 'Scientiae fundamenta sunt ratio aequi & boni, & res Imperiorum generatim consideratae.'

³⁰ Ibidem, I.1, p. 2. 'Usus verò, quando & quomodo, & cui ea sint applicanda, docet.'

³¹ Ibidem, I.1.5, p. 1. 'Usus fundamenta sunt, Prudentia, & res Imperiorum singulares.'

³² Ibidem, I.1.3, p. 1. 'Usus & scientia inter se ut plurimum diversa & distincta sunt, ita tamen cognata, ut, quin haec ad alterius praesidium plurimum conferat, dubitari non possit, adeò ut scientia ab usu divellenda non sit, & illa huic optimo consilio praemittatur.' This is the precise opposite order that Aristotle recommends. Aristotle, *Politics*, 1338b1 [VIII:3], p. 198. 'Now it is clear that in education practice must be used before theory.'

³³ Ibidem, I.1, p. 2. 'Scientia haec ita est usui juncta, ut vana sit sine illo, & usus vanus sine scientia.'

these characters differ wildly in time and place, it becomes very hard to prescribe rules that hold any universal meaning. What some consider a virtue, others find wholly repulsive, and vice versa. Here the famous case of the Persian king Vonones provides the example.³⁴

As Boxhorn is not tired to repeat over and over again, what works in one country does not automatically work in another, or can even be counterproductive.³⁵ To find out what does sort the right effect in this or that country, an analysis of the local circumstances, the people's character and the commonwealth's institutions is necessary. It is here where politics meets history, and where the two merge as it were into what Hans Blom has called a 'historico-institutionally tinged "policy science"'.³⁶ The theoretical side of politics, then, says what should be done *in theory*; the practical side of politics, however, tells what policy is most likely to succeed in this or that circumstance or country, and thus what policy should be adapted *in practice*, for what ultimately counts in politics is actual success.³⁷ In the end, practice holds sway over theory.

The nature of man and the birth of the commonwealth

Crucial for a correct comprehension of Boxhorn's political thought is a clear insight into his perception of man's nature and into the understanding of man's relationship to his fellow men and society at large that Boxhorn deduces from this perception.³⁸ To begin with, Boxhorn believes that all men were by nature

³⁴ Ibidem. Grown up in Rome, Vonones had acquired virtues to which the Persians were not accustomed and thus considered as bad. Therefore, they had cast him out of their kingdom. Boxhorn quotes here Tacitus, *The Annals*, II.2.4, p. 42. 'Yet he was readily accessible and had a forthcoming affability, virtues, unknown to the Partians but novel as vices. And, because his forms of crookedness and honesty were alien to their own behavior, there was equal hatred for both.' In contrast, Zeno, whom the Romans had made king of Armenia, but who was, as son of the Pontic king Polemon, a foreigner, had won the goodwill of the Armenians, 'because from his earliest infancy he had emulated the customs and style of the Armenians'. Tacitus, *The Annals*, II.56.2, p. 69.

³⁵ To prove his point, Boxhorn comes up with a range of historical examples. An interesting example is that of the Inquisition. Officially called into existence in the fifteenth century to battle the Jews and the Moors in the kingdom of Castille who simulated that they were christians, the Inquisition also proved its value in keeping the kingdom of Napels subservient to Spanish rule. However, when the Spaniards introduced the Inquisition in the Netherlands they made a grave error, because 'the Dutch people were born in freedom and to life free'. For this reason the Inquisition was rightly called a form of tyranny. Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I.1, p. 3. 'Ex hac quoque ingeniorum & circumstantiarum diversitate illud est, quod una eademque res saepe alio atque alio nomine, prout usurpata fuit, nominetur. E.g. Inquisitioni Hispanicæ quidam Tyrannidem, quidam prudentiam inesse existimant, & utrumque verum. Nam, quia eâ usi Hispanio in Belgarum gente in libertate & ad libertatem natâ, meritò Tyrannidem dixerunt.'

³⁶ Blom, "Political Science in the Golden Age", pp. 58-59.

³⁷ Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I.1, p. 5. This becomes clear from the example of Tiberius, who refused to take tough measures against excessive luxury, because he was afraid he could not enforce them. Boxhorn quotes here Tacitus, *The Annals*, III.52.3.

³⁸ All scholars who until thus far have delved into Boxhorn's political thought have paid hardly, if

created equal and that all men were by nature free. In Boxhorn's time these two principles had become commonplaces. They had been sanctioned by Roman law and had been common features in the scholastic tradition of natural law.³⁹ In the sixteenth century the French Huguenots and Dutch Calvinists had used these principles of natural equality and natural liberty to legitimise their theories of resistance, as they found their way into the anonymous tract *Vindiciae contra Tyrannos* (*Vindication against Tyrants*, 1579), the annotations of the Frisian lawyer Aggaeus van Albada (c.1525-1587) to the *Acts of the Peace Negotiations* (1580),⁴⁰ and the *Politica* (*Politics*, 1603) of the German political thinker and Emden syndic Johannes Althusius (1557-1638).⁴¹ Vázquez and Grotius, with whose works Boxhorn was acquainted,⁴² had taken these principles as their point of departure, and through their works they had reached Thomas Hobbes, of whose *De Cive* Boxhorn owned a copy.⁴³ In adhering to these two principles, then, Boxhorn tapped into streams of thought that had for long formed an intrinsic part of European political thought.

In two crucial passages Boxhorn expresses these principles and sets out their implications.

All men, namely, are by nature created equal, and that equality could not be maintained in well-organised commonwealths, where some must obey, and others must command. Human authority, however, could not compel man to cast of this equality. Therefore, princes had to forge a certain air of divinity.⁴⁴

any, attention to these topics and the role they play in Boxhorn's political thought.

³⁹ For the principle of natural equality, see the Digest, L.17.32. For the principle of natural liberty, see the Digest, I.5.4. See also Van Gelderen and Blockmans, "Het klassieke en middeleeuwse erfgoed", p. 13. For the principles of natural equality and natural liberty being common features in the scholastic tradition of natural law, see, for example, Lloyd, "Constitutionalism", pp. 259-60, 294.

⁴⁰ As Gustaaf van Nifterik has shown, Albada was strongly influenced by Fernando Vázquez. See Gustaaf van Nifterik, "Fernando Vázquez, 'Spaignaert', en de Nederlandse Opstand", in *The Legal History Review*, Vol. 68, No. 4 (2000), pp. 523-40.

⁴¹ Quentin Skinner, *Hobbes and Republican Liberty* (Cambridge University Press; Cambridge, 2008), pp. 37-39.

⁴² See chapter 5.

⁴³ *Catalogus Variorum & Insignium Librorum, Celeberrimi ac Eruditissimi Viri Marci Zucri Boxhornii*, xxxv. The catalogue does not mention the year of publication. It does inform us that the copy of Hobbes's *De Cive* that Boxhorn owned was 'in 12'. This is an indication that Boxhorn owned the 1647 Latin edition of the *De Cive* that Samuel Sorbierè had managed to get published in Amsterdam, because the 1647 edition was also 'in 12'. For the connection between Vázquez, Grotius, and Hobbes, see Tuck, *Philosophy and Government*, pp. 170-200, 304-35, 346-48; Brett, *Liberty, Right and Nature*, pp. 166-235; Martin van Gelderen, "From Domingo de Soto to Hugo Grotius: Theories of Monarchy and Civil Power in Spanish and Dutch Political Thought, 1555-1609", in Graham Darby (ed.), *The Origins and Development of the Dutch Revolt* (Routledge; London/ New York, 2001), pp. 160-66.

⁴⁴ Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I.2, p. 13. 'Pares enim omnes homines à naturâ editi sunt, quae in ordinatis Rebuspublicis servari paritas non poterat, ubi aliis parendum est, aliis imperandum. Hominem autem autoritate exuere hanc aequalitatem homines cogi non poterant, itaque divinitatis quae-

Further, because it is against nature, and against the original freedom of men, to be subjected to some else, and because, as Seneca says, *no creature endures a ruler with more difficulty than that creature, that subjects all the rest*, it is altogether necessary to establish a bond by which rulers and subjects are not only very tightly, but also very willingly, mutually tied up to each other.⁴⁵

As these quotations demonstrate, Boxhorn considers natural equality and natural liberty as impediments to establishing and maintaining a commonwealth, which he depicts here as a hierarchical structure of people who obey and people who rule (an *ordo parendi et imperandi*). Certain devices or mechanisms are therefore necessary to create some artificial inequality and to tie men together to a common cause.⁴⁶ As we shall see later on, two of these devices are religion and the law.

A further problem that hinders the foundation and preservation of a commonwealth is man's character. Here we come across a second important feature of Boxhorn's political thought, namely his pessimistic perspective on human nature. Although it is true that Boxhorn never gives a full systematic account about man's nature, the observations he does make about man and human behaviour lead to an overall negative picture. To begin with, Boxhorn believes no man to be entirely good, which means that there is always the danger that man might do something that could prove harmful to his fellow

dam opinio Principibus affingenda erat.' See also *ibidem*, I.15, p. 241. 'Conditione nascendi imperantes pares subditis erant, itaque opus fuit specie, quâ fulti majores caeteris crederentur. Hinc tot apud omnes gentes instituta & solennia, quibus per insignia & species Majestatis, imperantium adjuncta autoritas.'

⁴⁵ *Ibidem*, I.3.15, pp. 18-19. 'Jam verò, cum contra naturam, & primævam hominum libertatem sit, alteri subesse, nullumque, ut Seneca loquitur, animal morosius rectorem ferat, quàm quod caetera domat, omnino nexum statuendum esse oportet, quo imperantes & subditi, non tantùm artissimè, sed & libentissimè sibi invicem devinciantur.' Boxhorn paraphrases Seneca, *De clementia*, I.17.1. 'nullum animal morosius est, nullum maiore arte tractandum quam homo, nulli magis parcendum.' 'There is no creature more difficult, none that needs handling with more skill, none that needs treating more tolerantly, than human beings.' Latin text and English translation quoted from Seneca, *De Clementia*. Edited with Translation and Commentary by Susanna Braund (Oxford University Press; Oxford, 2009), pp. 124-25. In this context it is also important to note that Boxhorn defends Aristotle's opinion that 'some are naturally bondslaves' against the verdict of the jurists that each form of subjection originates from the law of nations on the ground that Aristotle was referring to the slavish character of some people, and not to 'the servitude of bodies'. Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I.2, p. 14. 'Hinc est, quod quosdam Aristotel. esse dicat à natura servos l. 1. Polit. 3. quod contra Jurisconsultos esse videtur, qui omnem servitutem juris gentium esse volunt ... sed de servilibus solummodò ingeniis illo loco loquitur Aristoteles, non de servitute corporum.' For Aristotle's view on slavery, see Aristotle, *Politics*, 1253b1-1255b1 [I:3-7]. Interestingly, in the *De iure praedae* Grotius had employed an almost similar argument to defend Aristotle's assertion that some persons are by nature slaves. Hugo Grotius, *Commentary on the Law of Prize and Booty*. Edited and with an Introduction by Martine Julia van Ittersum (Liberty Fund; Indianapolis, 2006), VI.6, pp. 94-95. See also *idem*, *The Rights of War and Peace*, I.3.8, p. 264, and Tuck, *The Rights of War and Peace*, p. 89.

⁴⁶ See also "Boxhorn", p. 149.

man.⁴⁷ He further believes that human beings are primarily driven by ambition.⁴⁸ Man is essentially a greedy animal. Human nature is such 'that any man wants what he can [get].'⁴⁹ 'Where everyone is permitted everything, everyone will want to take possession of everything and will continuously strive for more.'⁵⁰

Boxhorn combines this bleak view of man with a negative description of the independent, individual commonwealth as the product of a historical process of decline. In the beginning, before there were any commonwealths, there had existed only single families. These families had formed the first forms of command (*imperia*) and had, due to their fertility, grown into 'a certain type of commonwealth' under the leadership of their respective *patresfamilias* (male heads of a family).⁵¹ This had been the legendary golden age, an age where there had been no laws, and where the authority of rulers had been obeyed without coercion.⁵²

⁴⁷ Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, II.4, p. 313. 'Nemo scilicet omnino bonus.' There is a biblical parallel here. See, for example, Ecclesiastes 7:20. 'For *there is* not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.'

⁴⁸ Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn, "Oratio de vera nobilitate", in idem, *Orationes duae, De vera nobilitate, et Ineptiis saeculi ...* (Justus Livius; Leiden, 1635), p. 1. 'Intuenti mihi in res humanas, Auditores, sola ubique ambitio in animis mortalium videtur dominari. Illa jam saeculorum vetus, & nec sui nec aliorum potens, eorum obliviscitur, quae ignorare non debebat.'

⁴⁹ Idem, *Institutiones politicae*, II.3, p. 290. 'Natura enim humana ita comparata est, ut quisque velit id, quod possit.'

⁵⁰ Ibidem. 'Ubi enim omnia omnibus licent, omnes omnia volunt occupare, & continuo amplius serpunt.' For this negative picture of man, which immediately reminds us of Machiavelli (*Discorsi*, I.3.1-4 and I.37.1-4, and *Il principe*, XVII.2), there are also traces to be found in Aristotle. See, for example, what Aristotle has to say in *Politics*, 1267b1 [II:7], p. 45. 'And the avarice of mankind is insatiable; at one time two obols was pay enough; but now, when this sum has become customary, men always want more and more without end; for it is of the nature of desire to be unlimited, and most men live only for the gratification of it.' And *Politics*, 1318b1 [VI:4], p. 157. 'Every man should be responsible to others, nor should anyone be allowed to do just as he pleases; for where absolute freedom is allowed there is nothing to restrain the evil which is inherent in every man.'

⁵¹ Ibidem, I.2, p. 12. 'Imperia sensim ac gradatim prodiisse dicebamus: Primis enim temporibus singulae familiae, pro Rebuspublicis erant. Quod mirum videri non debet, nam primi & prisci illi longaevi maximè erant atque simul foecundi, ut etiam quidam concubinas haberent. Itaque in vita sua plurimos penes se filios, nepotes & reliquos descendentes habebant, qui quia plures erant, speciem quandam Reipublicae constituabant.'

⁵² Ibidem, I.9, pp. 129-30. Reference to Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, I.89-90. 'Golden was that first age which unconstrained, With heart and soul, obedient to no law, Gave honour to good faith and righteousness.' Quoted from Ovid, *Metamorphoses*. Translated by A.D. Melville. With an Introduction and Notes by E.J. Kenney (Oxford University Press; Oxford/New York, 1986), p. 3. The reference is between brackets, which might suggest that it was not originally made by Boxhorn, but inserted by Franckenstein/Hanwaker. However, the theme of a golden age, which goes back to at least the Greek poet Hesiod (*Works and Days*, 110ff) from whom Plato (*Republic*, 415a-c and 546e) had derived it, would not have been unfamiliar to Boxhorn. It reoccurs in Tacitus (*The Annals*, III.26) and can be found in Vázquez's *Controversiarum illustrium* (I.4.3, I.41.32, and I.41.40), both works, as we have seen, Boxhorn knew and used. The theme also appears in Hobbes's preface to the *De Cive*, of which Boxhorn owned a copy. Concerning man's situation in the golden age, Boxhorn seems to hold a position somewhere between Vázquez and Hobbes, not following the former in denying that there had been no form of authority in this blessed age, but also not adhering to the latter's description of a fully active 'sovereign power'. See Van Nifterik, *Vorst tussen volk en wet*, p. 38, and Thomas Hobbes, "Preface to the Readers", in idem, *On*

The golden age, however, had come to an end when the original families had grown too big for their original homelands to contain them and to provide them with a sufficient amount of food. Forced by a scarcity of land and food, the original families had divided their possessions and had spread around the globe. With the division of property and the dividing of the earth, law had set in to protect private property. Together these divided families or tribes had constituted a 'commonwealth of nations' that Boxhorn describes as Augustine's City of God, whose 'prince was reason that ruled as wide as the nations were stretched'.⁵³

But reason's reign had not lasted. Due to the violation of the law of nations, factions had emerged, soon followed by all kinds of injustices and finally war. As peoples had begun to aim at their mutual destruction, many neighbouring tribes had merged into bigger compositions, as they had a better chance against the aggression of other tribes as a united front and because they could achieve advantages (*utilitates*) as a united front that they could not achieve on their own.⁵⁴ Furthermore, just as war had divided people, so necessity (*necessitas*) had united them. 'Because we all cannot achieve everything, yet we still require everything, a certain congregation of many is

the Citizen. Edited and translated by Richard Tuck and Michael Silverthorne (Cambridge University Press; Cambridge, 1st ed. 1997, 2007), p. 9, with quote there.

⁵³ *Ibidem*, I.2, p. 12. 'Atque Augustinus de Civitate Dei, gentium Rempubicam esse dixit, quae omnes homines complectitur, cujus Princeps ratio, quae tam latè imperat, quam gentes sunt porrectae.' I was unable to discover to which passage in Augustine's *De civitate Dei* Boxhorn is referring here. According to Boxhorn, the commonwealth of nations was 'the second form of command'. This form of command had sprung forth from the law of nations. *Ibidem*, I.2.5, p. 8. 'Secundum imperium ex jure gentium prognatum est, estque, quo gentes omnes eidem rationi, & unanimi consensu receptis institutis, se, velut legi, subjecerunt. Estque illa universalis Respublica omnium omninò hominum.' This view shows a close resemblance to what Vázquez had put forward in the *Controversiarum illustrium*. See Van Nifterik, *Vorst tussen volk en wet*, pp. 36-38.

⁵⁴ *Ibidem*, I.2.13, p. 9. 'At verò, natis interim, & crescentibus injuriis, quibus populis divisi, & potentia jam, opibus ac multitudine hominum, inaequales, in mutuum exitium ferebantur, plures vicinae gentes, & Respublicae modicae tandem sese conjunxerunt, & iisdem Principibus, Magistratibus & legibus, juri & imperio se permiserunt, muti auxilii ferendi causa, & ut tanto promptius injurias, quas alii inferebant, aut illaturi erant, quibus prohibendis singulae impares existebant possent propulsare.' *Ibidem*, I.2, p. 11. 'Dictum porrò est: Utilitatis causâ Rempubicam congregatam. Utilitas enim omnium non est postrema causa originis imperiorum. Cum enim singuli non essent pares suis commodis, & plurima utilia eis desiderarentur, congregati in pluribus inveniebant utilitatem, quam in se singuli non habebant, quive divisi ante, injuriis plurium facillè patebant, congregati easdem facillè vi repellabant.' The first argument reminds us of Machiavelli, *Discorsi*, I.1.2-3, p. 23. 'Because I want first to discuss its founding, I state that all cities are built either by men indigenous to the place where they are built or by outsiders. The first case occurs when the inhabitants, scattered through many small villages, do not feel they have a secure place to live in. Because both its location and the smallness of its numbers, each cannot resist on its own the strength of those who attack them; and when the enemy comes, there is not enough time to band together for self-defence or, even if there were time enough, they would have to abandon many of their stronghold and would thus immediately become their enemy's prey. Therefore, to avoid these dangers – prompted either on their own or by someone with greater authority among them – they band together and dwell in a site they have selected that is more convenient to live in and easier to defend.'

necessary, in order that other people's possessions bestow upon us, what we do not possess ourselves.⁵⁵

The commonwealth, then, according to Boxhorn's explanation, finds its origins in fear, advantage, and necessity. This explanation, however, is hard to reconcile with the key Aristotelian contention that 'man is by nature a political animal' and that, as a consequence, society is a natural phenomenon.⁵⁶ True, even Aristotle himself had admitted that the state had originated 'in the bare needs of life', but he had made it explicitly clear 'that the state is a creation of nature, and that man is by nature a political animal'.⁵⁷ This notion of man's natural sociability was widespread in early modern Europe: it was not only shared by political Aristotelians such as Arnisaeus and Boecler,⁵⁸ but also echoed by Vázquez and Grotius,⁵⁹ by Christoph Besold (1577-1638) and Althusius,⁶⁰ and, as we have seen, by Burgersdijk, Boxhorn's teacher at Leiden.⁶¹ But in Boxhorn's *Institutiones politicae* the notion of man's natural

⁵⁵ Ibidem, I.2, p. 13. 'Ut autem divisae gentes propter bella, ita conjunctae per necessitatem usus civilis; Cum enim omnes omnia non possimus, & tamen omnibus indigeamus, opus est Congregatione quadam multorum, ut quod ipsi non habemus, aliorum fortunae nobis elargiantur.' In other words, men are not self-sufficient and are therefore forced to seek each others company. See Plato, *Republic*, 369bff.

⁵⁶ See chapter 3. It is also hard to reconcile with the Ciceronian belief that political society came into being after some eloquent speaker had convinced men of the advantages of living together in an organised society, that is, that political society came into being thanks to the 'triumph through rhetoric of reason over appetite'. Lloyd, "Constitutionalism", p. 260.

⁵⁷ Aristotle, *Politics*, 1252b1-1253a1 [I:2], p. 13. 'When several villages are united in a single complete community, large enough to be nearly or quite self-sufficing, the state comes into existence, originating in the bare needs of life, and continuing in existence for the sake of a good life. And therefore, if the earlier forms of society are natural, so is the state ... Hence it is evident that the state is a creation of nature, and that man is by nature a political animal.' Further, ibidem, 1278b1 [III:6] and 1280a1-1281a1 [III:9]. Many political Aristotelians admitted that necessity, fear, and self-interest were strong impetus for men to live together. See, for example, Burgersdijk, *Idea politica*, I.6-10, pp. 4-6, and Arnisaeus, *De republica*, I.1.2.8, p. 9. 'Primas civitates coisse ferè ex metu.'

⁵⁸ Arnisaeus, *De republica*, I.1.1, p. 6. 'Hominem naturâ esse animal Politicum & societatis appetens ...' Johann Heinrich Boecler, *Institutiones politicae* (Johann Eberhard Zetzner; Strasbourg, 1674), I.1, pp. 9-10.

⁵⁹ See for Vázquez, Van Nifterik, *Vorst tussen volk en wet*, pp. 36-40. The notion of man's natural sociability was shared by almost all Spanish Late-Scholastics. For instance, Vitoria claimed that man could not exist 'in solitude' and that obedience to a 'public power' was consistent with 'natural law'. He strongly refuted that political society existed 'for the sake of "private utility"', and that it had 'originated as an "invention of man"'. Lloyd, "Constitutionalism", p. 259. Grotius, who was strongly influenced by the Spanish Late-Scholastics, had claimed both in the *De iure praedae* and the *De iure belli ac pacis* that self-preservation was the main driving force behind human behaviour, and had reasoned that civil society had come into being due to demographic growth, man's need for protection, and his search for economic advantages. Van Gelderen, "Aristotelians, Monarchomachs and Republicans", p. 202. But Grotius had also claimed that there was something 'special to man' (*homini proprium*) that made him want to live with his fellow-men, namely 'a longing for company' (*appetitus societatis*). Thus, following Vázquez, he re-introduced the principle of natural sociability. See Tuck, *Philosophy and Government*, p. 196; Blom, *Causality and Morality in Politics*, p. 110; Tuck, *The Rights of War and Peace*, pp. 94-102; Van Gelderen, "'So Merely Humane': Theories of Resistance in Early-Modern Europe", pp. 157-60. See also Richard Tuck's introduction to Grotius, *The Rights of War and Peace*, xix-xxv.

⁶⁰ Christoph Besold, *Politiorum Libri duo* (Johann Alexander Cellius; Frankfurt, 1618), I.13, pp. 14-15. For a short summary of Althusius's complex interpretation of man's 'sociability' (*socialitas*), see Von Friedeburg and Seidler, "The Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation", pp. 134-36.

⁶¹ See chapter 3.

sociability is completely absent.⁶² Instead, Boxhorn provides his readers with a gloomy description of the origin of political society and of man's nature that strongly suggests that it was not 'special to man' to live with his fellow men, but that he was forced to do so by the circumstances he found himself in.⁶³ This was a line of thought that Arnisaeus, one of the founding fathers of the *politica* genre, had associated with Plato, Machiavelli, and the Spanish Jesuit Juan de Mariana (1536-1624),⁶⁴ and for which Hobbes, the brothers De la Court, and Spinoza would become notorious, that is, a line of thought that took man's unsociability as its point of departure and that grounded the foundation and workings of political society on a negative anthropology of fear, ambition, and self-interest.⁶⁵

⁶² That is, in the sections attributed to Boxhorn. It can be found in the commentaries of George Hornius. See Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, II.10, p. 359 [365].

⁶³ I therefore disagree with Ernst Kossmann's judgement that Boxhorn, whom Kossmann classified as an erudite but superficial scholar, represented the merry side of the Baroque age, who followed the latest popular trends, and who, unlike the brothers De la Court, could find amusement in men's wicked ways. On account of these arguments, Kossmann concluded that scholars like Boxhorn had felt no need to develop methods by which better forms of social and political behaviour could be achieved. As this chapter will show, in the case of Boxhorn the very opposite is true. Kossmann, "Enkele laat-zeventiende-eeuwse Nederlandse geschriften over Raison d'Etat", pp. 103-6.

⁶⁴ Henning Arnisaeus, *Doctrina politica* (Lowijs Elzevier; Amsterdam, 1651), I.2, p. 46. 'Plato quidem, 3. de ll. & ferè Machiav. l. 1. disc. ad 1. Dec. Liv. c. I. Ioh. Marian. l. I. de reg. instit. c. I. homines putat primum egestate & necessitate compulsos societatem iniisse. Sed Arist. 4. pol. 4. illam sententiam meritò improbat, quoniam, ut in loci illius enarratione dicit Thomas, civitas non est propter ipsum vivere, sed propter benè vivere.' For a discussion of Arnisaeus's own view on the beginning of society, see Brett, *Changes of State*, p. 119.

⁶⁵ This line of thought has a religious counterpart in Augustine's negative picture of the unavoidable persistence of human sinfulness due to the Fall, and his subsequent view of politics as 'the means to achieve minimum disorder'. Janet Coleman, *A History of Political Thought*, Vol. 1: *From Ancient Greece to Early Christianity* (Blackwell Publishers; Oxford/Malden, 2000), pp. 330-37, with quote on p. 333. Taking his cue from the same Spanish Late-Scholastic tradition by which Boxhorn was influenced, Samuel Rutherford (c.1600-1660), writing in the early 1640s, also pointed out to the artificial and unnatural foundation of political society. Although he accepted that 'God hath made man a social creature, and one who inclineth to be governed by men' (specific reference to Aristotle, *Politics*, 1252b1-1253a1 [I.2]), he also argued that 'if all men be born equally free ... there is no reason in nature why one should be king and lord over another; therefore ... I conceive all jurisdiction of man over man to be as it were artificial and positive, and that it inferreth some servitude whereof nature from the womb hath freed us ...' (specific reference to Vázquez, *Controversiarum illustrium*, I.42.28-29). Samuel Rutherford, *Lex, Rex, or the Law and the Prince* (Sprinkle Publications; Harrisonburg, 1982), pp. 1-2. For Rutherford and his modification of the arguments put forward by the Spanish Late-Scholastics, see Robert von Friedeburg, "Bausteine widerstandsrechtlicher Argumente in der frühen Neuzeit (1523-1668): Konfessionen, klassische Verfassungsvorbilder, Naturrecht, direkter Befehl Gottes, historische Rechte der Gemeinwesen", in Christoph Strohm and Heinrich de Wall (eds.), *Konfessionalität und Jurisprudenz in der frühen Neuzeit* (Duncker and Humblot; Berlin, 2009), pp. 130-31, 154-56. In his analysis of Rutherford's 'mind' John Coffey, who classifies *Lex, Rex* as in some ways 'deeply Thomistic book', tries to explain these two seemingly opposed ideas of Rutherford by pointing out to the distinction that Rutherford draws between political society being natural 'in the root' and voluntary 'in the manner of coalescing'. John Coffey, *Politics, Religion and the British Revolutions: The Mind of Samuel Rutherford* (Cambridge University Press; Cambridge, 1997), pp. 152, 158-63.

The nature of the commonwealth I. *Majestas, obedience, and ‘public opinion’*

So far we have spoken about how Boxhorn thinks political society has come into being and how this can be attributed more to man’s circumstances than to man’s nature. However, this still leaves the question open of what a commonwealth (*res publica*) actually is. Boxhorn’s answer to this question is pretty clear cut. ‘A commonwealth is a body of many that is permeated by the same laws for the sake of the advantage of all together and each individually to recognise the majesty of the power to command over that same body.’⁶⁶ The definition shows some remarkable parallels with the famous description of a *res publica* given by Cicero in *The Republic*, but also some striking differences. For example, Cicero acknowledges man’s social nature to be the main driving force behind the foundation of a *res publica*. Boxhorn, on the other hand, leaves this feature unmentioned. A second notable difference is that Cicero defines the *res publica* as the property of the people (*res populi*), while Boxhorn, in defining the *res publica* as a ‘body’, follows the unciceronian language of the medieval jurists.⁶⁷ We will discover, however, that this did not stop Boxhorn to see the *res publica* in certain cases as a *res populi*. Finally, it should also be pointed out that in his definition of a commonwealth Boxhorn does not mention the Aristotelian goal of ‘a good life’ as the end of a commonwealth.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I.2.1, p. 8. ‘Respublica est corpus multorum ad agnoscendam eiusdem Imperii Majestatem, iisdem legibus, omnium & singulorum utilitatis causa, inbutum.’ Slightly different in idem, *Institutionum politicarum libri duo: Editio altera, Priori longe emendatior*, I.2.1, p. 5. ‘Respublica est Imperium corporum multorum ad agnoscendam ejusdem Imperii Majestatem, iisdem legibus omnium & singulorum, utilitatis causa, inbutum.’

⁶⁷ Cicero, *De re publica*, I.39. “Est igitur” inquit Africanus “res publica res populi; populus autem non omnis hominum coetus quoquo modo congregatus, sed coetus multitudinis iuris consensu et utilitatis communione sociatus. Eius autem prima causa coeundi est non tam imbecillitas, quam naturalis quaedam hominum quasi congregatio. Non est enim singulare nec solivagum genus hoc, sed ita generatum ut ne in omnium quidem rerum affluen[tia ***] ...” Cicero, *The Republic*, I.39. ‘Scipio: “Well then, a republic is the property of the public. But a public is not every kind of human gathering, congregating in any manner, but a numerous gathering brought together by legal consent and community of interest. The primary reason for its coming together is not so much weakness as a sort of innate desire on the part of human beings to form communities. For our species is not made up of solitary individuals or lonely wanderers. From birth it is of such kind that, even when it possesses abundant amount of every commodity ...”’ Latin text quoted from Cicero, *De re publica, De legibus, Cato maior de senectute, Laelius de amicitia*, p. 28. English translation quoted from Cicero, *The Republic and The Laws*, p. 19. See also Mager, “Republik”, pp. 560-62. To Boxhorn and his contemporaries this passage of Cicero’s *Republic* was not available. However, Boxhorn could have gained knowledge of Cicero’s definition of a *res publica* through Augustine’s *De civitate Dei* (there XIX.21), a work he knew, as we shall see below. See further Blom, “*Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas*: Burgersdijk’s Moral and Political Thought”, pp. 140-41, footnote 57, and Paul A. Rahe, *Against Throne and Altar: Machiavelli and Political Theory under the English Republic* (Cambridge University Press; Cambridge, 1st ed. 2008, 2009), p. 328, footnote 27.

⁶⁸ According to Aristotle, ‘a state exists for the sake of a good life, and not for the sake of life only: if life only were the object, slaves and brute animals might form a state ... Nor does a state exist for the sake of alliance and security from injustice, nor yet for the sake of exchange and mutual intercourse

Instead he speaks of ‘the advantage of all together and each individually’. It seems that for Boxhorn the existence of the commonwealth has no moral or ethical goal. This might also explain why Boxhorn, contrary to Burgersdijk, does not identify as the goal of politics ‘the felicity of the entire commonwealth, which exists in this; that all may live piously and properly’.⁶⁹ Indeed, in the *Institutiones politicae* Boxhorn does not explicitly list any goal of politics, which leaves the impression that to him the only goal of politics is to instruct men in ‘the theory and practice of founding, preserving, and enlarging a commonwealth’. Thus, in both his definition of politics and its main subject, the commonwealth, Boxhorn seems to take a neutral, non-moral, approach.

As Boxhorn explains, his definition of a *res publica* holds good for every form of government, even for monarchical ones, although rulers who rule alone are often tempted to disregard their subjects’ interests. ‘The definition of a commonwealth we give here is used for every form of command, even for that form of command, of which one person is in charge, as long as he looks after the welfare of those who obey. But because he often puts affairs of common concern after private matters, or because he is [often] carried away by temptations of pleasure, or because he, inclined to tyranny, causes the more damage, the more powerful he is, it is generally the case that a commonwealth is opposed to monarchy.’⁷⁰ In the Aristotelian sense of a political society, what counts as a true commonwealth is that body of many whose rulers ‘govern with a view to the common interest’, that is, in Boxhorn’s words, ‘the advantage of all together’.⁷¹

... Whereas, those who take care for good government take into consideration political excellence and defect. Whence it may be further inferred that excellence must be the care of a state which is truly so called, and not merely enjoys the name: for without this end the community becomes a mere alliance ...’. Aristotle, *Politics*, 1280a1-1280b1 [III:9], pp. 73-74.

⁶⁹ See chapter 3.

⁷⁰ Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I,2, p. 10. ‘Respublica quam hic definimus pro quovis imperio usurpatur, etiam pro eo cui unus praeest, si modo ille salutis obedientium consulat. At quia saepè is aut publica privatis postponit, aut illecebris voluptatum rapitur, aut ad tyrannidem inclinans tantò plus infert damni, quantò potentior est, obtinuit, ut Respublica Monarchiae ferè opponatur.’

⁷¹ Aristotle, *Politics*, 1279a1 [III:6-7], p. 71. ‘The conclusion is evident: that governments which have a regard to the common interest are constituted in accordance with strict principles of justice, and are therefore true forms; but those which regard only the interest of the rulers are all defective and perverted forms, for they are despotic, whereas a state is a community of freemen ... The true forms of governments, therefore, are those in which the one, or the few, or the many, govern with a view to the common interest; but governments which rule with a view to the private interests, whether of the one, or of the few, or of the many, are perversions. For the members of a state, if they are truly citizens, ought to participate in its advantages.’ For Aristotle and his Greek context, see Paul A. Rahe, *Republics: Ancient and Modern*, Vol. 1: *The Ancien Régime in Classical Greece* (The University of North Carolina Press; Chapel Hill, 1994), pp. 93-95, and Coleman, *A History of Political Thought*, Vol. 1, p. 214. For the term ‘res publica’ in early modern Europe, see Mager, ‘Republik’, pp. 549-651, esp. pp. 565-89. According to Janet Coleman, ‘... “respublica” is the humanist Latin word for any good constitution, “Aristotle’s politeia”’. Janet Coleman, *A History of Political Thought*, Vol. 2: *From the Middle Ages to the Renaissance* (Blackwell Publishers; Oxford/Malden, 2000), p. 270. James Hankins shows that, besides this general meaning of the word

But not every 'body of many' whose rulers attend to the common good constitutes a commonwealth. The distinctive mark of a commonwealth, and what sets it apart from other large associations, is *majestas*. Boxhorn describes *majestas* as the commonwealth's 'soul', without which a commonwealth cannot exist.⁷² The possessors of *majestas* have the power and the right to legislate, to appoint magistrates, and to declare war.⁷³ These are precisely the attributes that Bodin saw as the sole prerogatives of the sovereign. In this sense, Boxhorn's concept of *majestas* can be defined as 'sovereignty', the highest or supreme power in any given political society that only acknowledges God as its superior.⁷⁴ Unlike Bodin, however, Boxhorn does not hold that *majestas* or sovereignty is, or should be, indivisible.⁷⁵ Surveying the political landscape of his time, Boxhorn observes that most commonwealths are 'mixed', by which he means that in most commonwealths several or all estates into which the

res publica, 'by the second half of the fifteenth century the word *respublica* was increasingly being used as an equivalent for *politeia* in the specific sense, the mixture of democracy and oligarchy which Aristotle described as, in relative terms, the best constitution for most cities. In other words it had begun to stand for "non-monarchical regime"'. James Hankins, "De Republica: Civic Humanism in Renaissance Milan (and Other Renaissance Signories)", in Mario Vegetti and Paolo Pissavino (eds.), *I dicembre e la tradizione della repubblica di Platone tra medioevo e umanesimo* (Bibliopolis; Naples, 2005), p. 493. Especially illuminating in this respect is also David Wootton, "The True Origins of Republicanism: The Disciples of Baron and the Counter-Example of Venturi", in Manuela Albertone (ed.), *Il republicanesimo moderno: l'idea di repubblica nella riflessione storica di Franco Venturi* (Bibliopolis; Naples, 2006), pp. 271-304.

⁷² Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I.2, p. 11. 'Corpus enim Respublica est, hujus anima, teste Aristotele, est Majestas. Ut ergo corpus sine anima subsistere non potest, ita & Respublica sine Majestate.' Aristotle mentions a 'sovereign power' in the two main definitions he gives of 'constitution'. Aristotle, *Politics*, 1278b10 [III:6], p. 69. 'A constitution is the arrangement of magistracies in a state especially of the highest of all. The government is everywhere sovereign in the state, and the constitution is in fact the government.' *Ibidem*, 1289a15 [IV:1], p. 92. 'A constitution is the organization of offices in a state, and determines what is to be the governing body, and what is the end of each community.' According to Isocrates, 'every government is the soul of its city and has as much power as practical wisdom (*phronēsis*) has in the body. For it is this that plans everything and preserves the good things we have and avoids troubles and is responsible for all that happens in cities'. Isocrates, "Panathenaicus", in *Isocrates II*. Translated by Terry L. Papillon (University of Texas Press; Austin, 2004), 12.138, p. 201.

⁷³ *Ibidem*. 'Sic in Republica Romana apparet, populi imprimis fuisse Majestatem, quia ille leges ferebat, Magistratus eligebat, bella indicebat.'

⁷⁴ For some recent views on Bodin's conception of sovereignty, see Martin van Creveld, *The Rise and Decline of the State* (Cambridge University Press; Cambridge, 1st ed. 1999, 2007), pp. 176-77, and J.H.M. Salmon, "France", in Lloyd, Burgess and Hodson (eds.), *European Political Thought*, pp. 475-78. For Bodin's influence on political Aristotelianism, see Dreitzel, *Protestantischer Aristotelismus und absoluter Staat*, pp. 172, 212-18, 239, 262-63, and Weber, *Prudentia gubernatoria*, pp. 26, 103. If we allow ourselves to define Boxhorn's conception of *majestas* as 'sovereignty', it is interesting to note that the 'idea that sovereignty is like the soul (rather than the head) is precisely the analogy used by Hobbes' and Grotius. See footnote 38 in the introduction by Richard Tuck to Grotius, *The Rights of War and Peace*, xxxiii. For Grotius, see Grotius, *The Rights of War and Peace*, II.VI.6, pp. 571-72. 'Nor let any Man pretend to tell me, that the Sovereign Power is lodged in the Body, as in its Subject, and may therefore be alienated by it, as a Thing that properly belongs to it. For if the Sovereignty resides in the Body, it is as in a Subject which fills entirely, and without any Division into several parts; in a Word, after the same Manner as the Soul is in perfect Bodies.' For Hobbes, see Hobbes, *Leviathan*, p. 153. 'The Sovereignty is the Soule of the Common-wealth; which once departed from the Body, the members doe no more receive motion from it.' The analogy was later taken over by Samuel Pufendorf. See Dufour, "Pufendorf", p. 574.

⁷⁵ For the last point, see the discussion of Boxhorn's view on political participation below.

commonwealth is divided hold on to 'pieces of the majestas', giving these commonwealths a 'blended' form of command.⁷⁶ In most European kingdoms, for example, king and parliament, where the nobles of the realm have a seat, share judicial powers.⁷⁷

The acceptance that more than one estate could hold on to 'pieces of the majestas' aligns Boxhorn closer to Aristotle than to Bodin. The great Stagirite also recognises a 'supreme' or 'sovereign power' (*to kyrion*), namely the 'government' (*politeuma*) of a state which he equates with the 'constitution' (*politeia*) of a state, that is, 'the arrangement of magistracies in a state especially of the highest of all'.⁷⁸ According to Aristotle, all constitutions have at least three elements; a deliberative element, a judicial element, and an element that concerns itself with the distribution of offices. As a direct consequence every sovereign power has at least three elements. Of these three elements, 'the deliberative element has the authority in matters of war and peace, in making and unmaking alliances; it passes laws, inflicts death, exile, confiscation, elects magistrates and audits their accounts'. These powers can be distributed to one person, several persons or to all persons, or amongst different social classes (e.g. the rich and the poor).⁷⁹ In the long run this Aristotelian concept of divisible sovereign power would lose out to Bodin's concept of indivisible sovereignty, which was theoretically more attractive. The Aristotelian concept, however, was more applicable than Bodin's concept for

⁷⁶ Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, II.2, pp. 260-61. 'Quinimo in eodem statu aliquando est omnium quasi formarum colluvies & species, per quam fit, ut aliquid Principis, aliquid optimatum, aliquid populi inter eosdem esse videatur, quas *Resp. mixtas* Politici solent appellare. Ego, ut plerasque *Resp. confusi* plerumque esse imperii scio ... Cavendum tamen, ne simulatas inter partes oriantur. Exitium enim Reip. fruatur, ubi inter habentes partes Majestatis discordiae oriuntur.'

⁷⁷ *Ibidem*, I.5, p. 57. 'Secundo modo restringitur, quando potentia partim legibus partim Imperantium arbitrio permittitur. Atque haec libertatis ratio in plerisque Europae regnis obtinet, praecipue autem in Gallia, ubi aliquid commissum legibus ad tuendam libertatem, aliquid etiam regibus, ad tuendam Majestatem. Parlamentum apud illos est supremum de rebus judicium, in quo optimates de reipubl. rebus omnibus ex legibus consultant: sed id celebrari nisi à Rege indictum, non potest, & quicquid ab illis constitutum, Rex approbare debet.' For Bodin and his vision on the mixed constitution, see Julian H. Franklin, "Sovereignty and the Mixed Constitution: Bodin and His Critics", in Burns (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Political Thought*, pp. 298-309.

⁷⁸ Aristotle, *Politics*, 1278b1 [III:6] and 1289a1 [IV:1]. See also *ibidem*, 1279a1 [III:7], p. 71. 'The words constitution and government have the same meaning, and the government, which is the supreme authority in states, must be in the hands of one, or of a few, or of the many.'

⁷⁹ *Ibidem*, 1297b1-1298a1 [IV:14], p. 112. 'All constitutions have three elements ... There is one element which deliberates about public affairs; secondly that concerned with the magistracies – the questions being, what they should be, over what they should exercise authority, and what should be the mode of electing to them; and thirdly that which has judicial power. The deliberative element has the authority in matters of war and peace, in making and unmaking alliances; it passes laws, inflicts death, exile, confiscation, elects magistrates and audits their accounts. These powers must be assigned either all to all the citizens or all to some of them (for example to one or more magistracies, or different causes to different magistracies), or some of them to all, and others of them only to some.' For the distribution of these powers between different social classes, see Aristotle's discussion of the 'polity' in *Politics*, 1294a1ff [IV:9].

describing and explaining the bewildering division of power and authority that characterised most European countries in the early modern period.⁸⁰ Nor should we exaggerate the 'indivisibility' and 'absoluteness' of Bodin's concept of sovereignty. It is true that Bodin held that the sovereign was not bound by human laws (*princeps legibus solutus*), but he also denied the sovereign the right to tax his subjects' property without their consent. This meant that if the sovereign wanted to levy new taxes he had to consult his subjects and seek their approval. In this manner even in Bodin's vision on politics and society the estates of the realm participated in the decision-making process and had a say in important political matters.⁸¹

Despite their affinity there is a remarkable difference between Boxhorn's concept of *majestas* and Aristotle's concept of sovereign power. The difference centers on the conception of citizenship. Aristotle claims that only he who 'has the power to take part in the deliberative or judicial administration of any state is said by us to be a citizen of that state'.⁸² The citizen's 'special characteristics is that he shares in the administration of justice, and in offices'.⁸³ Since

⁸⁰ For the problems the Dutch experienced in applying Bodin's concept of sovereignty to their own political context, see Kossmann, *Political Thought in the Dutch Republic*, esp. pp. 27-51; Haitsma Mulier, *The Myth of Venice*, pp. 72-75; Blom, *Causality and Morality in Politics*, pp. 89-90, 93-95; Gustaaf van Nifterik, "Jean Bodin en de Nederlandse Opstand", in *Pro Memoria: bijdragen tot de rechtsgeschiedenis der Nederlanden*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (2001), pp. 49-66; Van Gelderen, "Aristotelians, Monarchomachs and Republicans", pp. 197, 203.

⁸¹ Jean Bodin, *The Six Bookes of a Commonweale*. Edited with an Introduction by Kenneth Douglas McRae (Harvard University Press; Cambridge, 1962), I.10.D-A, pp. 177-79, and VI.2.C-I, pp. 663-66. For the limitations Bodin put on his sovereign and their roots in mediaeval jurisprudence, see Julian H. Franklin, *Jean Bodin and the Rise of Absolutist Theory* (Cambridge University Press; Cambridge, 1973), pp. 70-92; Ralph E. Giesey, "Medieval Jurisprudence in Bodin's Concept of Sovereignty", in Horst Denzer (ed.), *Jean Bodin: Proceedings of the International Conference on Bodin in Munich* (Verlag C.H. Beck; Munich, 1973), pp. 172-86; Kenneth Pennington, *The Prince and the Law, 1200-1600: Sovereignty and Rights in the Western Legal Tradition* (University of California Press; Berkeley/Los Angeles/Oxford, 1993), pp. 277-84; Van Nifterik, "Jean Bodin en de Nederlandse Opstand", pp. 51-54. For the role of the people and their representatives, the Estates, in Bodin's ideas about sovereignty, and the importance of their consent, see Nicholas Henshall, *The Myth of Absolutism: Change and Continuity in Early Modern European Monarchy* (Longman; London/New York, 1992), pp. 120-47, esp. pp. 126-28, and Julian H. Franklin, "The Question of Sovereignty in Bodin's Account of Fundamental Law", in Anthony Grafton and J.H.M. Salmon (eds.), *Historians and Ideologues: Essays in Honor of Donald R. Kelley* (University of Rochester Press; Rochester, 2001), pp. 40-48.

⁸² Aristotle, *Politics*, 1275b1 [III:1], p. 63. 'He has the power to take part in the deliberative or judicial administration of any state is said by us to be a citizen of that state; and, speaking generally, a state is a body of citizens sufficing for the purposes of life.'

⁸³ *Ibidem*, 1275a1 [III:1], p. 62. 'But the citizen whom we are seeking to define is a citizen in the strictest sense, against whom no such exception can be taken, and his special characteristics is that he shares in the administration of justice, and in offices. Now of offices some are discontinuous, and the same persons are not allowed to hold them twice, or can only hold them after a fixed interval; others have no limit – for example, the office of jurymen or member of assembly. It may, indeed, be argued that these are not magistrates at all, and that their functions give them no share in government. But surely it is ridiculous to say that those who have the supreme power do not govern. Let us not dwell further upon this, which is purely verbal question; what we want is a common term including both jurymen and member of the assembly. Let us, for the sake of distinction, call it 'indefinite office', and we will assume that those who share in such offices are citizens. This is the most comprehensive definition of a citizen, and best suits all those who are generally so called.'

the offices that the true citizen shares in are the deliberative and judicial elements every constitution, and thus every sovereign power, has, in Aristotle's scheme it are finally the citizens who are sovereign.⁸⁴

Boxhorn, on the other hand, clearly locates *majestas* in the commonwealth that he describes as an artificial 'congregation' or 'body' of many. From his vision on the origin of the independent, individual commonwealth we can deduce that 'the many' is a conglomeration of families under the leadership of their *patresfamilias*.⁸⁵ In contrast to Aristotle, Boxhorn never speaks of these heads of family as citizens (*cives*). Indeed, in his political-theoretical works Boxhorn hardly ever uses the term 'citizen' to denote a member of political society. Instead he sometimes uses the more neutral term 'inhabitant' (*inquilinus*).⁸⁶ But most of the time he speaks in terms of groups. He distinguishes between magistrates (*magistratus*) and subjects (*subjecti*) and between different parts (*partes*) of society, for example the nobles (*nobiles/optimates*) and the people (*populus*). One belongs to this or that part or estate, or, in the case of a monarch, one person is one estate. The estate as a whole is sovereign, or shares in sovereignty. In this picture the 'citizen' fades to the background. The notion of citizenship hardly plays any role in Boxhorn's political thought.

In the commonwealth power is exercised by the supreme magistrates.⁸⁷ Examples of such magistrates were the consuls and tribunes at Rome. 'Because the management of the power to command is so divers, hard, [and] difficult, and has such a wide scope' supreme magistrates need the assistance and advice of lower magistrates in carrying out their tasks.⁸⁸ Lower magis-

⁸⁴ See also Curtis N. Johnson, "The Hobbesian Conception of Sovereignty and Aristotle's *Politics*", in *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 46 (1985), pp. 327-47.

⁸⁵ See also Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, II.1, p. 260. 'Diximus § 3. Monarchiam & Aristocraticam esse antiquissimas. Democratiam autem post eas institutam. Monarchia sane est antiquissima. Ex capitibus enim ingentium familiarum prima regna exorta, quae capita Monarchici imperii erant. Unde *Arist.* confert Monarchiam cum imperio Patris filios. Postea autem cum familiae singulae non sufficerent sibi ipsis, plures in unum convenere, & sic plura quoque capita familiarum convenerunt, unde exorta Aristocratia. Cùm autem ab his capitibus reliqui premerentur, vindicarunt se in libertatem vel sublatis vel mortuis capitibus, cum omnes se pares existimarent, & Democraticum tandem constituerent imperium.' Aristotle, *Politics*, 1259b10 [I:12], p. 28. 'The rule of a father over his children is royal, for he rules by virtue both of love and of the respect due to age, exercising a kind of royal power.' According to Aristotle, the 'state' or commonwealth comes into being 'when several villages are united in a single complete community, large enough to be nearly or quite self-sufficient'. A village comes into being 'when several families are united, and the association aims at something more than the supply of daily needs'. *Ibidem*, 1252a1 [I:2], pp. 12-13.

⁸⁶ See below.

⁸⁷ Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I.3, p. 20. 'Hoc verò loco definimus illos, penes quos summa rerum est & Imperii.' See also Aristotle, *Politics*, 1299a1 [IV:15], p. 115. 'Speaking generally, those are to be called offices to which the duties are assigned of deliberating about certain measures and of judging and commanding, especially the last; for to command is the special duty of a magistrate.'

⁸⁸ *Ibidem*, I.8.1, p. 96. 'Cum omnis Imperii administratio, adeo varia, difficilis, impedita, & latè exporrecta sit, ut supremi Magistratus omnibus exsequendis pares esse aut omnibus pariter interesse non possint, dubitari haud debet, quin ministerio aliorum & consilio, veluti quibusdam dextris suis uti necessum habeant.'

trates, such as judges, military commanders and provincial governors, do not hold supreme power themselves, but, as representatives or replacements of the supreme magistrates, they do have the power (*vis*) and authority (*autoritas*) of the supreme magistrates; they should therefore be as duly obeyed as the supreme magistrates themselves.⁸⁹

At first supreme magistrates had been chosen or they had acquired the power to command by means of conquest.⁹⁰ In ancient times the last way had been more common. It had also been just 'because when men lived wandering and free from laws, it was in the interest of the entire human race, that the necessity to obey was imposed upon them even against their will'.⁹¹ In time succession, which made office-holding hereditary through custom or laws, had emanated from election or conquest as a third way to become a magistrate.⁹² Although each mode of acquisition has different implications for the power of the magistrates and the freedom of the subjects, what they have in common is that Boxhorn thinks that the legitimacy to command hinges on the consent of the subjects, which, in case of necessity, these subjects can withdraw.⁹³

While *majestas* and *imperium* may be said to represent one side of the commonwealth, obedience (*obsequium*) and freedom (*libertas*) represent the other.⁹⁴ Obedience is the *sine qua non majestas*; where it is absent, there is also no *majestas*.⁹⁵ On its turn, obedience depends on the subjects' opinions. In a powerful statement Boxhorn asserts that since even the power of the *majestas* that rulers have received from the gods finds its origins in those who obey, no *majestas* can exist if it is not recognised.⁹⁶ Indeed, the *majestas* that derives its power from

⁸⁹ Ibidem, I.8.2, p. 96. 'Sunt autem illorum alii, qui domi, ut minores Magistratus, aut subalterni, ut Judices, consilarii, negotiorum publicorum gestores, aut foris in pace, ut Legati, in bello, ut Militiae Imperatores, aut in provinciis, ut praefecti, & procuratores occupantur, in quos vim & auctoritatem suam transferunt, qui supremum in omnibus Imperium acceperunt, quibusque ea propter non aliter, ac his, obsequium defertur. Hi enim, si in absentiam majoribus illis succedunt, & eorum auctoritate ac nomine in negotiis publicis occupantur, quoad vim saltem rerum pro majoribus aestimantur.'

⁹⁰ Ibidem, I.3.3, p. 17. 'Illi primitus aut electi, & vocati sunt, aut imperium in alios, licet invitos, & reluctantes, occupantur.'

⁹¹ Ibidem, I.3, p. 21. 'Occupatio omnis, quae ad imperium pervenitur illicita non fuit. Cum enim vagi & expertes legum homines agerent, interfuit totius generis humani, iis vel invitis necessitatem parendi imponi. Talis verò occupatio antiquis temporibus frequentior, quam electio fuit.'

⁹² Ibidem, I.3.8, p. 18. 'Ex occupationibus aut electionibus nata est successio.' See also chapter 5.

⁹³ See, for instance, ibidem, I.3.7, p. 18. 'Ac proinde in occupationibus plurimum potestatis derivatum est in unum, aut plures, imperia occupantes. In electione autem, plus remansit penes populum, seu subditos, libertatis.'

⁹⁴ Ibidem, I.3.1, p. 17. 'Duae igitur cujusvis Reipublicae partes sunt: Imperium & obsequium. Duplices igitur personae, imperantes & subditi.' Aristotle, *Politics*, 1332b1 [VII:14], p. 186. 'Every political society is composed of rulers and subjects.'

⁹⁵ Ibidem, I.2, p. 11. 'Leges autem imperantis obsequium exigunt, & Majestas obsequio juncta esse debet, nec enim Majestas esse potest, ubi obsequium non est.'

⁹⁶ Ibidem. 'Tacit. 6. Annal. Cap. 8. Non est nostrum aestimare, quem supra caeteros, & quibus de causis extollas. Tibi summum rerum judicium Dii dederunt, nobis obsequii gloria relicta est. Vis autem hujus Majestatis est in Imperantibus; ut origo ejusdem est in Obsequentibus. Nec enim Majestas est, nisi agnoscatur.'

those who obey is nothing other than ‘the sacred, secure, and firm judgement of the subjects’.⁹⁷ Reasoning vice versa, this means that where this judgement no longer supports the supreme magistrates in office and where the people no longer obey the orders of the magistrates, but rather follow ‘the madness of their own lust’, the commonwealth seizes to exist and anarchy begins.⁹⁸ Thus, while the power to command (*imperium*) can be acquired by several means, including violence and arms, only power that is acknowledged, openly or tacitly, and obeyed by those who are subjugated to it can be considered to be sovereign power (*majestas*).⁹⁹ The opinions of the subjects are the pillar on which the very existence of the commonwealth ultimately rests.¹⁰⁰

The nature of the commonwealth II. Freedom, rights, and protection

Boxhorn’s concept of freedom is somewhat more sophisticated than his concept of sovereignty. He distinguishes two important sorts of freedom: the freedom to rule (*libertas imperii*) and the freedom from obedience (*libertas obsequii*).¹⁰¹ The freedom to rule equals to the *majestas Reipublicae*, that is, inde-

⁹⁷ Ibidem, I.4.4, p. 26. ‘Majestas, quae vim ex obsequentibus habet, est nihil aliud quàm sanctum, constans, & immotum iudicium subditorum, quo sibi omninò persuadent, illos, qui praesent Reipublicae, jure ac meritò praeesse, & posse, & debere.’

⁹⁸ Ibidem, II.10.8, p. 358 [364]. ‘Est autem Anarchia, quasi tu dixeris nullum Imperium, funus ipsum, ut ita loquar, Imperii & cadaver, in quo pessimi, quorum major fere est multitudo ubique, non jam jussa ditius sibi Magistratum similium, sed vesanae libidinis suae impetum sequuntur.’ It is on this account that Boxhorn could even legitimise tyrannical regimes for ‘it is even in the interest of all good people, that rather bad people lead the commonwealth, than non at all.’ Ibidem, II.10.9, p. 358 [364]. ‘Quod omni tyrannide et corrupto Imperio majus malum est, cum omnium etiam bonorum interit, malos potius quam nullos Rempublicam administrare.’ In the 1586 Latin edition of *Les six livres de la république* (*De republica*, II.1, p. 176) Bodin had claimed more or less the same thing. Where ‘there is no one obeying or commanding, it will be anarchy rather than a commonwealth, which is worse than the cruelest tyranny’. Quotation taken from Franklin, “Sovereignty and the Mixed Constitution”, p. 304, with reference there.

⁹⁹ Both in the *Historia universalis* (pp. 626-39, esp. p. 634ff) and the *Metamorphosis Anglorum* (p. 213ff) Boxhorn follows Selden’s thesis that immediately after the Norman conquest of England William the Conqueror held for a moment absolute power, but that he soon afterwards agreed to rule according to the old laws of St Edward the Confessor, albeit with adding some new laws. Christianson, *Discourse on History, Law and Governance*, pp. 24-26, and Greenberg, *The Radical Face of the Ancient Constitution*, pp. 149-50.

¹⁰⁰ This was a common notion within the *politica* genre. See Von Friedeburg and Seidler, “The Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation”, pp. 158-59. Hobbes is another example of a seventeenth-century political thinker who attached great value to opinion. In his *Behemoth* we read: ‘For the power of the mighty hath no foundation but in the opinion and belief of the people.’ Hobbes, *Behemoth*, p. 16. See also the previous chapter, footnote 123.

¹⁰¹ The normal translation would read ‘freedom to obey’. However, in my reading of the *Institutiones politicae*, Boxhorn is seen to follow the natural law tradition, in which it is possible to translate *libertas obsequii* as ‘freedom from obedience’. See, for example, the Digest, 8.2.32. ‘Libertas seruitutis usucapitur’, and ibidem, 8.6.16. ‘Libertate ... huius partis seruitutis.’ These examples can be found in the *Oxford Latin Dictionary* (Oxford University Press; Oxford, 1982), p. 1025. I would like to thank Adrie van der Laan for

pendence or sovereignty.¹⁰² The freedom from obedience is further dissected into two parts: the silent freedom from obedience (*tacita libertas obsequii*) and the expressed freedom from obedience (*expressa libertas obsequii*).

Boxhorn describes the silent freedom from obedience as the welfare of the people (*salus populi*), otherwise undefined.¹⁰³ According to Boxhorn, this type of freedom exists even under absolute rulers who are not bound to laws.¹⁰⁴ 'Because it can be presupposed that the people had offered power and obedience with the common good in view, although they have not expressed it.'¹⁰⁵ The implication is of course that even under the most autocratic regimes there exists some sort of common good that people deem worthy enough to stay obedient to their rulers, since, as we have just seen, obedience depends on the subjects' opinions. From Boxhorn's theory of resistance we can deduce that such a common good or silent freedom at least entails the mere preservation of life.¹⁰⁶

drawing my attention to these examples and for his help on this subject. See also Hans W. Blom, "Vrijheid in de natuurrechtelijke politieke theorie in de zeventiende-eeuwse Republiek", in Haitsma Mulier and Velema (eds.), *Vrijheid: een geschiedenis van de vijftiende tot de twintigste eeuw*, pp. 137-45.

¹⁰² Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I.5.5, p. 46. 'Adeo, ut illa libertas nihil sit aliud, quam ea Majestas, quam Reipublicae esse, & dici, superius demonstratum est cap. 4. itaque de ea non est hic iterum agendi locus.'

¹⁰³ Ibidem, I.9, p. 47. 'Tacita, quae in deferendo Imperio, licet non expressa, tamen semper expressa estimatur. Est ea autem Salus populi, ut verbo dicam, ad quam conservandam, promovendam & augendam, solo titulo accepti Imperii astringitur, quisquis Imperium accepit.'

¹⁰⁴ Ibidem, I.5.11, p. 48. 'Tacita illa in omnium omnino gentium, quamvis barbarum, iudicio inveniunt, ac proinde earum etiam, quae unius summo Imperio, nullis legibus astricto, se crediderunt.'

¹⁰⁵ Ibidem, I.5.12, p. 48. 'Nam populus in deferendo Imperio, & obsequio, non potest non praesumi, etsi non expresserit, intendisse publicam utilitatem ...' Thus, Boxhorn does not find it hard to claim that 'the most absolute power of princes and the freedom of the people are not by nature dissociable, nor do they come into conflict'. Boxhorn, *Emblemata politica: accedunt dissertationes politicae de Romanorum Imperio et quaedamaliae*, I.2, p. 141. 'Neque res sunt natura sua dissociabiles, aut pugnant, absolutissimum Principum imperium, & populi libertas. Nec, quod existimant nonnulla, hoc imperium & libertas opponuntur, à Tacito, ubi inquit; *Vrbem Romanam à principio Reges habuerunt; libertatem & Consulatum L. Brutus instituit*; sub initium Ann. I. Certe in quovis legitimo imperio, subditis sua esse debet libertas; ac proinde etiam in illo summo.' In the first sentence Boxhorn paraphrases Tacitus, *Agricola*, III.1. 'Nunc demum redit animus; et quamquam primo statim beatissimi saeculi ortu Nerva Caesar res olim dissociabiles miscuerit, principatum ac libertatem ...' Quoted from Tacitus, *Opera minora*. Recognoverunt brevique adnotatione critica instruxerunt M. Winterbottom et R.M. Ogilvie (Clarendon Press; Oxford, 1975), p. 4. In his commentaries on Tacitus, published in 1643, Boxhorn defends the same position. 'Those who think that freedom and a royal form of command are brought here into opposition by Tacitus overstep the line, neither do they understand what the author actually means. For in every form of command, even in a principate, there is freedom, as long as the principate stays in good condition.' Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn, "In Tacitum animadversiones", in *Caii Cornelii Taciti quae exstant. M.Z. Boxhornius recensuit et animadversionibus nonnullis illustravit* (Johannes Janssonius; Amsterdam, 1643), p. 3. 'Qui statuunt libertatem & regium imperium opponi hoc loco à Tacito, excedunt, neque capiunt Auctoris mentem. Nam in quovis imperio, etiam principatu, est libertas, si is quidem recte se habeat.' See also Levillain, "William III's Military and Political Career in Neo-Roman Context, 1672-1702", pp. 331-32, of whose translations I have greatly benefitted.

¹⁰⁶ In the chapter that deals with tyranny Boxhorn asserts that every time when the defence of freedom comes down to the defence of life itself, it is justifiable for subjects to depose of their prince, since the laws of nature allow a person to protect his own life. Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae* II.4.49, p. 305. 'Quippe ubi in extremo discrimine libertas versatur, multis jam modis fracta & accisa, justa ac gravis satis causa ejiciendi Principis subditis offertur, cum par ratio sit vitae & libertatis, vitam autem utique tueri naturae & gentium omnium legibus indultum est.' According to Wolfgang Weber, 'the idea of the

In contrast to the silent freedom from obedience, the expressed freedom from obedience is the freedom that is laid down in certain laws and agreements that clearly state the rights subjects have and rulers should respect.¹⁰⁷ These agreements are the *leges fundamentales* or fundamental laws, and Boxhorn explicitly describes them as contracts between private individuals who have come to an agreement about their mutual rights and obligations.¹⁰⁸ These fundamentals laws could have come into force at the moment of the foundation of the commonwealth, like those of Venice. But they could also have come into being as time went by, growing or diminishing under the pressure of ever-changing circumstances that force individuals and the factions that make up society to constantly renegotiate their mutual relationships.¹⁰⁹ As we have seen in chapter 7, this had been the case in both ancient Rome and the province of Holland. In the *Institutiones politicae* we see that this also holds good for the Netherlands as a whole. In first instance Boxhorn follows Grotius's conclusion in the *De antiquitate* that the ancient Batavians had elected their kings, just like the ancient Germans had done in Tacitus's *Germania* (*On Germany*).¹¹⁰ On the other hand, Boxhorn also states that in the past the Dutch had taken special care to augment their freedom by claiming, and receiving, ever more fundamental laws from their counts.¹¹¹ Seen from this perspective, Dutch freedom is as much a common good as it is a historical product.¹¹²

Among the rights subjects should lay down in fundamental laws is the protection of their property, particularly against arbitrary taxation.¹¹³ Boxhorn

common good' was 'the core concept of the debate' 'about limiting royal power'. 'This common good referred to a twofold goal of politics, a *beatitudo* for the individual citizen, which laid in some sense beyond the state, and the conservation of the state by means of a moderated reason of state.' Boxhorn's use of the concept seems to point in the direction of the second goal. Wolfgang Weber, "'What a Good Ruler Should Not Do': Theoretical Limits of Royal Power in European Theories of Absolutism, 1500-1700", in *Sixteenth Century Journal*, Vol. 26, No. 4 (1995), pp. 897-902, with quotes on p. 897.

¹⁰⁷ Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I.5.10, pp. 47-48. 'Expressa est, quae versatur circa singulares & certas quasdam leges, ac conditiones, disertim propositas, quas sanctè se, & perpetuò observaturos, Imperaturi, ante Imperium, solenni juramento testantur; quibus, aut Imperantium libidine quaedam exem[p]ta, arbitrio subditorum relinquuntur integra, aut Imperantibus ea singulatim mandantur, quae omnino praestare tenentur, ac privilegia & immunitates à Majoribus accepta, rata habentur & confirmantur, aut denique quae sub praecedentium Imperio gravis aut nimia autoritas fuit, quantum expedit, coercetur.'

¹⁰⁸ *Ibidem*, I.5.22-25, pp. 50-51. Thus, one might say that while the 'silent freedom from obedience' is grounded on natural law principles, the 'expressed freedom from obedience' finds its origin in positive law.

¹⁰⁹ Thus, their being 'fundamental' has not so much to do with them being 'immutable', but by the subjects that these 'fundamental' laws address: the most important matters in a political society.

¹¹⁰ Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I.5, p. 58; Grotius, *The Antiquity of the Batavian Republic*, II.5, 11-14, pp. 61-63; Tacitus, *Germania*, VII, XXIX-XXXI, especially XXX.2.

¹¹¹ *Ibidem*, I.9, p. 131. 'Et certè tantùm faciunt ad praesidium libertatis, ut augeri plerumque soleant, novisque Principibus electis novae addantur, quod à Belgis, dum sub Comitibus agerent, accuratè observatum est.'

¹¹² In the previous chapters we have already seen that Boxhorn equated 'Dutch freedom' with the rights and privileges that were expressed in the charters of Dutch towns.

¹¹³ Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I.5.19, p. 49. '(II.) *Ad opes subditorum*. Ne scilicet iisdem liceat

nowhere questions the necessity of taxation. He sees it as a necessary evil to provide the commonwealth and those in charge with the means they need to fulfil their administrative tasks properly and effectively. A primary task of princes and rulers is the protection of the commonwealth and its inhabitants and their goods against external aggression.¹¹⁴ Protection involves troops. 'You cannot have troops without pay; and you cannot raise pay without taxation.'¹¹⁵ This held especially true for the Dutch Republic in the seventeenth century, where the military expenditure, which took up 80% of the Generality's total amount of expenditure, was financed primarily through a detailed and complicated system of 'funded debt' that was made up of taxes and loans raised by the provincial governments.¹¹⁶

Taxation is a crucial instrument to finance the military means necessary to survive in a world plagued by continuous warfare on an ever-larger scale and inhabited by that ambitious and greedy animal Boxhorn calls man. In such a world the danger exists that the men responsible for governing the commonwealth exploit the need for money to oppress those whom they are supposed to protect with excessive taxation. The prime example here is the duke of Alva's introduction of the Tenth Penny that Boxhorn counts among the reasons for the outbreak of the Dutch Revolt.¹¹⁷ To prevent rulers from abusing taxes for their own private gain, Boxhorn advocates a division of financial responsibilities between different persons. 'To ward off fraud and deceit and to prevent the misappropriation of public funds, the power over public money and its supervision and safe-keeping must be in different hands, while account of the receipts and expenditures of public money must be given to a third party.'¹¹⁸ It is not prudent to concentrate the power over public money

vectigalia, & tributa indicere, exigere, his nolentibus & invitis. Ad haec alibi certus descriptus est fisco modus, quo ex utilitate publicâ placuit, non omnia, etiam ob crimen laesae Majestatis, bona damnatorum, ei inferre, sed certam tantum & modicam eorum partem. Quin & plerunque Imperantes, Regalia, quae sic vocant, aliaque omnia in quibus vis & opes Reipublicae sitae sunt, donare, vendere, & alienare alio aliquo titulo, sine expresso populi consensu, prohibentur.' Ibidem, I.10.18, p. 149. '(X.) Tributa sine injuriis exigi debent, & imperari certis legibus, non praestitutis tantum, sed in vulgus editis, ex quarum praescripto in exigendis tributis publicani versentur.'

¹¹⁴ Ibidem, I.12, pp. 180-208, and Boxhorn, *Disquisitiones politicae*, VI, pp. 26-32; VIII, pp. 40-43; XVI, pp. 74-78; XXIII, pp. 101-3; XXV-XXVI, pp. 109-16; XXX, pp. 132-40; XXXXI, pp. 192-98. See also Nieuwstraten, "Why the Wealthy should Rule".

¹¹⁵ Ibidem, I.9, pp. 132-33, and I.10, p. 156; Boxhorn, *Commentariolus*, XII.1, p. 170; idem, *Nederlandsche historie*, pp. 207-8. The quote is from Tacitus, *The Histories*, IV.74.1-2, p. 223. See also Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, LII.28.

¹¹⁶ See chapter 4, especially footnote 17.

¹¹⁷ Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I.10, p. 155. 'Est ergò juxta IV. & V. à nimis, imprimis & quibus impares sunt subditi *abstinendum*. Illud semper fit, ut qui nimium petit, etiam illud, quod aequum est, non consequatur. Inter causas certè Belgicorum motuum & illa censetur, quod Albanus decimas bonorum ab illis exigeret, quod cum praestare sine summo rerum suarum dispendio non possent, & tamen ille tyrannicè urgeret, tanto dulcius libertatis nomen fiebat eis, in quam tandem se vindicarunt.'

¹¹⁸ Ibidem, I.10.22, p. 151. 'Ad avertendas fraudes & dolos, praeveniendumque crimen publici pecu-

and the control of the receipts and expenditures of the public treasuries in the hands of one man. 'Because he will often impose taxes for his own advantage or divert to his own use what is levied to benefit the commonwealth.' A 'multitude of people who busy themselves with money', on the other hand, 'prevents two persons of being in league with one another'. Holland's decentralised and fragmented tax system, where taxes on real estate, private property, and income were collected by the public authorities directly, but excise taxes (*accijns*), which made up the bulk of Holland's tax revenue, were farmed out to private entrepreneurs at public auctions, could therefore meet with Boxhorn's approval.¹¹⁹

The fundamental laws that express the freedom from obedience are constantly threatened to be violated, especially by ambitious princes who, poisoned by the adulation of flatterers, seek to enlarge their power and to rule as they please. 'The majority of the princes rather follows the evil ways of flatterers than the just desires of [their] subjects.'¹²⁰ Therefore a major concern of Boxhorn in the *Institutiones politicae* is to come up with ways to protect subjects and their rights against the 'injustices' of princes and the machinations of their evil councillors. One way, as noted above, is to divide administrative responsibilities between different persons to prevent too much power being concentrated in the hands of one man. Another way is that those in office should give account of their actions. For this end Boxhorn advises to install 'censors'. The censors' task is to make sure that magistrates do not act against the laws that are established to safeguard the freedom of the people and to notify those 'in whose interest it was' if the methods of the magistrates oppose 'the law and freedom'. As an example, Boxhorn refers to the tribunes in ancient

latûs, penes alios imperium, penes alios cura & custodia esse, apud alios ratio aeris publici accepti vel expositi reddi debet.' See also Aristotle, *Politics*, 1322b1 [VI:8], p. 165. 'But since some, not to say all, of these offices handle the public money, there must be of necessity another office which examines and audits them, and has no other functions. Such officers are called by various – Scrutineers, Auditors, Accountants, Controllers.'

¹¹⁹ Ibidem, I.10, p. 159. 'Non enim eidem est imperium relinquendum & accipiendi & disponendi ratio, quia saepe tributum imponeret, propter sua commoda, vel quod imperatum in Reipubl. utilitatem, in usum suum exponeret. Et pluralitas haec circâ nummos versantium facit, ne duo inter se colludent, & quod Plautus ait, consutis dolis agant. Apud Romanos penes Senatam fuit imperium, penes Quaestores aerarii custodia, à quibus Censores & nonnunquam Senatus rationem expositi requirebant. In Batavia eadem cura circa publicam pecuniam.' Reference to Plautus, *Pseudolus*, line 540. See further Boxhorn, *Commentariolus*, XII.33-39, pp. 185-94, and De Vries and Van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, pp. 102-9.

¹²⁰ Ibidem, I.5.33, p. 53. 'Verum cum plerisque Principum corrupta haec, & iniqua manent, & adulantium potius nequitiam, quam justa subditorum desideria sequuntur, proin singulari quadam, in tuenda libertate, cura est opus, quam omnem triplici hoc praecepto includimus.' These 'corruptions' (*corrupta*) and 'injustices' (*iniqua*) are the ambition of princes to rule as they please and their 'lust' (*libido*) 'to restrain all the peoples over whom they have received command and who differ in place and customs under one and the same very great and very severe domination'. Ibidem, I.5.27-31, pp. 51-53, with quote on p. 53. 'Libido Principum, qui accepto, in diversas situ, ac institutis, gentes, Imperio, sub una eademque maxima, acerrima dominatione, omnes cupiunt continere.'

Rome who could summon the consuls to give account of their actions in the people's assembly.¹²¹ Boxhorn, however, keeps silent about who those people are 'in whose interest it was' to be notified (the Roman example suggests the people) and, when notified, what kind of actions they can take against magistrates who transgress the fundamental laws. From his comments on the Roman consuls and tyranny we can conclude that Boxhorn thinks that magistrates can only be held accountable after they have laid down their office or when they have fallen out of office due to tyrannical behaviour.¹²²

A third way Boxhorn comes up with to protect subjects from the violation of their rights is 'the joint and persistent freedom of the lower magistrates in timely preventing and stopping with a sufficient strength of both mind and speech all those matters which can take something away from the people's freedom'. This freedom of the lower magistrates constitutes 'the best defence of the people's freedom. And I shall summon here the senatorial freedom praised by Tacitus in the *Annals*, book 13, chapter 49, and of which Paetus Thrasea said that the Roman Republic was in need, and of which the states of the whole world are in need now, in a time where the peoples are so suffering and the princes use so many foul means'.¹²³

Although Boxhorn nowhere in the *Institutiones politicae* explains what this freedom of the lower magistrates means, the equation with the Tacitean concept of senatorial freedom (*senatoria libertas*) gives us a clear hint in what direction we should look. Senatorial freedom is an important principle in Tacitus's work.¹²⁴ It entails several powers, such as the power to legislate, the

¹²¹ *Ibidem*, I.5, 61. 'II. Custoditur libertas legibus permissa censoriis Magistratibus introductis, qui sunt Magistratus in Magistratus constituti, qui inquirunt rationes Magistratum, & si quos legi libertatique adversari deprehenderint, ad eos, quorum interest deferunt, sic ut hoc pacto ratio quasi gesti imperii à summis etiam Magistratibus exigatur ... Ap. Romanos etiam licebat *Tribunis plebis* Consuli diem ad populum dicere, postquam imperio abiisset, ut imperii gesti rationem redderet populo.'

¹²² *Ibidem*, I.5, p. 67, and II.4.49-53, pp. 305-6. Boxhorn makes it clear that a magistrate in office 'cannot or should not be punished'; he can be accused of having committed certain crimes. *Ibidem*, I.9.32, p. 104. 'Hinc Magistratus, qua adhuc talis, seu quamdiu titulum muneris publici sustinet, accusari quidem (etsi iusta §. 28. non temerè) potest, puniri non potest aut debet.'

¹²³ *Ibidem*, I.5.34, pp. 53-54. '(I) Concors & pertinax inferiorum Magistratum libertas, in tempesterive praeveniendis, & magnitudine idonea, tam animi, quàm oris, refutandis, omnibus, quibus aliquid decedere possit populi libertati, maximum hujus est munimentum, atque huc vocaverim illam *Annal.* 13. cap. 49. à Tacito laudatam, cujusque egere Romanam Rempublicam dicebat Paetus Thrasea, cujusque in tanta servientium patientia, totque malas Principum artes, totius jam orbis Imperia egent, Senatoriam libertatem.'

¹²⁴ Tacitus introduced the term for the first time in the *Agricola*, also in connection with the Roman senator Paetus Thrasea. Tacitus, *Agricola*, II.1-2. 'Legimus, cum Aruleno Rustico Paetus Thrasea, Herennio Senecioni Priscus Helvidius laudati essent, capitale fuisse, neque in ipsos modo auctores, sed in libros quoque eorum saevitum, delegato triumviris ministerio ut monumenta clarissimorum ingeniorum in comitio ac foro urerentur. scilicet illo igne vocem populi Romani et libertatem senatus et conscientiam generis humani aboleri arbitrabantur, expulsis insuper sapientiae professoribus atque omni bona arte in exilium acta, ne quid usquam honestum occurreret.' Quoted from Tacitus, *Opera minora*, pp. 3-4.

power to elect, and the power to adjudicate certain kinds of legal disputes that Tacitus thought the Roman Senate possessed but that most senators did not dare to use under the principate, afraid as they were to displease the *princeps* and to suffer his wrath if they did.¹²⁵ Above all, however, the term refers to 'the liberty of a senator', as a member of the Senate, 'to speak out on public affairs'.¹²⁶ This becomes especially clear in the passage of the *Annals* to which Boxhorn is referring. In that passage Tacitus records an attack on the Roman senator Thrasea by 'his disparagers' for speaking against the Senate's decision to allow 'to the community of the Syracusans to exceed the defined number for gladiatorial productions'. His detractors accused Thrasea of abusing his 'senatorial freedom' in trivial matters. Although Thrasea's response is ambiguous it is clear that Tacitus recorded this 'quite commonplace senate's decision' to show that Thrasea, in contrast to most senators, made use of his freedom of speech even in trivial matters, thus showing a free and independent spirit instead of the servile attitude that characterised most Roman senators at that time.¹²⁷ This makes it highly plausible that when Boxhorn speaks of the freedom of the lower magistrates as a defence mechanism against the malignity of ambitious princes and flatterers he means the freedom of lower magistrates to discuss and voice their opinion about matters concerning the commonwealth.¹²⁸

¹²⁵ Curtis N. Johnson, "Libertas" and "Res Publica" in Cicero and Tacitus (Ph.D.-dissertation, University Microfilms International; Ann Arbor, 1980), p. 147.

¹²⁶ Ibidem, pp. 114-21, 147-49, 166, 179-209, with quote on p. 185.

¹²⁷ Thrasea responded to the accusation that he, although not ignorant 'of present circumstances', 'was in fact honoring the fathers by making it clear that concern for important matters would not be dissembled by those who turned their attention even to the most trivial'. Tacitus, *The Annals*, XIII.49.4, p. 270. See also Tacitus, *The Annals*, XIV.49.1, p. 297. 'The free-speaking of Thrasea exploded the servitude of others, and, after the consul had permitted a division, they went to vote in favor of his proposal.' Tacitus, *Annalium ab excessu divi Augusti libri*, XIV.49. 'Libertas Thraseae servitium aliorum rupit et postquam discessionem consul permiserat, pedibus in sententiam eius iere ...'

¹²⁸ There are two other instances in the *Institutiones politicae* where Boxhorn defends the principle of free speech. The first instance can be found in the chapter on *majestas*. There he holds that not everything what is said can be counted as treason (*crimen laesae majestatis*). Referring to the famous example of Cremutius Cordus who was charged of treason because he had claimed in a work that C. Cassius, one of the murders of Julius Caesar, was 'the last Roman', Boxhorn distinguishes between the words of an innocent speaker, and the words of a future perpetrator. Only the later should be prosecuted, the other not, for he is, just as Cordus, 'completely ... innocent of deeds'. Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I.4, pp. 33-34, with quote on p. 33. Boxhorn quotes Tacitus, *The Annals*, IV.34.2, p. 138. The second instance can be found in the chapter on the lower magistrates. In that chapter Boxhorn agrees with Gaius Maecenas (c.70-8 BC), one of Augustus's councillors, who had advised Augustus 'that the power to advise should be allowed to anyone'. Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I.8, p. 113. 'Illi verò non sunt damnandi, qui diversas in Rep. ab aliis habent sententias. Aliud enim est opinione errare, aliud voluntate dissidere. Monuit id Mecaenas Agustum apud Dionem, l. 52. suasitque, linquendam esse cuilibet suadendi potentia.' Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, LII.37-40.

The mechanisms of order and obedience. Religion, law, and political participation

Boxhorn depicts the commonwealth as a body of many that has come into being ‘for the sake of the advantage of all together and each individually’. To obtain that goal the commonwealth has to be structured alongside a hierarchical order where some men obey and other men rule (an *ordo parendi et imperandi*), for only a well-organised political society with rulers and subjects constitutes a real commonwealth. Such a differentiation, however, goes against man’s natural equality and liberty, while man’s ambitious and greedy nature makes it hard for him to co-operate with other people and to accept orders. Thus, certain means are necessary to ensure that men work together, come to an agreement, and accept an *ordo parendi et imperandi*. In the *Institutiones politicae* Boxhorn discerns at least three important means to obtain these goals: religion, law, and political participation.

1. Religion

The most important mean that Boxhorn discerns is religion. Religion has two specific benefits. First, it can give rulers a certain air of divinity. Boxhorn refers to Numa, the second king of Rome, who had pretended to have a relationship with the water nymph Egeria who gave him advise. Numa’s religious ‘feigning’ (*factio*) ‘was so beneficial for the commonwealth that Augustine says that “Romulus had been the founder of the city of Rome, [but] Numa had been the founder of the Roman Republic”’.¹²⁹

Second, and in line with Machiavelli (who follows Polybius and Livy on this point), religion is beneficial because it installs fear in the hearts of the masses, which renders them into obedience, both to their fellow men and to the law.¹³⁰ The rebellious Roman legions stationed in Germania, for example, returned to their former obedience because an eclipse of the moon, which they interpreted as a sign of the wrath of the gods, had struck fear into their hearts.¹³¹

¹²⁹ Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I.2, p. 13. ‘Sed & Legislatores antiqui Deorum se uti Consillis fingebant, quod & observavit Liv. Lib. I. Hist. de Numâ, cap. 19. Tantumque ejus factio haec profuit Reipublicae ut Augustinus dicat, Romulum urbis, Numam Reipublicae Romanae Conditorem extitisse.’ See Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, I.3. See also Boxhorn, *Emblemata politica: accedunt dissertationes politicae de Romanorum Imperio et quaedamaliae*, II.8, pp. 160-61. ‘Unde liquet claretque, vinculum Reipub. adeò necessarium esse religionem, ut praestet falsam in eâ esse & coli, quàm nullam. Et simulatus illae Numae cum Aege-riâ congressus, & ancilia caelo, delapsa & aeterni isti tantâque sollicitudine semper custoditi.’ For the example of Numa, see also Machiavelli, *Discorsi*, I.11.

¹³⁰ Polybius, *The Rise of the Roman Empire*, VI.56, and Livy, *From the Foundation of the City*, I.19-20.

¹³¹ Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I.7, p. 85. The example is taken from Tacitus, *The Annals*, I.12.

Religion, then, provides for the two matters most necessary to establish and maintain a commonwealth: inequality and obedience. Religion is 'the bond, the tie, and indeed the foundation of the commonwealth'.¹³² Boxhorn even holds that 'it is better to have a false and very vain superstition than none at all'; a commonwealth simply cannot exist without a religion.¹³³

Like most contemporaries Boxhorn prefers that only one religion would be allowed to exist within a commonwealth 'because in this way concord is obtained'.¹³⁴ 'If, however, it is expedient for the growth of the commonwealth, then not only one religion, nor, however, every religion should be tolerated.'¹³⁵ It was clear to Boxhorn that 'there could be only one true religion, and only one religion that pleases God', but tolerating other religions was not against any divine or human law.¹³⁶ On the other hand, the advantages of religious toleration were manifest. First, it leads 'to the growth of the commonwealth and its people'. The Dutch Republic, where 'there is such a large number of people because almost every religion is being accepted', exemplified that truth.¹³⁷ Second, the toleration of several religions arouses in all people 'a love for the commonwealth and the magistrates. Because everyone will love those magistrates, who clearly sees that the matters he holds sacred are not treated with contempt by those magistrates'.¹³⁸ Third, toleration leads 'to the appreciation of freedom. Because freedom grows extensively, when one is allowed to act as freely in religion as in other matters'.¹³⁹

¹³² Ibidem, I.7, p. 85. 'Diximus religionem esse vinculum ac nexum adeoque fundamentum reip. ...'

¹³³ Ibidem, I.7.11, p. 81. 'Adeo, ut ex iis quidem omnibus manifestum sit, sine religione esse non posse bene constitutam Rempublicam, praestareque falsam & vanissimam superstitionem esse, quam nullam.' Idem, *Emblemata politica: accedunt dissertationes politicae de Romanorum Imperio et quaedamaliae*, II.8, p. 160. 'Unde liquet claretque, vinculum Reipub. adeò necessarium esse religionem, ut praestet falsam in eà esse & coli, quàm nullam.' See also Machiavelli, *Discorsi*, I.12.6-7, p. 60. 'The princes of a republic or a kingdom must therefore maintain the foundations of the religion that they practice; and if they do so, it will be easy for them to preserve religious belief and consequently goodness and unity in their republic. And they must foster and strengthen all things that happen in its favor, even if they judge them to be false.'

¹³⁴ Ibidem, I.6, p. 87. 'Ex hac ergò religionum multitudine ansa quaestioni data, an una an plures in Rep. tolerandae; Quam solvimus dicendo, quod, si possibile sit, una tantum debeat tolerari, quia hoc modo parata est concordia.'

¹³⁵ Ibidem, I.7.14, p. 82. 'Itaque si fieri possit, & in eà abunde prospectum sit Reipublicae, una; sin aliter expediat ad Reipublicae augmentum, non tantum una, nec tamen omnis tolerari debet.'

¹³⁶ Ibidem, I.7.13, p. 82. 'Equidem una tantum religio vera esse potest, & una Deo placere, sed interim Magistratui placere plures possunt religiones, cum plures, quantumvis falsae, Rempublicam possint juvare; neque illa tolerantia adversa est aut divinis, aut gentium institutis.'

¹³⁷ Ibidem, I.7, p. 87. 'Ubi autem Resp. ad ornamentum aut augmentum sui plures requirit, admit-tendae quoque sunt. Id enim facit 1. ad augmentum Reip. ac multitudinis. Sic in his locis, quod tanta sit hominum frequentia, id praecipuè effecit; quod omnis ferè religio recipiatur.'

¹³⁸ Ibidem. '2. ad conciliandum amorem Reip. ac Magistratibus apud omnes: quisque enim amat eos, quippe à quibus sacra sua non videt contemni. Id à Romanis saepe factum, ut externos etiam ritus admitterent, ut scilicet gentes quoque alias allicerent.'

¹³⁹ Ibidem. '3. aestimationem libertatis. Magna enim ejus pars accedit, cum aequè in religione ac coeteris rebus liberè agere licet.'

But not every religion should be tolerated. Boxhorn opposes the toleration of religious sects like the Anabaptists on the ground that they undermine ‘the strength and the awe of the power to command’ by denying the magistrate the right to rule and to wage war, the means without which ‘a commonwealth cannot exist, nor be preserved’.¹⁴⁰ Furthermore, if so happens that a commonwealth hosts several religions, then ‘it is expedient that one religion dominates’. ‘Which means, that those who are of one and the same religion, are in charge of the commonwealth and promote their one religion as much as possible.’¹⁴¹ In other words, Boxhorn does not equate religious toleration with political equality. This clearly refers to the situation in the Dutch Republic, where people who belonged to other churches than the Reformed Church were not allowed to hold an administrative office and where the Reformed Church was supported financially by the public authorities.¹⁴² To grant political equality to people who adhere to different faiths is not prudent, Boxhorn warns his students, the result often being ‘frequent dissensions’, as in the kingdom of Poland.¹⁴³

¹⁴⁰ Ibidem, pp. 87-88. ‘Nec tamen eam Religionem admittendam diximus, quae vim imperii ac reverentiam exolvit ex §. 15. ... Sic etiam initio Belgicorum motuum Anabapstae maximè exosi erant, quia jus gladii Magistratui denegabant.’ Ibidem, I.7.15, p. 82. ‘Neque verò, utut caeterae tolerandae sint, ea admittenda videatur, quae ad negandam aut imminuendam imperantium autoritatem est comparata, qualis hodie est illa Anabaptistarum, qui iniquum esse existimant ac docent, gerere Magistratus, bellum administrare, aliaque ejusmodi, sine quibus nec esse Respublica, nec conservari.’ Anabaptists or Mennonites refused to take oaths and to carry arms. Despite constant and sometimes vehement complaints by ministers of the Reformed Church they were reluctantly tolerated by the Dutch public authorities who could not (because of their large numbers) or would not (because of matters of principle) outlaw and prosecute Anabaptists. Samme Zijlstra, “Anabaptism and Tolerance: Possibilities and Limitations”, in Ronnie Po-Chia Hsia and Henk van Nierop (eds.), *Calvinism and Religious Toleration in the Dutch Golden Age* (Cambridge University Press; Cambridge, 2002), pp. 112-21.

¹⁴¹ Ibidem, I.7.19, p. 83. ‘Adeo ut cautè agendum sit, initiis, si fieri possit, oppressis, si tamen vires acceperint, abstinendum. Sed & ubi diversae religiones sunt in usu, expedit unam dominari, hoc est, qui unius ac ejusdem religionis sunt, Reipublicae praeesse, & quantum fieri potest, unam eorum promovere.’ From this it becomes clear that when Boxhorn speaks of ‘to tolerate’ he means it in the sense of ‘to endure’ or ‘to bear’ the existence of another religion and to not physically persecute its followers (the latin verb *tolerare* can mean both ‘to tolerate’ and ‘to bear’ or ‘to suffer’). Boxhorn’s view on ‘religious tolerance’, then, is quite different from what we mean by it today: ‘Today the phrase “religious tolerance” implies religious freedom, which we define as a basic human right; it entails freedom of worship, religious speech, and assembly, and the legal equality of different religious groups.’ Benjamin J. Kaplan, “‘Dutch’ Religious Tolerance: Celebration and Revision”, in Po-Chia Hsia and Van Nierop (eds.), *Calvinism and Religious Toleration in the Dutch Golden Age*, p. 25.

¹⁴² Wiebe Bergsma, “Kerk, staat en volk”, in Karel Davids and Jan Lucassen (eds.), *Een wonder weerspiegeld: de Nederlandse Republiek in Europees perspectief* (Aksant; Amsterdam, 1st ed. 1995, 2005), pp. 202-3, and Joke Spaans, “Religious Policies in the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic”, in Po-Chia Hsia and Van Nierop (eds.), *Calvinism and Religious Toleration in the Dutch Golden Age*, p. 74.

¹⁴³ Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I.7, p. 88. ‘Diximus §. 19. etiam, ubi diversae sunt religiones, expedire unam praedominari, ne diversae religionis hominibus rerum summae admotis quilibet eorum ad sua trahat & distrahat Remp. quod incommodum regnum Poloniae experitur: quia enim diversarum Religionum Nobiles ad comitia conveniunt, frequentes existent dissensiones.’ Since the Confederation of Warsaw (1573) all members of the Polish nobility (*szlachta*) had, regardless of their religion, an equal right to participate in politics. The religious freedom the *szlachta* had gained with the Confederation of Warsaw was meant to ensure that Protestants, Catholics, and Orthodox were treated equally before the

The fear of dissent also brings Boxhorn to judge as dangerous the introduction of new religions or ‘innovations’ in religions that are already established. Since the two spheres, religion and politics, are so closely intertwined, the smallest changes in matters of religion can lead to the greatest political upheavals. As example Boxhorn refers to the calamities that had recently plagued the British Isles; there the attempts of the archbishop of Canterbury William Laud (1573-1645) to introduce changes in religion in Scotland had almost resulted in a war between the English and the Scots. The final result was the execution of king Charles I and a ‘change of the commonwealth’.¹⁴⁴

How, then, are we to deal with new, upcoming religions or religious diversity? Boxhorn’s stand is ambivalent. On the one hand, he advocates the oppression of new religions if that is a feasible option.¹⁴⁵ On the other, ‘nothing is more contrary to religion and the public peace, than to use force, and to strike those people with the severity of death penalties, who do not share our own religion’. Man’s conscience falls directly under the command of God and thus outside the jurisdiction of the magistrate. However, if the public peace is disturbed ‘under the pretext and practice of a new and diverse religion’, the magistrate is allowed to impose a penalty, although, if he is wise, he will not do so in the name of religion.¹⁴⁶

All in all, Boxhorn’s treatment of religion reveals an instrumental and utilitarian approach to the subject. The fact that Boxhorn finds it acceptable that a

law. Anti-trinitarians, such as Socinians, were excluded from this arrangement. Karin Friedrich, “Poland-Lithuania”, in Lloyd, Burgess and Hodson (eds.), *European Political Thought*, pp. 208-10, 223-24, 229-42.

¹⁴⁴ Ibidem, I.7, p. 90. ‘Ultimo §. diximus etiam nihil temerè in sacris esse mutandum, quia quicquid novum cum mutatione veterum & saepè Reip. conjunctum est, quae interdum ex minimis oritur, ut testatur experientia. Recens hujus exemplum habemus in Anglia. Dum enim Archiepiscopus Cantuariensis quaedam in Religione mutare voluit, Scoti & Angli tantum non commissi sunt inter se. (Imò tempora procedentia ostenderunt, inde & Episcopo mortem illatam, & post occiso rege Remp. esse mutatam).’ The sentence in brackets is probably added by Franckenstein/Hanwaker. Here, however, Franckenstein/Hanwaker closely follows the explanation given by Boxhorn in the *Historia universalis*, a book that, as we have seen (see footnote 12 above), at least Franckenstein knew and had read. ‘Inter haec Angliae, Scotiae, Hiberniaeque Rex Carolus I, regnorumque Proceres, subditique, in contraria scissi studia, maximi terroris motibus bellisque domi inter se committuntur. Ex quibus, capto tandem rege, & securi ab Anglis publice percusso, regiâque omni sobole regio nomine ac jure exutâ, magna conversio rerum ac mutatio facta est.’ Boxhorn, *Historia universalis*, pp. 99-107, with quote on p. 107. See also idem, *Metamorphosis Anglorum*, pp. 300-4.

¹⁴⁵ Ibidem, I.7.19, p. 83. ‘Adeò ut cautè agendum sit, initiis, si fieri possit, oppressis, si tamen vires acceperint, abstinendum.’

¹⁴⁶ Ibidem, I.7.20, p. 84. ‘Et nihil magis Religioni & paci publicae est adversum, quàm vim usurpare, & acerbitate suppliciorum in eos grassari, qui non ejusdem nobiscum sunt religionis. Nam in negotio religionis divino juri, & privatae unius cujusque conscientiae, in quam solus sibi Deus imperium servavit, cedere oportet jus dominationis. Ubi tamen, praetextu ac usu novae, diversaeque religionis, pax publica turbatur, poenam necesse est imponere. Sed prudenter imponetur, si titulus non tam novae & diversae Religionis, quàm turbatae Reipublicae imponatur, sic enim in conscientias hominum Magistratus grassari non videbuntur.’

magistrate can tolerate more than one religion if he thinks that this will benefit the commonwealth makes it clear that Boxhorn holds that religious concerns are subordinate to concerns we would now call political. Even false religions find favour in Boxhorn's sight as long as they contribute to the well-being of the commonwealth. Boxhorn does not treat religion as a way towards salvation, but primarily as a mean to worldly ends. By that he reduces religion to a matter of choices and choices concerning religion to a matter of political prudence. Such a vision on religion would have been strictly abhorred by most adherents of the more orthodox stream of Dutch Calvinism from which Boxhorn descended.¹⁴⁷

2. Law

Another important mean that Boxhorn discerns is the law. Just like religion the law has two specific advantages. First, laws are meant to incite fear, both in the hearts of those who rule and in those who obey. Their primary goal is to prevent those evils that have erupted since the end of the golden age, specifically the disregard of authority and the abuse of power.¹⁴⁸ For the laws to be obeyed, they have to be accompanied by some kind of punishment, for only the prospect of punishment will incite fear.¹⁴⁹

On the other hand, the second advantage laws have is that they can encourage good behaviour by holding out the prospect of rewards for good deeds. In a specific attack on the Stoic doctrine that virtue is a reward in its own right Boxhorn claims: 'because of the sluggishness or ambition that is common to man it is a fact that virtue is valued because of her rewards. For nobody wants to be good for no reward but thanks.'¹⁵⁰ Utilising man's egocentric motives (avoiding pain and suffering, seeking rewards and profit), the laws are the commonwealth's stick and carrot.

The law has two important characteristics. The first important characteristic is its 'dispassionate' nature.

¹⁴⁷ See chapter 3.

¹⁴⁸ Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I.9, p. 130. Boxhorn refers to Tacitus, *The Annals*, III.25-29.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibidem*, I.9.14, p. 125. 'Neque enim ulla Lex valida est sine poena, cum ea nolentes etiam & inviti ad observationem legis constringantur. Qui enim ratione non possunt, terrore corriguntur.'

¹⁵⁰ *Ibidem*, I.9, p. 134. 'Licet enim Stoicorum ex sententia, virtus sibi ipsi sit praemium, et semper pulcherrima merces, tamen sive socordia sive ambitione humani ingenii factum est, ut virtus ex praemiis aestimetur. Nemo quippe gratis bonus esse vult.' After which follows a quote from Juvenal's *Satires* (10.141): 'Who, in fact, embraces Goodness herself, if you take away the rewards?' Quoted from Juvenal, *The Satires*. Translated by Niall Rudd. Edited with an Introduction and Notes by William Barr (Oxford University Press; Oxford, 1st ed. 1991, 2008), p. 91.

The law is a certain rule that is laid down by the authority of the highest magistrates or by the common consensus of the citizens. The law either commands what, and how something must be done, or it prohibits what must not be done, for the sake of obtaining the good of all or for the sake of diverting evil. It is like a decidedly steadfast magistrate, and without emotion, without favouritism, and hatred, as Tullius somewhere says.¹⁵¹

Second, every law finds its origin in reason.¹⁵² This reason, that is, the logic behind a certain law and its specific advantage should, if they are not known, be explained to the people, for men prefer to follow reason, and will 'gladly embrace' a law, if they know its specific advantage.¹⁵³ This explains the importance of *eloquentia*, but it also implies the need to communicate and to seek a common understanding about what is logical and advantageous. Thus, the laws themselves are the product of deliberation and the expression, if only silently, of consent.

Laws come in different kinds of sizes and shapes. Boxhorn follows the two-partite distinction between divine and human laws. Divine laws concern themselves with religion and sacred matters.¹⁵⁴ Their main objective is to ensure that (a) God is honoured.¹⁵⁵ Since they articulate the content of a religion, divine laws are the main instruments to excite fear and obedience

¹⁵¹ *Ibidem*, I.9, pp. 121-22. 'Lex autem ratio quaedam est, quae supremorum Magistratum auctoritate vel communi consensu civitatis definita, aut jubet quid, & quomodo quidque agendum sit, aut quod non agendum vetat, boni omnium obtinendi aut declinandi mali causa, constans quidem, & sine affectu, sine gratia, & odio, ut Tullius alicubi loquitur, Magistratus.' Probably Cicero, *Pro Marcello*, 9 [29]. See also Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I.5, p. 60. 'Legem esse Magistratum sine affectu.' For the unpassionate character of the law and its importance, see also Aristotle, *Politics*, 1286a1 [III:15], p. 86. 'Yet surely the ruler cannot dispense with the general principle which exists in law: and that is a better ruler which is free from passion than that in which it is innate. Where as the law is passionless, passion must always sway the heart of man.' And *ibidem*, 1287a1 [III:16], p. 88. 'Therefore he who bids the law rule may be deemed to bid God and Reason alone rule, but he who bids man rule adds an element of the beast; for desire is a wild beast, and passion perverts the minds of rulers, even when they are the best of men. The law is reason unaffected by desire.'

¹⁵² Boxhorn refers to the introduction to the *Rhetoric to Alexander*, a work which he, as was common at that time, attributed to Aristotle, but whose authorship is now questioned. In the introduction [1420a25] the law is defined as 'an utterance, determined by the common consent of the commonwealth, which declares how things are to be done'. In the *De Cive* Hobbes had criticised this definition. Hobbes maintained that Aristotle had confused the law, which he saw as the command from a sovereign authority, with an agreement which he defined as a promise. See Hobbes, *On the Citizen*, pp. 154-55, with quote and reference on p. 154.

¹⁵³ Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I.3, p. 22, and I.9, p. 133, with quote there. 'Quàm libenter quisque utilitatem amplectitur, ita quoque legem, quam utilitatis causa esse novit.'

¹⁵⁴ *Ibidem*, I.9, p. 131. 'Suntque istae duorum generum, Divinae scilicet & Humanae. Divinae sunt, quibus religio aut sacra aut aestimatio sacrorum praescribitur. Istae primae sunt, in vinculum sunt Rerumpubl. & nonnulla causa.'

¹⁵⁵ *Ibidem*. 'Ideo usitatum legislatoribus est in principio atque exordio legum primo hanc ponere legem: Colendum esse Deum, quod vel ex ipso Cic. de LL. apparet.' Actually Cicero, *De natura deorum*, I.115.

into the hearts of the subjects. Thus, the authority of the magistrate greatly depends on these divine laws.

Of the human laws, the fundamental laws are the most important. They concern themselves with 'the majesty of the commonwealth and that of the rulers, the freedom of the people, the designation, place and power of the magistrate, and the principal matter of the commonwealth', the *summa Reipublicae*.¹⁵⁶ Although these fundamental laws stand at the basis of what might be called a 'constitution' and should therefore remain fixed,¹⁵⁷ we have seen that Boxhorn considered them as renegotiable contracts that could and should be adapted if the circumstances demand such a course of action.¹⁵⁸ The fundamental laws represent the commonwealth's condition in all its varieties at a certain place at a certain time.

3. Political participation

A third way that Boxhorn discerns is 'political participation'. In book 1, chapter 3 of the *Institutiones politicae* Boxhorn gives a list of ten possible ways for obtaining and maintaining the 'mutual and invincible consensus between rulers and subjects'.¹⁵⁹ Third on that list is 'if, where the received form of ruling allows it, all members of the commonwealth are allowed some share in the public administration'.¹⁶⁰ It is here that the notion of self-interest comes into play. This becomes obvious if we look at Boxhorn's defence of the 'mixed commonwealth' or *respublica mixta*.

¹⁵⁶ Ibidem, I.9.4, p. 122. 'Leges autem aliae atque aliae sunt: sunt enim quae Imperii & Imperantium majestatem, libertatem populi, institutionem, ordinem, vim Magistratus, & summam Reipublicae concernunt, & fundamentales fere dicuntur.'

¹⁵⁷ Ibidem, I.9.5, p. 122. 'Hae à majoribus acceptae, & sanctissime semper observatae, tam debent esse aeternae, quam ad obtinendam Reipublicae aeternitatem sunt comparatae: ut verò aeternae manent, nec cum mutatis Magistratibus subinde mutantur, omnino condendae sunt leges quaedam earum custodes, quibus severissimae in eos constituuntur poenae, qui de iis mutandis aut abrogandis vel aliquid in medium tantum sunt allaturi.' The 'tam ... quam ...' construction in the first sentence is of great importance. In such a construction the emphasis lies on the 'quam' part. Thus, the first sentence can be translated as followed: 'These fundamental laws, which have been received from our ancestors and which have always been very piously observed, must exist forever, it is true, but must first and foremost be constituted to obtain the eternity of the commonwealth.' This wording of Boxhorn in the first sentence allows room to move. For what to do if the fundamental laws are not 'constituted to obtain the eternity of the commonwealth' or, after some time, when circumstances have changed, do not longer contribute to the commonwealth's eternity? As we shall see in chapter 9, it is the well-being of the commonwealth that determines if laws remain valid or become invalid, not their ancienity or eternal existence.

¹⁵⁸ Here, of course, counts that 'necessity knows no laws'. See chapter 9.

¹⁵⁹ Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I.3.16, p. 19. 'Nexus ille, & suprema Imperii omnis vis & anima, in imperantium ac subditorum mutuo invictoquo consensu, constitit.'

¹⁶⁰ Ibidem. 'Si, ubi id per admissam imperii formam licet, pars aliqua publicae curae omnibus Reipublicae membris permittatur.'

Since antiquity the defence of the concept of the mixed constitution rested on the assumption that by means of reciprocity and mutual fear an equilibrium could exist between the different estates or sections that make up a political society. A proper balance meant that each section of society held on to some of the central tenets of government (legislation, financial administration, the conduct of war), but that it was depended on the other sections for conducting its own administrative responsibilities. Thus, no section could properly function all by itself, while the resistance from the other sections would prevent any one section from gaining the upper hand. If well-balanced, such a mixed regime would lead to internal peace and prosperity. Here, Venice was the example *par excellence*.¹⁶¹

Boxhorn, however, does not believe in the feasibility of this equilibrium; no matter how mixed a regime might be, there is always one section that will tower above the others.¹⁶² In his defence of the concept of the mixed regime, therefore, the Polybian notion of a balance of power and the means for obtaining it are missing. Rather, Boxhorn reaches for the notion of self-interest.

Because if that form of government is long lasting that is loved by all its members; and if that form of government cannot be loved, unless all members are admitted to a part of the power to command, then such mixed forms of command must be judged the best, in which no member is ignored.¹⁶³

The underlying message of this syllogism is that each section of society needs to be *personally* involved in government for them to love the form of government. If a section of society does not *itself* participate in government, those

¹⁶¹ Haitsma Mulier, *The Myth of Venice*, pp. 13-75.

¹⁶² Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, II.1, p. 261. '*Mixti tamen imperii nomen mihi non placet, quia nihil tam mixtum est, in quo non aliquid excellat, à quo totum denominandum censeo.*' Ibidem, I.4, p. 32. 'Non enim in paucitate personarum consistit Majestas, sed in jure summi imperii. Atque ex hac Majestate faciliè dignosci formae rerumpubl. possunt, si solum modo attendatur ad illum ordinem, in quo Majestas est, & quanquam videantur mixtae esse respublicae, unus tamen ordo esse solet, in quo vis majestatis praecipuè elucet.' Here, Boxhorn could be following Tacitus who had also expressed his doubts about the practical feasibility of a constant balance of power. Tacitus, *The Annals*, IV.33.1, p. 137. 'All nations and cities are ruled either by the people or by leading men, or by an individual. (A form of government which is chosen from a combination of these can more easily be praised than happen, or, if it does happen, cannot be long-lasting.)'

¹⁶³ Ibidem, II.1, p. 261. '*Si enim durabilis status sit, qui ab omnibus amatur partibus; & amari non possit, nisi iisdem ad partem imperii admissis, optima censenda ejusmodi mixta imperia, in quibus nulla pars negligitur.*' Ibidem, I.15.31, p. 240. 'Enimvero ille Reipubl. status ad temporis & rerum diurnitatem maxime est comparatus, quem salvum & incolumem cupiunt omnia ejus membra, omnes ejus partes; nec salvum cupiunt, nisi secum quoque curas & res imperii intelligant communicari.' The first premises of Boxhorn's syllogism shows a close affinity with Aristotle, *Politics*, 1270b1 [II:9], p. 52. 'For if a constitution to be permanent, all the parts of the state must wish that it should exist and these arrangements be maintained.'

who belong to that section cannot love the form of government. In this particular case, 'to love' (*amare*) is directly connected to involvement of the self (*ego*). To this syllogism we can connect Boxhorn's observation that the most peaceful commonwealths are those in which even the lower magistrates, who Boxhorn describes as the representatives of the people, feel that they are admitted to the administration of the commonwealth. Here, once again, the Netherlands and ancient Rome, after the plebs had been given access to administrative offices, serve as the prime examples.¹⁶⁴

In line with this reasoning is Boxhorn's stand that, at least in theory, no inhabitant of a commonwealth should be barred from obtaining an administrative office, 'for private individuals should not be denied what is held in common'.¹⁶⁵ From this we can conclude that an administrative office is common property, and that, at least in this case, Boxhorn sees the *res publica*, which he defines in non-Ciceronian terms as a 'body of many', in the Ciceronian sense of a *res populi*, the collective property of the people.¹⁶⁶

According to Boxhorn, the principle of 'non-exclusion' carries four major benefits. First, it excites in people a greater love for the commonwealth, because the fact that no one should be excluded from office demonstrates to the people 'the greatness of liberty' that rests on a system of ruling and being ruled in turn.¹⁶⁷ Second, it contributes to the concord within a commonwealth,

¹⁶⁴ *Ibidem*, I.3, pp. 22-23. 'Itaque in Regno Optimatum & Populi; in Optimatum regimine Populi; in Democratia Optimum habenda ratio est; atque indè pacatissimae sunt Respublicae, in quibus & minores Magistratus curam Reipublicae ad se pertinere sentiunt. In Belgio sanè nullus status exclusum se à Republica queri potest. Comitibus enim constituunt Nobiles & Civitatum delegati, qui posteriores sunt quasi Optimates in populo, atque indè facillimè consensus vel in gravissimis rebus impetratur. Nam si delegati consentiant in Tributa; populus id non potest impedire, quia omnem sui consensus vim in eos transfundit. Ita & Respublica Romana turbata mirificè fuit, antequam plebs ad Reipublicae munia admissa fuisset.' For Rome, see also *ibidem*, I.8, p. 105, and chapter 7 of this thesis.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibidem*, I.8, p. 105. 'Nemo etiam à Magistratu excludendus, juxta §. 6. quia quod commune omnium est, singulis non debet denegari.' *Ibidem*, I.8.5, p. 97. 'Via igitur ad honores munienda est iniquinis.'

¹⁶⁶ If this is true, then one has to be careful of speaking of the state as an abstract entity, separated and distinguishable from its citizens, since the Romans had no such conception of a *res publica*. See Wood, *Cicero's Social and Political Thought*, pp. 124-26. According to Aristotle, what defines a citizen is 'that he shares in the administration of justice, and in offices'. Aristotle, *Politics*, 1275a1 [III:1], p. 62. 'Thus', as Richard Mulgan has explained, in the Aristotelian sense 'full membership of a city implies participation, or at least the right to participate, in the political duties of citizenship'. Mulgan, however, also points out that Aristotle's view on political participation was ambivalent; the good citizen could also be good and live a virtuous life without fulfilling an office. Furthermore, Aristotle had described his ideal state (books VII-VIII) as a polis in which men of equal virtue share in ruling and being ruled; however, if there was someone, or a few people who would exceed the others in matters of virtue and ability, they should rule instead of the whole citizen-body. Here we come across Aristotle's notion of distributive justice, giving each man his due, a principle also followed by Cicero. Aristotle, *Politics*, 1283b1-1284a1 [III:13], p. 81, and Richard Mulgan, "Aristotle and the Value of Political Participation", in *Political Theory*, Vol. 18, No. 2 (1990), pp. 195-215, esp. pp. 203-8, with quote on p. 206. For a more elaborate discussion of this topic, see Nieuwstraten, "Why the Wealthy should rule", pp. 126-49.

¹⁶⁷ Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I.8, p. 105. 'Accedit quod hoc faciat: I. ad Reip. amorem majorem in omnibus excitandum: quippe sic ostenditur & magnitudo libertatis, quae in vicissitudine parendi & imperandi consistit, & reprimitur Insolentia Magistratum.' Probably because where everyone is

since both the people who are unfit to and will probably never rule and the people who are fit to rule all share the same hope that one day they might rule. Third, it promotes virtuous behaviour, because virtue is treated with contempt if administrative offices are 'being snatched or taken away'.¹⁶⁸ In other words, holding an administrative office should be earned. Fourth and finally, the principle of 'non-exclusion' leads to a public manifestation of obedience, because the person who hopes to obtain an administrative office one day will show more respect to the magistrates present, so as to avoid disobedience when he himself is in office. In sum, self-interest will produce a greater love for the commonwealth (*Reipublicae amor major*), concord (*concordia*), virtue (*virtus*), and obedience (*obsequium*).¹⁶⁹

So much for theory. In practice, however, administrative offices should be preserved for the noble and the rich. In his treatment of Roman history Boxhorn defends Rome's senatorial rule of the patricians on the ground that 'the administration of the commonwealth should be put in the hands of those people, who are fairly wealthy, rather than in the hands of those people who are of lesser condition, since it is likely that those people shall be more devoted to the common good who will suffer more when it is lost'.¹⁷⁰ In the *Institutiones politicae* this argumentation can also be found, but now specifically applied to the Dutch Republic. In book I, chapter 8 we read that it is customary among the Dutch that the rich are favoured above the poor when it comes to holding an administrative office. According to Boxhorn, one of the reasons why the Dutch prefer the rich to hold an administrative office is that those people will take better care of the commonwealth who know that their belongings are predominantly to be found in that commonwealth. Applying the ship metaphor, Boxhorn explains that the Dutch in this case are following the exam-

allowed to obtain an office, no magistrate can hold an office for life. Furthermore, it also curbs the insolence of the magistrates. Because as long as the magistrates realise that they are elected from amongst equals and they themselves will someday be ruled by others, they will, for fear of retaliation, adopt a careful policy and avoid anything that might upset their fellow citizens. In this way their unbridled lust (*libido*) is restrained. According to Aristotle, 'to rule and be ruled in turn' was one of the two principles of liberty, the other one being 'that a man should live as he likes'. Aristotle, *Politics*, 1317b1 [VI:2], p. 154.

¹⁶⁸ Ibidem. '3. ad excitandum virtum. Sublatis enim aut ablatis honoribus virtus contemnitur.'

¹⁶⁹ To advocate for political participation on practical grounds was common practice among political Aristotelians. See Von Friedeburg and Seidler, 'The Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation', p. 159. 'It should be stressed, lest there by any misunderstanding, that this 'representation' was not justified by a general legal claim to parity in the political system, but by pragmatic arguments such as improvement of the level of awareness that would inform political decisions and the integrating effect that participation in political processes would achieve.' Boxhorn, however, advocates for political participation with man's unsocial nature in mind.

¹⁷⁰ Boxhorn, *Emblemata politica: accedunt dissertationes politicae de Romanorum Imperio et quaedamaliae*, VI.7, p. 213. 'Quod consilium ipsa ratio probat. Cum enim credibile sit boni publici magis futuros studiosos, qui eo amisso jacturam facturi sunt privatarum opum, ditioribus potius, quam his, qui minoris fortunae, cura Reipub. mandanda est.'

ple set by merchants, who, when they send their ships with their goods to unknown shores, force the crew to put some of their personal belongings on board, so that they will be more trustworthy in protecting the ships.¹⁷¹ This for the obvious, but unmentioned reason that if any harm will befall a ship, its crew would also have something to lose. It was therefore only logical that in the Dutch Republic the rich merchants should stand at the helm of the state, because they had the most to lose if the Republic would suffer any damage and much to gain with the Republic's well-being.¹⁷²

Here it is time to pause and to consider the implication of what we have just discovered. With his plea for political participation on the grounds that it is participation that will lead to stability, Boxhorn had made it theoretically possible to see self-interest as the pillar of peace. In reality, however, this meant that political participation should be preserved for those whose private interests corresponded the most to the public interest.¹⁷³ These two ideas would be adopted by the brothers De la Court and Spinoza, who integrated them into their own ideological frameworks. If they are the leading examples of a seventeenth-century 'Dutch republicanism', then Boxhorn can be seen as one of its founding fathers, as his defence of polyarchical regimes will further demonstrate.

In Aristotle's footsteps I. Aristocracy as 'the most commendable form of government'

Ernst Kossmann famously argued that before 1650 the Dutch had failed to come to grips with the genesis and nature of their own state, failing as they did in locating the political body in which sovereignty rested, and, as consequence, in supplying their theories of resistance with sufficient legal grounds. Only after 1650, Kossmann claimed, during the period in which Holland had no stadholder, did Dutch political thinkers started to come up with 'political

¹⁷¹ Idem, *Institutiones politicae*, I.8, p. 107. 'Interest quoque egenorum, ut à Divitibus regantur, quia Divites majorem vim & opes ad defendendos egenos conferre possunt. Id usitatum est Belgis habentque rationes: 1. Quia nulla ferè apud illos stipendia magistratibus dantur. 2. Quia divites non adeo Remp. expilant, qui sufficientes jam opes habent, quod Plato observavit. 3. Quia magis curant Rempub. qui sua quoque in illa esse & quidem non modica norunt. Fit hoc ea ratione, quemadmodum cum mercatoriis navibus, ubi sua bona in exteris oras ablegantibus adigunt nautas rerum quoque propriarum aliquid imponere, ut tanto fideliores sint in nave custodienda. 4. Quia ad pompam dignitatis, quae in Magistratu esse debet, opes faciunt.'

¹⁷² Nieuwstraten, "Why the Wealthy should rule", pp. 126-49.

¹⁷³ It is interesting to note that a similar view can be detected in the *Republic* of Plato, who Arnisaetus saw as one of the leading proponents of the theory of man's unsociability. Plato, *Republic*, 412d-e, 421b-c, 423d-e, 463a-465d. For Arnisaetus, see footnote 64 above.

systems' that to some extent reflected their own reality. At the same time he characterised Dutch political thought before 1650 as Aristotelian and humanist with an inherent tendency to favour monarchy as the oldest, best, and safest form of government. Here Kossmann put Boxhorn forward as a leading example. In Kossmann's view during this pre-1650 period there was no 'principal Dutch republicanism', while he classified authors who favoured a royal form of command (*regnum*) or a mixed form of command (*imperium mixtum*) as monarchists.¹⁷⁴

Since then many comments and alternatives have been reviewed. While some have pointed out that the Dutch did manage to construct a consistent republican theory of resistance during the early and later phases of the Revolt,¹⁷⁵ others have emphasised that a monarchical theory, in a full appreciation of monarchy or expressed in a theory of a mixed regime, only developed in a later stage of the Revolt, as a reaction to the problems a Bodinian kind of absolute sovereignty posed for the realities of Dutch politics.¹⁷⁶ Thus, we are told that 'the astonishment modern historians of political thought have expressed about the prevalence of monarchical theory in the early Republic seems to be misplaced. The seventeenth-century admirers of Roman antiquity, these critics of Bodinian absolutism did indeed prefer a balanced form of government, but could in no way accept the theory underlying it [i.e. reason of state arguments-JN]. They used the monarchical model to escape the perplexities involved'.¹⁷⁷

We have already seen that Boxhorn's view on man and political society, and the means to make the later function properly and peacefully, does not quite fit the Aristotelian mould some have tried to put him. I will now show that Box-

¹⁷⁴ First expressed in 1960, Ernst Kossmann, in his many publications, more or less stuck to the same view, claiming in 2000, when his classical study was republished in English, that he could repeat his arguments almost unaltered, because no real new convincing alternative, Hans Blom's study of 1995 exempted, had been offered. Kossmann, *Political Thought in the Dutch Republic*, pp. 22-23, 38-39, 41-43, 50-51. See also, amongst others, idem, "Dutch Republicanism", pp. 179-82, 193, and idem, "Freedom in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Thought and Practice", in Jonathan I. Israel (ed.), *The Anglo Dutch Moment: Essays on the Glorious Revolution and Its World Impact* (Cambridge University Press; Cambridge, 1991), pp. 289-90. Simon Groenveld and Harm Wansink followed Kossmann in this view. Groenveld, *De prins voor Amsterdam*, pp. 37-44, and Wansink, *Politieke wetenschappen aan de Leidse universiteit*, esp. p. 231ff.

¹⁷⁵ Nicolette Mout, "Van arm vaderland tot een eendrachtige republiek: de rol van politieke theorieën in de Nederlandse Opstand", in *Bijdragen en mededelingen betreffende de geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, Vol. 101, No. 3 (1986), p. 359; Martin van Gelderen, "The Machiavellian Moment and the Dutch Revolt: The Rise of Neostoicism and Dutch Republicanism", in Block, Skinner and Viroli (eds.), *Machiavelli and Republicanism*, pp. 221-22; idem, *The Political Thought of the Dutch Revolt*, pp. 276-87; idem, "The Low Countries", pp. 378-79, 387-89.

¹⁷⁶ Nicolette Mout sees the period around 1600 as a watershed, Hans Blom the years 1618-19. Mout, "Van arm vaderland tot een eendrachtige republiek", p. 362, and Hans W. Blom, "Politieke theorieën in het eerste kwart van de zeventiende eeuw: vaderland van aristocratische republiek naar gemengde staat", in Nellen and Trapman (eds.), *De Hollandse jaren van Hugo de Groot (1583-1621)*, pp. 145-53.

¹⁷⁷ Blom, *Causality and Morality in Politics*, p. 98.

horn also took an ambivalent position on monarchy and that he had an outspoken preference for aristocracy that he classified as the best form of government.

Like most political Aristotelians Boxhorn is a constitutional relativist. 'That form of ruling must be judged the best that suits the characters and the interests of its inhabitants the most.'¹⁷⁸ This does not stop Boxhorn deeming monarchy 'the oldest, simplest, and, provided it is maintained in a good condition, the safest way of commanding'.¹⁷⁹ It is on that last point, however, that monarchy often founders. As Boxhorn has already made clear in his definition of what constitutes a commonwealth, rulers who ruled alone are often tempted to disregard their subjects' interests and to follow their own at the cost of the common good,¹⁸⁰ a view that also comes to the fore in his chapter on freedom.¹⁸¹ Indeed, since even a prince who observes the laws that have been obtained for the protection of freedom 'seldom focuses his attention on the command of one person', i.e. seldom attends to how he as a sole ruler should command, tyranny is always lurking.¹⁸²

¹⁷⁸ Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, II.1.4, p. 258. 'Quae autem regendi ratio & forma optima sit, non tam anxîe, ut fieri solet, perscrutandum putamus. Utique enim, ut generatim dicam, quod sentio, ea optima censenda, quae ad ingenia suorum & commoda, maximè est comparata. Neque enim omnibus in tantâ morum, locorum, temporum diversitate omnia conveniunt.' Ibidem, I.2, pp. 14-15. 'Cum enim privatae utilitates constituent publicam, necesse est, quomodo se habent privati actus, ita se habere publicas constitutiones. At quia illi saepe diversi invicem, instituta quoque & formas rerumpublicarum diversas esse, quae illis praesint, oportet ... Pro loci enim diversitate, diversa sunt ingenia, at pro diversitate ingeniorum alia atque alia imperia esse necessum est.' See also Boxhorn, *Emblemata politica: accedunt dissertationes politicae de Romanorum Imperio et quaedamaliae*, I.1, p. 140. 'Ex quo apertum est, quae Reipub. forma melior sit, frustra plerumque disputari. Quaevis enim optima & longè caeteris praeferenda, quae suorum ingenii est attemperata.' In Boxhorn's time these were all common notions. See, for instance, Bodin, *The Six Bookes of a Commonweale*, V.1. For the spread of these ideas in the Dutch Republic, see Meijer Drees, *Andere landen, andere mensen*, pp. 12-24. The classical sources are Plato, *Republic*, 544d-e, and Aristotle, *Politics*, 1327b1 [VII:6-7].

¹⁷⁹ Ibidem, II.2.1, p. 264. 'Monarchia, Respublica est, in qua uni alicui & soli suprema & praecipua Imperii cura est demandata, cui ex eo Regis aut Principis est cognomentum. Estque illa & antiquissima, & facillima, & si rectè habeatur, tutissima imperandi ratio.' Both Ernst Kossmann and Harm Wansink explain this sentence and Boxhorn's defence of monarchy and primogenitur by pointing to the scholarly 'aristotelian-humanist' tradition that had a 'monarchical tendency'. Kossmann, *Political Thought in the Dutch Republic*, pp. 42-43, with quotes on the latter, and Wansink, *Politieke wetenschappen aan de Leidse universiteit*, pp. 178-81, 245-46. Both, however, overlook the condition that Boxhorn attaches here. That same condition can also be found in Cicero's account of monarchy in the *Republic*. Cicero, that staunch defender of Roman freedom, calls monarchy 'that form of constitution ... most liable to change; for when it is upset by the incompetence of one man, there is nothing to stop it from falling headlong into utter ruin. Monarchy in itself is not only free from blame; it is, I am inclined to think, far preferable to the other two simple types of constitution (if I could bring myself to approve of any simple type), but only as long as it retains its proper form'. Cicero, *The Republic* and *The Laws*, II.43, p. 48.

¹⁸⁰ Ibidem, I.2, p. 10. 'Respublica quam hic definimus pro quovis imperio usurpatur, etiam pro cui unus praestet, si modo ille saluti obedientium consulat. At quia saepè is aut publica privatis postponit, aut illecerbis voluptatum rapitur, aut ad tyrannidem inclinans tantò plus infert damni, quantò potentior est, obtinuit, ut Respublica Monarchiae ferè opponatur.'

¹⁸¹ Ibidem, I.5.14, p. 48. 'Sed cum sub unius summo Imperio singulatim non eluceat subditorum libertas, ejusmodi Principatus, & libertas, apud Autores fere opponuntur. Et cum plerumque iniqua sint ita arbitria Imperantium, ut Tacitus loquitur, res, olim dissociabiles, libertas, & principatus, raro conjunguntur.' See Tacitus, *Agricola*, III.1.

¹⁸² Ibidem, II.4.3, p. 294. 'Cum enim ad Imperium unius raro conferat Princeps animum, qui aut infinitam frenet potestatem, aut eas pro libertate repertas leges observet, in quas juravit, Monarchicus status in vitium facilè excedit, quod Tyrannidem appellamus.'

That the threat of monarchy lapsing into tyranny is real and issues a major concern can be deduced from the fact that the chapter that deals with tyranny counts no less than 65 theses, by far the most theses devoted to any subject in the *Institutiones politicae*.¹⁸³ Taking Tacitus and Aristotle as his guides, Boxhorn reveals the secret ‘ways and counsels’ (*artes et concilia*) of princes who exercise a tyrannical form of rule.¹⁸⁴ Interestingly, the first secret device he detects is precisely the one that Augustus had used to obtain sole power: the (mis) appropriation of the functions of the magistracy and the laws.¹⁸⁵ The saviour of Rome was at the same time its tyrant.¹⁸⁶

Besides a list of the causes and characteristics of tyranny, two other important topics are discussed in this chapter. The first topic is the question if subjects have the right to resist a tyrant, and if so, under which conditions and how. The answer is clear: when their lives and the goods that are necessary to stay alive are on the line subjects may resist and even get rid of their prince-turned-into-tyrant.¹⁸⁷ But in good Calvinistic tradition Boxhorn reserves this right for the ‘public authority and that order, which stands nearest to the authority of the prince’, and not to ‘the fury of every private and common citizen’.¹⁸⁸ He therefore condemns the opinion of De Mariana that even private individuals have the right to revolt, an opinion that, especially after the

¹⁸³ In the 1657 Leiden edition of the *Institutiones politicae* the chapter dealing with tyranny counts 45 theses, still a great amount, second only to the number of theses (56) in the chapter on the ‘secrets of an aristocratic form of government’, which shows Boxhorn’s concern for this topic.

¹⁸⁴ Aristotle, *Politics*, 1313a1ff. [V:11]. Using the works of Tacitus as a critique on tyrannical rule and as a defence of the rights of subjects seems to have been a typical aspect of seventeenth-century Dutch political thought. See, for example, the case of the Dutch scholar Isaac Dorislaus, who had been a student of Gerard Vossius. P. Alesandra Maccioni and Marco Mostert, “Isaac Dorislaus (1595-1649); The Career of a Dutch Scholar in England”, in *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society*, Vol. 8 (Cambridge University Press; Cambridge, 1981-84), pp. 419-70, and Ronald Mellor, “Tacitus, Academic Politics, and Regicide in the Reign of Charles I: The Tragedy of Dr. Isaac Dorislaus”, in *International Journal of the Classical Tradition*, Vol. 11, No. 2 (2004), pp. 153-93.

¹⁸⁵ Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, II.4.6, p. 295. For the explicit connection with Augustus, see *ibidem*, I.5, pp. 60-61. ‘Merito itaque tanta cura & custodia esse debet Legum istarum, cum maximum sit beneficium legum in Remp. quae quamdiu integrae sunt in Rep. tamdiu libertatem ejus aggredi vix audent, qui eversam aut occupatam volunt. Tac. I. An. 2. dicit prius *legum auxilium vi, ambitu, pecunia* turbatum, & tum demum *Augustum munia Magistratum, Senatus, LEGUM*, in se traxisse. Ultimum ergo subditis maximè cavendum, ubi Magistratus legum munia in se trahunt ... Nempe apud subditos ut pictis crepundiis pueri, ita umbra rerum vulgus facillè decipitur. Quod considerare licet in Rep. Romana sub Caesaribus ab initio, in qua omnes, cum essent in servitute, liberos tamen se existimabant. Atque hâc umbra potissimum eos decepit Augustus, quem Tac. ait Veterem semper praetulisse Remp. quia eadem Magistratum nomina ac vocabula reliquit, cum vim tamen omnem & potestatem retineret.’ References to Tacitus, *The Annals*, I.1-2, and I.9.

¹⁸⁶ See chapter 7.

¹⁸⁷ Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, II.4.49-53, pp. 305-6.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibidem*, II.4.54, p. 306. ‘Caeterum autoritate publica ac imprimis illius ordinis, qui Principis proximè contingit autoritatem, ea Principum vel Imperii propter tyrannidem mutatio instituenda est.’ *Ibidem*, II.4.56, p. 306. ‘Quare eorum sententiam ut iniquam & subvertendis Rebuspublicis repertam proscribimus, ac damnamus, qui privati cujusdam plebeique hominis furori occaecato, licito velut spolio, Principum vitiam exponunt & securitatem.’

murder of king Henry IV of France (1553-1610) came to be regarded as ‘the general tenet’ of the Jesuit order to which De Mariana belonged.¹⁸⁹

The second topic is the question what to do after a tyrant indeed has been deposed. Of the two options that Boxhorn mentions – to return to the old form of government, i.e. a monarchy, or to create a new form of government, he deems the latter ‘the most cautious’.¹⁹⁰ ‘Because evils must not only be destroyed, but also the fear of them. And one cannot be free from [that] fear, as long as the same circumstances favourable for evils exist.’¹⁹¹ ‘Therefore, along with a very bad prince the principate must also be removed, if that is possible.’¹⁹² A possible beneficial outcome of such a regime change is that it can lead to the obtaining and maintaining of a ‘mutual and invincible consensus between rulers and subjects’ if in the new form of government ‘those evils are immediately taken and driven away, on account of which the subjects rightly wanted to change the prior form of government’.¹⁹³ In the *Institutiones politicae* to change a form of government is not only perceived as a necessary

¹⁸⁹ Ibidem, II.4, p. 314, and J.H.M. Salmon, “Catholic Resistance Theory, Ultramontanism, and the Royalist Response, 1580-1620”, in Burns (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Political Thought*, pp. 240-41. For Calvin’s theory of resistance, see John Calvin, *Institutio Christianae religionis* (Thomas Platterus and Balthasar Larius; Basel, 1536), IV.20. Boxhorn quotes this chapter at length in the *De majestate*, pp. 65-72, although there he stops just at the point where Calvin begins to explain that it is the duty of popular magistrates to resist ‘the licentiousness and frenzy of kings’, and that if the kings ‘connive at their unbridled violence and insults against the poor common people, I say that such negligence is a nefarious betrayal of their oath; they are betraying the people and defrauding them of that liberty which they know they were ordained by God to defend’. John Calvin and Martin Luther, *Luther and Calvin on Secular Authority*. Edited and translated by Harro Höpfl (Cambridge University Press; Cambridge, 1st ed. 1991, 2007), p. 83. Fernando Vázquez had also claimed that lower magistrates had the right to rise in resistance and defend the ‘life and goods’ of the people if the prince is unable or unwilling to do so. Van Nifterik, “Fernando Vázquez, ‘Spaignaert’, en de Nederlandse Opstand”, pp. 535-36.

¹⁹⁰ Ibidem, II.4.59, p. 307. ‘Denique Tyranno ejecto, vel eadem Imperii forma retinetur, vel nova excitatur, quarum rationum ultimam omnium cautissimam esse existimamus.’

¹⁹¹ Ibidem, II.4.60, p. 307. ‘Nec enim mala tantum excindenda sunt, sed malorum metus, nec abesse metus, potest, quamdiu ea[e]dem supersunt malorum occasiones.’

¹⁹² Ibidem, II.4.61, p. 307. ‘Igitur cum pessimo Principe, si fieri potest, amovendus quoque Principatus.’ In the explanation belonging to this thesis Boxhorn refers to Roman history. He does not mention the Dutch Revolt or the Dutch Republic. Ibidem, II.4, p. 315. ‘Diximus §. 59. *Sublato tyrannorum imperio praestare formam quoque imperii mutari*. Sic Romani cum Regibus Regium quoque exuere imperium, adeo ut maximum maleficium censeretur, si quis à populo Romano Rex vocatus fuisset.’ Although Boxhorn believes that to change the monarchical form of government is ‘the most cautious’ option after a tyrant has been deposed, he does not believe that such a change should always take place. The ‘specific customs and interests of different peoples’ can make it expedient to hold on to the monarchical form of government. In that case the best option is to have another family from which to choose a prince. Ibidem, II.4.62, p. 307. ‘Sin autem contrà formam Imperii non mutare expediret ob peculiare diversarum gentium mores & rationes, mutanda saltem familia est, ex qua nati & electi hactenus Principes fuerunt.’ ‘However, if on the contrary the public peace and security should not allow that too, then the principate must be conferred to another person from that same family with this precaution, that a minimum of authority for the future is bequeathed to the prince and to the subjects more than the usual freedom.’ Ibidem, II.4.63, p. 307. ‘Sin verò & illud publica pax & securitas non permetteret, ea cautione ejusdem familiae alteri deferendus est Principatus, ut Principi minimum in posterum autoritatis, subditis plus solito libertatis relinquatur.’

¹⁹³ Ibidem, I.3.16-17, p. 19, and ibidem, I.3.27, p. 20. ‘(X.) Si in novis, & mutatis imperiis, ea statim tollantur mala, & avertantur, ob quae priorem imperii formam subditi meritò mutatam voluerunt.’

evil, but also as something that can be longed for and that has a potentially positive effect on the 'unnatural' bond between subjects and rulers.¹⁹⁴

As we have seen above monarchy is susceptible to degenerate into tyranny. This susceptibility opens the way for a positive evaluation of the merits of aristocracy and democracy, which Boxhorn groups together under the name of 'polyarchy'. The evaluation comes in the shape of a dispute with Machiavelli about the feasibility of concord between men who are equal in power.

We said in theses one and two that there exists a *polyarchy* where *more than one person is put in charge of the commonwealth*. Experience demonstrates and learns that such polyarchies exist, and reason shows that such polyarchies can be good. However, *Machiavelli* denies this with this argument, that there is no concord among those equal in power, and that thus nothing can be decided for the common good.¹⁹⁵

Although it is not quite clear to which work of Machiavelli Boxhorn is referring, at first instance he seems to agree with the Florentine's argument.¹⁹⁶ If one looks at the number of people that hold the highest authority, Boxhorn has to admit that a multiple number of people would not be able to govern well since, and here he quotes Tacitus, 'it was a condition of commanding that the account would not balance unless it were rendered to a single individual'.¹⁹⁷ And had that same Tacitus not explained that 'the body of the state was one and needed to be ruled by the mind of one individual'?¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁴ *Ibidem*, I.3.15, pp. 18-19. 'Jam verò, cum contra naturam, & primævæ hominum libertatem sit, alteri subesse, nullumque, ut Seneca loquitur, animal morosius rectorem ferat, quàm quod cætera domat, omnino nexum statuendum esse oportet, quo imperantes & subditi, non tantùm arcissimè, sed & libentissimè sibi invicem devinciantur.'

¹⁹⁵ *Ibidem*, II.5, p. 326. 'Diximus § 1. & 2. *Polyarchiam esse*, ubi plures summae rerum præponuntur. Esse autem tales experientia probat, & docet, & esse posse bonas, ratio ostendit. Negat tamen id *Machiavellus* eo argumento, quod nulla sit concordia inter pares potentia, et sic nihil possit pro communi boni decerni.'

¹⁹⁶ The most likely option would be the *Discorsi*. There Machiavelli elaborates on the 'ineffectualness of masses without a leader.' Machiavelli, *Discorsi*, I.44.1-5, p. 12. 'Because of the incident of Virginia, the Roman Plebs had withdrawn with their weapons to the sacred Mount. The Senate sent its envoys to ask by what authority they had deserted their commanders and withdrawn onto the Mount. The Senate's authority was so greatly respected, that since there was no leader among them, nobody ventured to reply. Livy says they did not lack what to say in reply but they lacked someone to give the reply. This shows precisely the ineffectualness of masses without a leader.' In book 3, chapter 15 of the *Discorsi* Machiavelli advocates that 'one man, not many, should have charge of an army'. He substantiates his view by quoting Livy, *The History of Rome from its Foundation*, III.70.1. '... in the administration of important matters, it is most advantageous for the highest power to be placed in one man.' Machiavelli, *Discorsi*, III.15, pp. 312-14, with quotes on pp. 312-13, and reference on p. 314. However, it is also possible that Boxhorn had Machiavelli's *Istori Fiorentine* (*Florentine Histories*, 1532) in mind, where dissensions between and within the different (social) strata of Florence take centre stage.

¹⁹⁷ Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, II.5, p. 326. See also *ibidem*, I.8, p. 111, and I.15, p. 243, and Tacitus, *The Annals*, I.6.3, p.5.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibidem*, II.5.2, p. 320, and Tacitus, *The Annals*, I.12.3, p. 9. Here, then, just as Lipsius had done

In a political dissertation on election and succession that is attributed to Boxhorn, the same arguments lead to the assertion that 'monarchy is better and more perfect than all the other forms of government'.¹⁹⁹ But in opposition to what he would defend in the 1649 version of the *De successione et iure primogenitorum*,²⁰⁰ Boxhorn writes in this dissertation that the question who should occupy the monarch's seat should preferably be decided by means of election rather than following the logic of succession and primogenitur, 'since in election the commonwealth is taken into account rather than the ruling dynasty'; in succession, on the other hand, it is the other way around.²⁰¹ This just shows that Boxhorn's standpoint on monarchy is ambivalent to say the least and that he adjusted it to the occasion.

His defence of polyarchical regimes against Machiavelli's accusation that no concord can exist 'among those equal in power', however, is quite explicit. Its starting point is Boxhorn's trust in the power of consensus by which a group of people can strive towards a common goal, 'as if they were one and ruled as one'.²⁰² 'There is no doubt that every internally divided crowd obstructs the right governing of states, whereas a somehow united one highly

before him, Boxhorn gives a monarchical reading of Tacitus. Lipsius, *Politica*, II.2, pp. 296-301. See also Blom, *Causality and Morality in Politics*, p. 97.

¹⁹⁹ Marcus Zuërius Boxhorn, "De electione et successione", in idem, *Varii Tractatus Politici*, pp. 548-49. 'Non sufficit vero Magistratum in singulis amplissimi Regni ditionibus haberi, singulisque civitatibus haberi; neque satis consultum est totius Regni administrationem pluribus, praesertim vero vita moribusque discrepantibus, committere. Multorum enim ejusmodi regimen multa plerumque & innumerabilia secum trahit mala; imo & aliquando, ob discordias intestinaeque inter eos ex discordiis bella, perniciem atque adeo occassum toti Regno adferre solet. Quare necessum est, ut si unius, à quo reliqui omnes Magistratus dependeant, quique summa praeditus potestate universis Regni incolis totique multitudini praesit, & eam ex aequo regat atque gubernet. Monarchiam enim caeteris omnibus Rerumpublicarum formis meliorem perfectioremque esse existimamus.' As far as this author's knowledge goes, this is the first time that this particular dissertation of Boxhorn got published. The dissertation is also listed in the 'ordo operum Boxhornii' that can be found in the 1668 Amsterdam edition of the *Institutiones politicae*.

²⁰⁰ See chapter 5.

²⁰¹ Boxhorn, "De electione et successione", p. 551. 'Utramque hanc electionem successioni praeferimus. In ea namque Reipublicae potius, quam regnatricis domus; contra in successione regnatricis domus potius, quam Reipublicae ratio habetur.' Here, Boxhorn has an ideal balance between an elective and a hereditary monarchy in mind, a concept that Johannes Isacius Pontanus had used to describe and praise the Danish monarchy. Pontanus, *Rerum Danicarum historia*, p. 769. 'Ex his liquere sat puto, regni Daniae politiam peroptime constitutam: dum ita sit libera Regis election, ut ea non nisi ex regia familia perficiatur.' 'From this I think it sufficiently clear that the constitution of the Danish kingdom is exceedingly well established: there is an open election of the king, but it is executed only from members of the royal family.' Translation taken from Skovgaard-Petersen, *Historiography at the Court of Christian IV*, p. 146. In the *Institutiones politicae*, however, Boxhorn leaves the question which of the two ways are better, election or succession, undecided. Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, II.2.5-6, pp. 266-67.

²⁰² Idem, *Institutiones politicae*, II.5, p. 326. '2. ad censuram, per quem plures ad eundem scopum tendunt. Possunt itaque plures unius imagine imperare, & tamen uni quasi redditur imperandi ratio, cum omnes tanquam unus, & unius Imperii omnes habeant rationem.' In his dispute with Machiavelli Boxhorn is following the path that Franco Burgersdijk had already laid out. 'Status Monarchicus haud dubie optimus est naturâ suâ, quia non est obnoxius dissensionis: & status in quo imperium penes plures est, eatenus est laudabilis, quatenus ad unitatem reducitur. Haec unitas in consensione & concordia consistit.' Burgersdijk, *Idea politica*, XXI.3, pp. 190-92.

favors it. For no single crowd can stay together long, unless it is kept together by some advantage. And this is why also a civil society, which depends upon a certain unity as its soul, falls apart if the crowd is not somehow united.²⁰³

The central question then of course becomes how this unity can be reached. Boxhorn's answer is simple: by creating unchangeable laws. 'That unity in a political society results from concord between several people. Although it can be difficult to obtain that concord between several people, who are left to their own arbitration and judgement, and who are accordingly subservient to different points of view, it can nevertheless be provoked and maintained very easily through fixed and unalterable laws that determine all matters that concern the highest authority.'²⁰⁴

Although these kinds of laws are very useful in every form of command, they are especially necessary in forms of command that consist of more than one person. 'It is the particular strength and peace of each polyarchical regime, and especially this contributes to its eternity, to allow a very small number of matters to the arbitration of the rulers, that is, only those matters, that cannot be dealt with in laws.'²⁰⁵ Thus, the defence of polyarchical regimes rests on the assumption that concord amongst a number of people is a real possibility, and that this concord depends on restraining the different opinions men have by legal constraints.

Since these legal constraints touch upon 'all matters that concern the highest authority' they can easily be identified as the fundamental laws discussed previously. As we have seen, Boxhorn defines fundamental laws as private contracts between individuals about mutual rights and obligations according to the legal principle 'I give in order that you do'.²⁰⁶ The fundamental laws,

²⁰³ Ibidem, II.5.3, p. 320. 'Equidem multitudo omnis discors rectae Imperiorum administrationi adversa est, optima tamen, si in unum quodammodo coalescit, quando quidem neque multitudo ulla diu consistere queat, nisi utilitate aliqua contineatur, ac proinde civilis quoque societas dissipatur, quae unitate quadam, tanquam anima, constat, nisi quapiam ratione multitudo unita efficiatur.'

²⁰⁴ Ibidem, II.5.4, p. 320. 'Unio verò illa ex plurium inter se concordia resultat, cum autem concordia illa difficulter obtineri possit inter plures, suo arbitrio iudicioque relictos, ac diversis proinde sentiis obnoxios, excitari tamen illa ac contineri facillimè potest legibus certis ac non movendis, in omnia quae summam imperii concernunt, definitis.'

²⁰⁵ Ibidem, II.5.6, p. 320. 'Vis igitur praecipua & pax Polyarchici omnis status sit, ac ad ejus imprimis facit aeternitatem, paucissima, hoc est, ea tantum, quae legibus comprehendi non possunt Imperantium arbitrio permittere.' See also Aristotle, *Politics*, 1281a1-1282b1 [III:11], where Aristotle tries to find arguments that can defend the possibility of 'the principle that the multitude ought to be in power rather than the few best'. Aristotle holds that 'the many, of whom each individual is not a good man, when they meet together may be better than the few good, if regarded not individually but collectively'. Aristotle concludes this discussion by claiming 'that laws, when good, should be supreme; and that the magistrate or magistrates should regulate those matters only on which the laws are unable to speak with precision owing to the difficulty of any general principle embracing all particulars'. Aristotle, *Politics*, pp. 76-78, with quotes on p. 76 and p. 78.

²⁰⁶ Ibidem, I.5.22, p. 50. 'Do, ut facias.' The famous fourteenth-century jurists Bartolus de Saxoferato (c.1313-1357) and Baldus de Ubaldis (c.1327-1400) also put laws on par with contracts. Van Niffterik, "Jean Bodin en de Nederlandse Opstand", p. 60.

then, express the agreement reached by deliberation, and as such represent the common consensus about a certain issue, or, reasoned from the negative perspective of man's ambitious and greedy character, they articulate man's compliance, be it out of self-interest or fear. Since they articulate and represent the common consensus, it is these fundamental laws that should and could rule, and not man's own private opinion. It is on this belief in the rule of law that Boxhorn's defence of polyarchical regimes ultimately rests; the private opinions of the many have become one in the law, and it is this law that both regulates the relationships between subjects and rulers and those between the rulers themselves.²⁰⁷ Fear and self-interest will guarantee that both rulers and subjects will abide to the laws, which themselves are the expressions of these fears and interests.²⁰⁸ Thus, Boxhorn comes up with a Machiavellian argument to refute Machiavelli.²⁰⁹

The ground has now been prepared to assert that aristocracy is the most commendable form of government. Boxhorn defines aristocracy as 'that form of command, in which the whole supreme power is transferred to a small section of citizens, who excel as far as descent, wealth, and especially virtue goes'.²¹⁰ The main difference between aristocracy and democracy is not the number of persons that have been put in charge of the commonwealth; in both the number is small.²¹¹ In a democracy, however, these few men are chosen from the entire

²⁰⁷ As we have seen in chapter 5, Boxhorn's defence of prince Charles's right to the throne of England in 1649 ultimately also rested on this belief in the rule of law. Fundamental laws were seen as imposing limits upon the power of rulers, and as such they 'were grist to the mill of outright resistance theorists'. In this sense, Boxhorn can be seen as an adherent of 'constitutionalism' such as described by Howell Lloyd, with this important note, that, just as Lloyd himself acknowledges, the term 'had no currency in the political thought of the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries'. Lloyd, "Constitutionalism", pp. 254-79, with quotes on p. 254 and p. 279. See also chapter 5.

²⁰⁸ Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I.5, p. 59.

²⁰⁹ See Machiavelli, *Discorsi*, I.4.4-6, pp. 34-35. 'I say that those who condemn the conflicts between the Nobles and the Plebs appear to me to be blaming the very things that were the primary reasons for Rome's remaining free and to be paying more attention to the shouts and cries that these conflicts aroused than to the good results they had. They do not consider that in every republic there are two opposing humors – the people and the upper class and that all laws to promote freedom derive from the conflict between them. We can readily see this from what occurred in Rome: from the Tarquins to the Gracchi, a period of more than three hundred years, conflicts in Rome rarely involved banishment and even more rarely bloodshed ... Nor can a republic in which there are so many examples of virtù reasonably be called disorderly, since good examples derive from good upbringing, good upbringing from good laws, and good laws from the very conflicts that many people condemn indiscriminately. For anyone who studies their result closely will discover that they did not lead to any exile or violence inimical to the common good, but produced laws and institutions conducive to public freedom.'

²¹⁰ Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, II.5.9, p. 321. 'Aristocratia autem ea imperii forma est, in qua in partem civium minorem, eamque genere, censu, & virtute imprimis excellentem, suprema omnis potestas est translata.' Compare Boxhorn's definition of aristocracy with Aristotle's definition in *Politics*, 1293b1 [IV:7], p. 102. 'The term "aristocracy" is rightly applied to the form of government which is described in the first part of our treatise; for that only can be rightly called aristocracy which is a government formed of the best men absolutely, and not merely of men who are good relative to some hypothesis.'

²¹¹ *Ibidem*, II.5, p. 327. 'Ac primâ quidem fronte duo isti Reip. status vix commodè distingui posse

multitude of the people, who have to make decisions for the entire people, but not for themselves.²¹² In an aristocracy, the few people who rule are the best, and they form only a part of the people. They 'are in good condition, if they leave decisions about themselves and public affairs to themselves'.²¹³

'Free from the care of others' an aristocratic regime holds an intermediate position between the command of the people, that is prone to degenerate into license, and the command of a prince, where there is less freedom and where the danger of tyranny is always lurking.²¹⁴ Under an aristocratic regime the situation of the subjects is 'pretty well more equal than under the command of one prince'.²¹⁵ On the other hand, in an aristocracy 'what one man cannot provide for on his own, another provides and sacrifices as if he is called upon to participate in the care for the common good. That is why we hold the opinion that this form of government is the most commendable and why Aristotle has called it the best'.²¹⁶

Boxhorn portrays aristocracy as a safe course of navigation between the many headed monster Scylla (anarchy) and the abyss Charybdis (tyranny).²¹⁷

inter se videntur. Nam in utroque pauci sunt praepositi rerum summae, in Aristocratico pauci optimates, in Democratico pauci ex populi delecti; interea immane inter utrumque discrimen.'

²¹² Ibidem, II.5, p. 328. 'Pauci hi in Democratia non sibi, sed toti populo, administrationis atque rerum suarum iudicium debent.'

²¹³ Ibidem. 'Optimates vero aliorum securi et sibi solis pares satis habent, si sibi ipsi de se et publicis actionibus iudicium relinquunt.'

²¹⁴ Boxhorn's most damaging critique on a democratic form of government can be found in book 1, chapter 5 of the *Institutiones politicae*, where he claims that the freedom that characterises a democracy easily turns into license. And that is why 'no other form of government is more inferior than democracy, because as long as all are equal, obedience is hardly distinguished from the power of those who command'. Ibidem, I.5, p. 56. 'Quia enim servitus est ex alterius vivere sententia, summam esse libertatem apparet, ubi vivitur, prout cuique placet, atque hinc nascitur aequalitas libertatis, sed haec libertas facile in licentiam abit. Hinc nulla forma Reipubl. Democratia est inferior, dum enim omnes pares sunt, obsequium ab imperantium potestate vix distinctum est.'

²¹⁵ Ibidem, II.5, p. 327. 'Quod Optimates imperantes concernit, ita de iisdem statuendum: quandoquidem intermedii sunt inter Principem et Populum, propius tamen a principum, quam populi imperio absunt. Ipsa quippe administrationis ratio hoc evincit. Cum enim minus libertas sub Principibus, quam totius populi imperio sit, optimates non quidem singuli, sed omnes juncti veluti Principes quidam sunt, & propemodum par subditorum conditio sub optimatibus, quam sub unius Principis est imperio, nisi quod libentius & facilius, pro utilitate sua expeditius subditi se relinquunt virtutibus iudicisque multorum, quam unius.'

²¹⁶ Ibidem, II.5, p. 328. 'Quod enim providere unus aut solus non potest, alter velut in partem curarum bono Reip. vocatus providet et impendit, unde maxime laudabilem hanc Reip. formam existimamus & optimam Aristot. appellat.' See Aristotle, *Politics*, 1293b1 [IV:7] and 1294a1 [IV:8]. See also ibidem, 1286a1 [III:15], p. 86, where Aristotle puts aristocracy above kingship. 'If we call the rule of many men, who are all of them good, aristocracy, and the rule of one man kingship, then aristocracy will be better for states than kingship, whether the government is supported by armed forces or not, provided only that a number of men equal in excellence can be found.'

²¹⁷ Since Aristotle considered virtue as a position between two bad extremes, e.g. 'sufficiency' as a mean between 'abundance' and 'shortage', one could say that Boxhorn saw aristocracy (rule by the best, that is, the most virtuous people, mostly only a few) as the golden mean between monarchy (one) and democracy (many or all). See Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*. Translated and edited by Roger Crisp (Cambridge University Press; Cambridge, 1st ed. 2000, 2008), 1106b-1107a [II:6], p. 31. 'Virtue, then, is a state involving rational choice, consisting in a mean relative to us and determined by reason – the reason, that is, by reference to which the practically wise person would determine it. It is a mean between

However, since 'there are in the world seldom good people' to be found, the perfect aristocracy 'is easier to describe than to detect'.²¹⁸

Boxhorn also describes another type of aristocracy. This type existed among the ancient Carthaginians and consisted of a mixture of aristocracy, oligarchy, and democracy, because the people who were chosen to hold office were few, rich, endowed with virtue, and chosen from amongst the people.²¹⁹

And the commonwealth of the *Hollanders* agrees mostly with that type of aristocracy. For the qualities, the riches, and the people are taken into account. Therefore, two [things] are said about the aldermen and the burgomasters in the oldest statutes of the princes: they must be the richest men from the people and the best.²²⁰

Through a detour, then, we have come to the theoretical underpinning of what history had already told Boxhorn, namely the logic behind the functioning and success of Holland, the Dutch Republic's most richest and powerful province.

Boxhorn was not unique in comparing Holland with ancient Carthage. Grotius, for example, in his widely popular book the *De antiquitate*, had defended Holland's aristocratic form of government, a 'government of the

two vices, one of excess, the other of deficiency. It is a mean also in that some vices fall short of what is right in feelings and actions, and others exceed it, while virtue both attains and chooses the mean. So, in respect of its essence and the definition of its substance, virtue is a mean, while with regard to what is best and good it is an extreme.'

²¹⁸ Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, II.5, p. 329. 'Sed quia rari in mundo boni, facilius est hanc describere quam invenire.' This also brings to mind Aristotle's critique on Socrates's description of the ideal polis in Plato's *Laws* as an ideal impossible to obtain in reality. Aristotle, *Politics*, 1265a1 [II:6].

²¹⁹ Ibidem. 'Diximus §.15. praeter illam primam *alias* quoque *dari Aristocratiae species*, ubi tamen nunquam excludenda sit virtus. Omnis enim Aristocratia semper virtutem intendere debet, quae anima est ejus imperii, sed praeter haec respiciunt quaedam opes, genus, populum, quo reliquae formae à prima differunt. Exemplum Aristocratiae ex posteriore genere est ap. *Carthaginenses*, in quorum Rep. occurrebat Aristocratia, quia virtute praediti, Democratia quia è populo, Oligarchia, quia divites & pauci eligebantur ad Magistratus gerendos.' Boxhorn closely follows Aristotle's description of the Carthaginian 'constitution' in *Politics*, 1293b1 [IV:7], pp. 102-3. 'And so where a government has regard to wealth, excellence, and the populace, as at Carthage, that is aristocracy; and also where it has regard only to two out of the three, as at Lacedaemon, to excellence and the populace, and the two principles of democracy an excellence temper each other. There are these two forms of aristocracy in addition to the first and perfect state, and there is a third form, viz. the constitutions which incline more than the so-called constitutional government towards oligarchy.' Unlike Aristotle, who treats oligarchy as a deviant form of aristocracy (see especially *Politics*, 1289a1 [IV:2], p. 93ff), Boxhorn uses the term 'oligarchy' here simply to denote a regime where those who rule do so not on account of their virtue (a true aristocracy in the Aristotelian sense of the word), but on account of their wealth. Although in this particular case a moral judgement is lacking, we will see that Boxhorn followed Aristotle's negative judgement of oligarchy.

²²⁰ Ibidem, II.5, pp. 329-30. 'Et *Batavor*. Resp. fere ad istam Aristocratiae speciem accedit. Nam & virtutis & opum & populi habetur ratio, unde in antiquissimis constitutionibus Principum duo dicuntur de scabinis & consulibus, debere eos ditissimos è populo esse & optimos.' This is a clear reference to the privilege that Boxhorn had recited in the Dutch version of the *Theatrum*. Boxhorn, *Toneel ofte beschryvinge*, p. 151. See chapter 7.

best', by referring to Carthage amongst others.²²¹ In the same book, however, Grotius had also made it very clear that Holland's aristocratic form of government contained a monarchical element. 'On the other hand, we share the situation that a princely authority, circumscribed by laws, is added to the government of the best.' That princely authority was the stadholder, whose powers according to Grotius in the *De antiquitate*, 'are marks of a very high authority', and who, together with the States, had 'the control over the state, which used to be held by the Count'.²²² This compound composition of 'the best of both estates' (i.e. the nobility and the people) and a princely authority was Grotius's version of the concept of the mixed regime in which different parts of society hold on to some of the central tenets of government.²²³ The concept, both in its aristocratic-monarchical form and in its Polybian form (a mixture of democracy, aristocracy, and monarchy), enjoyed great popularity in the Dutch Republic in the first half of the seventeenth century.²²⁴ As we recall, Burgersdijk judged the former to be 'the most outstanding form of government'; the latter he deemed the safest and, perhaps with the Dutch context in mind, 'appropriate for towns that control very large dominions, or for entire provinces'.²²⁵ The example of the ancient Carthaginians, who, as both Aristotle and Polybius had observed, had kings, and the judgement of contemporaries confirmed this view.²²⁶ Yet despite the authority of the ancients

²²¹ Grotius, *The Antiquity of the Batavian Republic*, VII.17, p. 113. 'For if we apply reason, it persuades us that power in the state should best be entrusted to the best; or if we accept the authority of respected writers, we find that the government of the best was praised by the wisest men of antiquity; or, if we look for parallel cases, the very celebrated examples of Crete, Sparta, Carthage, Rhodes, Marseilles, Thessaly, Achaia, Samos, Cnidos, Chios and Corfu, and, as many believe, Rome itself, in the period when it flourished most with virtue, immediately present themselves.'

²²² *Ibidem*, VIII.9-18, pp. 109-13. See also *ibidem*, II.14, p. 65. 'Thus we have found that the Batavians lived under a *government of the best*, but in combination with a prince, which princely power was either continuous under the name of a king, or temporary under the name of a commander.'

²²³ In this context the introduction to Grotius's *The Antiquity of the Batavian Republic* prefers to speak of a 'compound constitution' rather than a 'mixed constitution' since the latter term 'usually refers to a combination in which elements of all three forms democracy, aristocracy and monarchy are present'. See the introduction to Grotius, *The Antiquity of the Batavian Republic*, pp. 6-8, 13-18, with quote on p. 7, footnote 12.

²²⁴ See, amongst others, Kossmann, *Political Thought in the Dutch Republic*, pp. 31-43; Blom, "Politieke theorieën in het eerste kwart van de zeventiende eeuw"; Van Gelderen, "Aristotelians, Monarchomachs and Republicans", pp. 210-13.

²²⁵ Burgersdijk, *Idea politica*, XXIV.2, pp. 210-11, and XXIV.24-25, pp. 218-21. It should, however, also be remembered that Burgersdijk also ranked monarchy as 'the safest' (*firmissimus*) and 'the best' (*optimus*) form of government. *Ibidem*, II.2, pp. 9-10, and XXI.3, pp. 190-92. See chapter 3.

²²⁶ Polybius had thought Carthage to be a 'well-designed' mixture of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy. For Aristotle, the government of Carthage had remained primarily 'oligarchical'. Compare Aristotle, *Politics*, 1272b1-1273b1 [II.11], with Polybius, *The Rise of the Roman Empire*. Translated by Ian Scott-Kilvert. Selected with an Introduction by F.W. Walbank (Penguin Books; London, 1979), VI.51, pp. 344-45, with quote on p. 344. For a modern analysis of the Carthaginian 'constitution', see Serge Lancel, *Carthage: A History*. Translated by Antonia Nevill (Blackwell Publishers; Oxford/Cambridge, 1995), pp. 110-20. Boxhorn owned a copy of the Greek and Latin edition of Polybius's work, which was made by the French scholar Isaac Casaubon (1559-1614). *Catalogus Variorum & Insignium Librorum, Celeberrimi ac Eruditissimi Viri Marci Zueri Boxhornii*, v.

and the vogue among Dutch scholars in the early decades of the seventeenth century to detect a monarchical element in the Dutch body politic, Boxhorn is remarkably silent on this issue.²²⁷ Neither in the *Institutiones politicae* nor in any other work does he detect or speak of a monarchical element in the Dutch Republic, or in any of its constituent parts, let alone linking such an element to the office of the stadholder as was common. Indeed, in the *Institutiones politicae* Boxhorn hardly ever mentions or refers to the office of stadholder or the equivalent office of provincial governor, the office out of which the stadholderate under the Dutch Republic had developed.²²⁸ On the few occasions that he does, Boxhorn describes a provincial governor as a lower magistrate, who derives his power and authority from the supreme magistrates he represents and on whose powers he depends.²²⁹ Thus, just like the stadholder in the *Commentariolus*, a provincial governor is a subordinate; at best, as a nobleman or a patrician sitting on a town council, he is a member of the governing elite. His subordinate position and dependence hardly qualifies a provincial governor, nor a stadholder, to fulfil the role of monarch in any form of government whatsoever.²³⁰ Therefore, Boxhorn can safely assert that in the Dutch Republic the towns and provinces are administrated in an 'aristocratic' way, albeit with some democratic features. In such a political framework there are at least two pressing matters: the relations between the aristocratic element and the democratic element, and the relations among the 'optimates', the best, themselves.

²²⁷ Following the Polybian ideal, Paulus Merula had declared that the Dutch Republic was a mixture of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy. Kossmann, *Political Thought in the Dutch Republic*, p. 33.

²²⁸ 'Stadhouder' (translated into English as 'stadholder') was the Dutch term for the lieutenants or governors through whom the dukes of Burgundy exercised their rule in the Low Countries in the fifteenth century. Under the Habsburgs, the stadholders were provincial governors who 'exercised virtually all the rights of the ruling prince within their provinces'. These rights included the military command over the armed forces in their provinces and a say in the election of members of some town councils. Rowen, *The Princes of Orange*, pp. 2-5, with quote on p. 3. What is of crucial importance is that both under the Habsburgs and the Dutch Republic, the power of the provincial governor/stadholder was conferred by delegation from a higher authority, respectively the ruling Habsburg prince and the provincial States, to whom the provincial governor/stadholder had to swear obedience.

²²⁹ See, for example, Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I.8.2, p. 96. 'Sunt autem illorum alii, qui domi, ut minores Magistratus, aut subalterni, ut Iudices, consiliiarii, negotiorum publicorum gestores, aut foris in pace, ut Legati, in bello, ut Militiae Imperatores, aut in provinciis, ut praefecti, & procuratores occupantur, in quos vim & auctoritatem suam transferunt, qui supremum in omnibus Imperium acceperunt, quibusque ea propter non aliter, ac his, obsequium desertur. Hi enim, si in absentiam majoribus illis succedunt, & eorum auctoritate ac nomine in negotiis publicis occupantur, quoad vim saltem rerum pro majoribus aestimantur.' I find it therefore hard to agree with Wolfgang Weber that in the *Institutiones politicae* Boxhorn tries to institutionalise or strengthen the position of the stadholder. See Weber, *Prudentia gubernatoria*, p. 93.

²³⁰ In this case it is interesting to note that in the *Institutiones politicae* Boxhorn describes the doge of Venice, with whose office the office of the Dutch stadholder was sometimes compared, as merely the executor of decisions made by the senate of Venice and as Venice's commander-in-chief. *Ibidem*, I.4, p. 33. 'Dux Venetus quoque speciem saltem habet Majestatis, quia ea tantum exequitur, quae Senatus jussit; Hinc Itali proverbio eum Ducem vinctum & captivum appellant, quod vim aliquid possit sua auctoritate, & ferè nihil aliud sit, quam aliis in regionibus Imperator & dux exercitus.'

In Aristotle's footsteps II. The road to democracy?

If the *Institutiones politicae* can be read as a theoretical explanation and justification of Holland's body politic, then it also entails some concealed criticism against its aristocratic regime. Boxhorn criticises, for example, a small, closed-off aristocracy as easily corruptible and prone to oligarchical tyranny.²³¹ He furthermore agrees with Tacitus's judgement that 'whereas command by the people borders on freedom, domination by a few approximates to the fancy of kings',²³² A more open and wider aristocracy, however, would 'meet the wishes of the many, who are of distinguished descent and wealth and above all virtuous, and who desire to participate in the power to command'.²³³ In his *Oratio de vera nobilitate* (*Oration on True Nobility*) Boxhorn had criticised people who only take pride on the glory won by their ancestors, instead of on their own achievements.²³⁴ Virtue is something that could be achieved and should be exercised, just like wealth could be acquired. This opens a window of opportunity for an accessible and flexible aristocracy. Furthermore, in his treatment of the lower magistrates Boxhorn recommends a well-balanced arrangement of administrative offices that aims at preventing any concentration of power within the magistracy by a yearly rotation of office and a prohibition for blood relatives to hold administrative offices at the same time or to elect family members as their successors.²³⁵

In this respect it is also interesting what Boxhorn has to say about why aristocracies change into other forms of government. The first two reasons are that an aristocracy may degenerate into a tyranny or an oligarchy.²³⁶ Both

²³¹ *Ibidem*, II.5.11, p. 321. 'Istorum verò certus est numerus, major alibi, alibi minor definitus, neque de eo certi quid licet praecribere. Sunt quidem qui putant, quo numero isti fuerint pauciores, durabilem magis & pacatum esse optimatum statum, quod pauci faciliùs inter se, quàm plures, possint sententiis convenire. Quibus tamen ex adverso regerere licet, paucos faciliùs corrumpi posse, quàm plures, atque iterum unum ex paucis, si malè forsàn velit, & in se unum transferre omnem Imperii statum, faciliùs posse paucos quàm plures superare, atque in eos & populum Tyrannidem usurpare.'

²³² *Ibidem*, II.8, p. 352, and Tacitus, *The Annals*, VI.42.2, p. 188. See also Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I.3, p. 21. 'De Optimatum quoque imperio idem sensisse videtur idem Tacitus l. 6 *Annal.* c. 42. *Populi imperium, inquit, juxta libertatem; paucorum dominatio regiae libidini propior est.*'

²³³ *Ibidem*, II.5.11, pp. 321-22. 'At in ista, ubi plures praeficiuntur, plura consilia sunt & plus habent autoritatis, & plurium, qui illustris generis, & fortunae, & maxime virtutis, Imperii cupiunt esse participes, votis satisfacere licebit, inde ubi multi tales ab Imperii administratione exclusi, & paucis quibusdam ejusdem secum conditionis, obnoxii sunt, facile motus & res novae excitantur.'

²³⁴ Boxhorn, "Oratio de vera nobilitate", pp. 9-10. 'Et nos majorum nostrum gloriam in nos derivamus, nec relictam ab ijs, nec à nobis acquisitam ... Non nobiles omnes, qui ex illustri prosapia prognati. Nisi simiam hominem dixeritis, quia cultu humano ornata incedit. Stolidum est ita majores numerare, ut ad eorum numerum ipse non accedas, & splendidum gloriae suae seipsum auctorem fateri, splendidissimum tamen & à se, & à majoribus suis ordiri.'

²³⁵ *Idem*, *Institutiones politicae*, I.8.19-24, pp. 101-3.

²³⁶ *Ibidem*, II.7.3-4, p. 342 [348]. The difference between a tyrannical aristocratic regime and an

'defective' aristocratic forms will incite resistance and lead to a democracy or to a mixture of aristocracy and democracy respectively. A third reason is that there is always one ambitious person among the best who will strive to obtain sole power; this is why aristocracies are accustomed to change into monarchies. A fourth reason is that 'as time goes by, the people acquire ever more riches and power, and therefore no longer tolerate that they are excluded from the administration of the power to command'. This explains why aristocracies are accustomed to change into democracies.²³⁷

Just like his position on monarchy, Boxhorn's position on democracy is ambivalent. In the *Dissertationes politicae de regio Romanorum imperio* Boxhorn judges democracy worthy of praise and not inferior to monarchy.²³⁸ At first sight it seems that in the *Institutiones politicae* Boxhorn takes a diametrically opposite stand. In book I, chapter 5 we read that 'no other form of government is inferior to democracy',²³⁹ a judgement that Boxhorn repeats in book II, chapter 8 on democracy.²⁴⁰ In this chapter he also discredits the common people, because they possess 'less wisdom and take, thanks to their private interests, less care for what is common. Thanks to the poverty that can be found amongst many of them, they are also less inclined to take into account the perils that are facing the commonwealth'.²⁴¹ This is the negative reason

oligarchy is that in the former the aristocrats violate the law and only follow their self-interest, while in the later power is in the hands of a small group of relatives, who have excluded the rest of the aristocrats from partaking in commanding.

²³⁷ *Ibidem*, II.7.8, pp. 342-43 [348-49]. 'Sed & aliud etiam nunc superest quo haec Reipublicae forma evertitur, & in aliam commutatur. Ambitio nimirum unius inter plures, qui cum pares nati non possit in se unum transferre vim omnem contendit. Et cum populus, progressu temporis opibus atque potentiâ magis magisque auctus, idcirco ab Imperii administratione, diutius sese haud patitur excludi. Unde Aristocratia in Monarchiam aut Democratiam facillimè transire consuevit.'

²³⁸ Boxhorn, *Emblemata politica: accedunt dissertationes politicae de Romanorum Imperio et quaedamaliae*, XV.2, p. 329. 'Ista pro Democratia tum ille. Verum ut haec gerendae Reipub. forma non est illaudabilis, neque eâ melior est Monarchia, ita eam Romanorum rebus tum non convenisse cum Tacito iudicamus.' Boxhorn comments here on the famous debate between Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa (†12) and Maecenas, Augustus's most trustworthy advisors, who Augustus, after his victory at Actium, had asked for advice on the form of his government. According to Cassius Dio, to whom we owe the account of this discussion (see Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, LII.1-42), Agrippa advocated a return to Rome's republican form of government, where the Senate deliberated and the people ratified. However, in Boxhorn's version of the discussion Agrippa is seen defending democracy. This is in line with Boxhorn's view in the *Dissertationes politicae de regio Romanorum imperio* that after the installation of the tribunate Rome had in effect become a democracy. See chapter 7.

²³⁹ *Idem*, *Institutiones politicae*, I.5, p. 56. 'Quia enim servitus est ex alterius vivere sententia, summam esse libertatem apparet, ubi vivitur, prout cuique placet, atque hinc nascitur aequalitas libertatis, sed haec libertas facillè in licentiam abit. Hinc nulla forma Reipubl. Democratia est inferior, dum enim omnes pares sunt, obsequium ab imperantium potestate vix distinctum est.'

²⁴⁰ *Ibidem*, II.8.4, p. 345 [350]. 'Porro ita ab omni aevi sapientibus fuit iudicatum, omnium formarum gerundae Reipublicae minus idoneam esse illam, quam δημοκρατία appellamus.'

²⁴¹ *Ibidem*, II.8.6, pp. 345-46 [350-51]. '... quod notatum Tacito Annalium XIV.c.60. ubi tradit vulgo minus esse sapientiae & propter privata commoda minus publicae curae, & propter tenuitatem, quae in plerisque est fortunae, non tantam esse aestimationem periculorum Reipublicae incumbentium.' Tacitus, however, says: 'inde crebri questus nec occulti per vulgum, cui minor sapientia et ex mediocritate fortunae

why the rich should rule; the interests of the poor are not the interests of the commonwealth.

Yet in the short explanation of his theses on democracy we see Boxhorn singing a different tune. He now highly praises what seems to be the best type of democracy, namely the 'polity' or 'constitutional government', the mixture of oligarchy and democracy that Aristotle saw as 'the best constitution for most states'.²⁴² The eulogy that follows is worth quoting at length for it reveals that Boxhorn shared some of the same 'democratic' sympathies of the brothers De la Court and Spinoza which, if followed up, would have some severe consequences for Holland's body politic.

Thus, no matter how many [rich and poor-JN] shall look for that form of government, that suits the interests of both the rich and the poor, none of them shall find any other form of government, than that management by the middle class in a democratic form of government.²⁴³ Because the best commonwealth has citizens who obey to reason, and such is that commonwealth, which we now recommend from amongst the democratic types. Because the rich are proud and haughty, [and] the poor are often tempted to commit crimes because of [their] want. But the people whom we praise for their modest wealth are free from these two evils when in power.²⁴⁴ Add to that, that the best commonwealth is hardly plagued by seditions and dis-

pauciora pericula sunt.' 'Hence frequent and unconcealed complaints from the public, whose prudence is less and, given the meanness of their fortune, dangers few.' Latin text quoted from Tacitus, *Annalium ab excessu divi Augusti libri*, XIV.60. English translation quoted from Tacitus, *The Annals*, XIV.60.5, p. 303.

²⁴² Aristotle, *Politics*, 1293a1-1294a1 [IV:7-8], pp. 102-4, and 1295a1-1296b1 [IV:11], pp. 106-9, with quote on p. 106.

²⁴³ Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, II.8, p. 346 [352]. 'Quotquot igitur requisiverint eam Reipubl. formam, quae Divitibus & pauperibus sit accommodata, nullam aliam invenient, quam hanc mediorum civium in Democratico statu gubernationem.' Aristotle, *Politics*, 1296b1-1297a1 [IV:12], p. 110. 'There only can the government ever be stable where the middle class exceeds one or both of the others, and in that case there will be no fear that the rich will unite with the poor. For neither of them will ever be willing to serve the other, and if they look for some form of government more suitable to both, they will find none better than this, for the rich and poor will never consent to rule in turn.'

²⁴⁴ *Ibidem*, pp. 346-47 [352-53]. 'Est enim optima Respubl. illa, quae cives habet obedientes rationi, talis autem ista est, quam ex Democratiae speciebus nunc maximè laudamus. Divites enim superbi sunt, et contumaces, pauperes ob penuriam saepe ad delicta invitantur, à quibus duobus malis in imperio absunt illi, in quibus mediocritatem census commendamus.' Aristotle, *Politics*, 1295a1-1295b1 [IV:11], pp. 106-7. 'And in fact the conclusion at which we arrive respecting all these forms rests upon the same grounds. For if what was said in the Ethics is true, that the happy life is the life according to excellence lived without impediment, and that excellence is a mean, then the life which is in a mean, and in a mean attainable by everyone, must be the best. And the same principles of excellence and badness are characteristic of cities and of constitutions; for the constitution is so to speak the life of the city. Now in all states there are three elements: one class is very rich, another very poor, and a third in a mean. It is admitted that moderation and the mean are best, and therefore it will clearly be best to possess the gifts of fortune in moderation; for in that condition of life men are most ready to follow rational principle.'

sensions. In that management by the middle class such is the case. For according to the opinion of *Aristotle* large states, where the middle class is larger, are less exposed to seditions than small states, where the number of citizens, who are praised here because of their moderate means, is modest.²⁴⁵

If we connect what is said above with some of the findings of the previous chapters, an interesting hypothesis arises. Both in the *Theatrum* and the *Commentariolus* Boxhorn observed that over time the citizens of Holland and the Dutch Republic had become wealthier and wealthier. He did not only believe that growth of private wealth was the logical outcome of a mixture of geographical and historical circumstances; he also embraced it as one of the pillars on which the Dutch Republic rested. But, as we have just learned, the other side of the coin of the growth of private wealth, at least in aristocracies, is that 'the people' will 'no longer tolerate that they are excluded from the administration of the power to command'. They will demand a say in politics, which will likely result in a shift in government from an aristocracy to a democracy. If we apply this logic to the situation in the Dutch Republic, this would mean that there was a reasonable possibility that sooner or later popular pressure would bring about a transition in the province of Holland, or at least in one of the eighteen towns with a vote in the provincial States, from an aristocratic form of government to a democratic one.²⁴⁶ The most preferable option would then be to transform Holland into the best democratic form of government imaginable, Aristotle's specific polity.

²⁴⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 347 [353]. 'Accedit, quod optima sit illa Respubl. quae seditionibus & discordiis minime agitur, ita autem res in illa mediocrium civium gubernatione sese habet, cum ex sententia *Arist.* magnae civitates, quae majorem partem habent mediocrium civium, minus seditionibus subjiciantur, quam parvae, quae modicam habent copiam eorum civium, qui à mediocritate opum hic laudantur.' Aristotle, *Politics*, 1296a1 [IV:11], p. 108. 'The mean condition of states is clearly best, for no other is free from faction; and where the middle class is large, there are least likely to be factions and dissensions. For a similar reason large states are less liable to faction than small ones, because in them the middle class is larger; whereas in small states it is easy to divide all the citizens into two classes who are either rich or poor, and to leave nothing in the middle.'

²⁴⁶ Leiden or Amsterdam, the two most populous towns of Holland that counted many wealthy merchants, come to mind. It should be remembered that both in the *Commentariolus* and the *Institutiones politicae* Boxhorn deduces Holland's form of government from the form of government found in its towns. Holland was aristocratic because, besides the nobles who only held one seat in the provincial States, the local town governments of Holland were aristocratic. A transition from aristocracy to democracy at the local town level would thus have consequences for the government at the provincial level. In this Boxhorn differs from Johan de la Court, who drew a strict distinction between government at the local town level and government at the provincial level. Johan de la Court thought it possible for a town to become a democracy, but he denied this possibility for a province as a whole, for its government would always consist of delegates. To Johan de la Court indirect democracy was no democracy at all. V.H., *Consideratien en Exempelen van Staat*, IX.5, pp. 278-79. I would like to thank Jan Hartman for drawing my attention to this point.

Reasoning from Boxhorn's perspective this was a very feasible option. After all Holland was a large state in the sense that it was very populous, while it was surely possible that a large section of Holland's prosperous society could pass for Aristotle's middle class. Furthermore, the differences between the aristocratic regime Boxhorn envisioned Holland to have, a mixture of aristocracy, oligarchy and democracy, and a polity in the Aristotelian sense were very small.²⁴⁷ The transition from the one form of government to the other would not amount to a great political earthquake, but rather more to an adjustment or a correction of Holland's political infrastructure, albeit with possibly great consequences. Finally, there is a great overlap between the positive features that Aristotle attributes to a polity and Boxhorn's characteristics of 'the most peaceful' and 'best' commonwealths. As we have seen, Boxhorn holds that 'that form of government is long lasting that is loved by all its members', which would only be the case if 'all members are admitted to a part of the power to command'. In line with this reasoning he judges those commonwealths the most peaceful in which the representatives of the people, the lower magistrates, also partake in the administration of the commonwealth. Boxhorn also thinks it expedient that, at least in theory, no citizen should be barred from obtaining an administrative office. A feature, by the way, that is a specific characteristic of democratic regimes as Boxhorn himself admits.²⁴⁸

If we look at Aristotle's description of the specific polity the resemblances become clear. According to Aristotle, in a specific polity the political institutions and characteristics of a democracy and an oligarchy are mixed in such a way that administrative offices are open to members of every social stand.²⁴⁹ If these different political institutions and characteristics are mixed in just proportion, it would also make the government of a specific polity very stable, for in such a specific polity 'all classes in the state' would probably like 'to maintain the constitution'.²⁵⁰ 'For if a constitution to be permanent, all the parts of the state must wish that it should exist and these arrangements be maintained.'²⁵¹ In short, Aristotle's specific polity meets the criteria of the

²⁴⁷ Indeed, as Aristotle himself said, polities and aristocracies 'are not very unlike'. Aristotle, *Politics*, 1294a1 [IV:8], p. 104.

²⁴⁸ Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, II.8.2-3, pp. 344-45 [350-51].

²⁴⁹ Aristotle, *Politics*, 1294b1 [IV:9], pp. 104-5.

²⁵⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 105. 'In a well attempered polity there should appear to be both elements and yet neither; also the government should rely on itself, and not on foreign aid, and on itself not through the good will of a majority – they might be equally well-disposed when there is a vicious form of government – but through the general willingness of all classes in the state to maintain the constitution.' See also Johnson, "Libertas" and "Res Publica" in *Cicero and Tacitus*, p. 19.

²⁵¹ *Ibidem*, 1270b1 [II:9], p. 52.

political infrastructure of commonwealths that Boxhorn deems ‘the most peaceful’ and ‘the best’.²⁵²

If we connect the implications of this thesis to Boxhorn’s critique of a small, closed-off aristocracy, a central theme can be detected: Boxhorn is advocating for a ‘democratisation’ of Holland’s body politic in the sense that he advocates for a more open and accessible form of government that would allow a much broader section of Holland’s (male) population to participate in their own government. With this plea he anticipated the ideas of the brothers De la Court, who, some fifteen years later, would take the same ingredients and, albeit via a different way, come to an almost similar conclusion.²⁵³ This triggers us to address one more issue, namely Boxhorn’s view on the potential danger that one man, who exceeds all others in power and prestige, will overthrow the aristocratic regime he is a part of and grab absolute power.

The problems among the best

Boxhorn admits that there are aristocratic forms of government in which one of the best towers above the rest qua prestige and honours. This person ‘represents’, so to speak, the *majestas* of the whole commonwealth. However, in such an aristocratic form of government the power of the commonwealth (*vis Reipublicae*) remains in the hands of all the best together.²⁵⁴ Venice is here the most likely example, where the doge has ‘a type of majestas’, but is con-

²⁵² Here it should be reminded that the commonwealths Boxhorn deems ‘the most peaceful’ are the Netherlands (i.e. the Dutch Republic) and ancient Rome after the plebs had been given access to administrative offices. In chapter 7 we have seen that Boxhorn thought that with the access granted to the plebs in the form of the institution of the tribunate Rome had effectively become a democracy. In the *Institutiones politicae* Boxhorn acknowledges ancient Rome’s democratic nature when he declares that in the Roman Republic ‘sovereignty belonged in the first place to the people’. Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I.2, p. 11. ‘Sic in Republica Romana apparet, populi imprimis fuisse Majestatem, quia ille leges ferebat, Magistratus eligebat, bella indicebat.’

²⁵³ Modern scholars hold different opinions on what has influenced the brothers De la Court the most. Eco Haitsma Mulier has emphasised the influence of Hobbes, while Hans Blom has pointed to the influence of Machiavelli and ‘reason’ or ‘interest of state’ thinking to which Pieter de la Court gave a naturalistic twist. Jonathan Scott, on the other hand, has focused on the influence of ‘classical republicanism’ (central to which, he believes, lies the tension between reason, defined as public virtue, and passion, defined as self-interest) in the works of Pieter de la Court. Haitsma Mulier, *The Myth of Venice*, pp. 128-30; Blom, *Causality and Morality in Politics*, pp. 158-81; Jonathan Scott, “Classical Republicanism in Seventeenth-Century England and the Netherlands”, in Van Gelderen and Skinner (eds.), *Republicanism: A Shared European Heritage*, Vol. 1, pp. 67-69.

²⁵⁴ Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, II.5.16, p. 323. ‘Sunt & aliae, in quibus ut autoritate, ita honore, loco, & reverentia optimates omnes inter se sunt pares; Sunt etiam, in quibus unus aliquis Principis nomine atque insignibus supra caeteros excellit, in quo uno externa species Majestatis totius Reipublicae repraesentatur, ita, ut vis interim ejus penes omnes maneat, unusque ille non majoris, quam caeteri sunt, autoritatis existat.’

strained by laws and executes what the senate has ordered.²⁵⁵ But how to prevent such an eminent person, or any other ambitious person among the ruling elite, of seizing absolute power?

Like Heinsius, Boxhorn believes it is essential in aristocratic regimes that its members be and stay on par.²⁵⁶ To prevent an aristocrat from rising above his peers Boxhorn comes up with a series of measurements. The public display of riches and virtue, for example, must be curtailed by 'a firm law' so that none of the best can gain the favour of the plebs.²⁵⁷ Likewise, neither the best nor their children should be allowed to marry the children of a foreign prince,²⁵⁸ a principle that stadholder Frederik Hendrik and his son William II clearly had ignored.²⁵⁹ Furthermore, the best should also not be allowed to accept titles and other prestigious honours that foreign princes offer them,²⁶⁰ a principle that was doomed to count on a lukewarm reception from Holland's town *regenten* with their aristocratic pretensions.²⁶¹ Boxhorn also advises against the 'exclusion' or 'oppression' of the offspring of noble families,²⁶² 'because those who are excluded and oppressed shall, out a desire for vengeance, set the common people against those who are in power'.²⁶³ In the summer of 1672 the *regenten* of Holland would find out the hard way the truth of this warning.

'Finally, where that form of aristocratic command pleases, in which the appearance and splendor of the majestas rests in the hands of one person, as if he were a prince, the other persons belonging to the best shall have to

²⁵⁵ Ibidem, I.4, p. 33. 'Dux Venetus quoque speciem saltem habet Majestatis, quia ea tantum exequitur, quae Senatus jussit.'

²⁵⁶ See chapter 7.

²⁵⁷ Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, II.6.6, pp. 333-34. '(II.) Quod privatam & publicam pompam & alia ejusmodi judicicia spectat, quibus capiuntur & acquiruntur judicicia vulgi, certi eorum modi, ultra quos exorbitare nemini, quamvis majoris, quam collegae autoritatis, liceat, immota lege deferuntur.' See Luuc Kooijmans and Carly Missel, "Van rebellen tot 'koningen in eigen huis': opstand, regentenbewind en politieke cultuur", in De Nijs and Beukers (eds.), *Geschiedenis van Holland*, Vol. 2, pp. 55-57.

²⁵⁸ Ibidem, II.6.10, p. 334. '(IV.) Non ipsi, neque eorum liberi cum Principis liberis matrimonium inire permittuntur.'

²⁵⁹ Frederik Hendrik was married to Amalia van Solms, daughter of count Johann Albrecht I of Solms-Braunfels (1563-1623). William II was married to Mary Stuart (1631-1660), daughter of king Charles I. Pieter Geyl has famously argued that Frederik Hendrik's choice of potential partners for his children was primarily dictated by his desire to obtain supreme power in the Dutch Republic and absolute control of the Republic's foreign policy. Geyl, *History of the Dutch-Speaking Peoples, 1555-1648*, p. 424ff, and idem, *Orange and Stuart*, pp. 28-29. For Frederik Hendrik's rather ad hoc marriage to Amalia, see Rowen, *The Princes of Orange*, p. 59.

²⁶⁰ Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, II.6.12, p. 334. '(V.) Tituli & ejusmodi nomina & insignia majorum, quae ab exteris Principibus sunt delata, non admittuntur.'

²⁶¹ Van Nierop, *Van ridders tot regenten*, pp. 224-28, and Frijhof and Spies, *Hard-Won Unity*, pp. 100-4.

²⁶² Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, II.6.22, p. 335. '(X.) Nullarum nobilium familiarum, eorumque, qui in honoribus publicis olim positi fuere, posterius excluduntur aut opprimuntur, quavis potius ratione juvantur, promoventur.'

²⁶³ Ibidem, II.6.23, p. 335. 'Exclusi enim & oppressi cupidine vindictae, plebem adversus rerum potentes concitaturi sunt.'

restrain the ambition of that one person by means of accurate and separate laws that are drawn up to promote and strengthen the position of the best, and that shall not hesitate to tie up [that one person] as if they were chains.²⁶⁴ As we have seen in chapter 5, Boxhorn believes this to be the case in the Dutch Republic; the prerogatives of the stadholder are specified, while his powers are kept in check by the provincial States, which have ‘the power to command’ and whose authority is ‘the highest’.²⁶⁵ In this respect Boxhorn differs greatly from the views of the brothers De la Court, for as history told them ‘in time of war, the laws are silent’.²⁶⁶ Furthermore, they held up William II’s ill attempt to get his own way by force as an example to show that the authority of the provincial States was but a mere chimaera if not backed by military power. But history taught Boxhorn other political lessons.

²⁶⁴ Ibidem, II.6.26, p. 336. ‘(XII.) Denique ubi ea placuit Aristocratici Imperii forma, in qua penes unum, quasi Principem, residet species & pompa externa Majestatis, accuratis singularibusque, & ad augendum & ad confirmandum Optimatum statum comparatis legibus, veluti vinculis, facillè vincire ausuris, ejus ambitionem caeteri constringunt.’

²⁶⁵ Boxhorn, *Commentariolus*, IX.13, pp. 147-48. It is interesting to note that in the chapters dealing with aristocracy Boxhorn does not mention the stadholderate or the princes of Orange at all; only George Hornius explicitly mentions them in his commentaries. Idem, *Institutiones politicae*, II.5, p. 332. ‘Ad §.16. Tertia species Aristocratiae est, in qua unus aliquis titulo & dignitate sive ducis seu Principis eminent, quamquam non majorem potestatem, quam caeteri, obtineat, & talis est Aristocratia Reip. Venetae, Genuensis, Luccensis, Ragusanae. Talis etiam forma apud Batavos fuit, quamdiu principes Auriaci caput Reip. repraesentabant.’

²⁶⁶ V.H., *Consideratien van Staat, Ofte Politike Weeg-schaal ...* (?; Ysselmonde, 1662), Vol. 1, I.28, p. 139. ‘Want, inter arma silent leges jus in armis.’ From Cicero, *Pro Milone*, 11. ‘... silent enim leges inter arma ...’ Latin text quoted from Cicero, *The Speeches*. With an English Translation by N.H. Watts (William Heinemann/G.P. Putnam’s Sons; London/New York, 1931), p. 16.

Chapter 9

The working of politics.

The Disquisitiones politicae

Background to the *Disquisitiones politicae*

If the *Institutiones politicae* can be considered Boxhorn's political *magnus opus*, the *Disquisitiones politicae* was probably, after the *Commentariolus*, his most popular work. For example, while the *Institutiones politicae* was never translated into another language, the *Disquisitiones politicae* saw Dutch, English and French translations, and perhaps also a German translation.¹ In 1669, a year after Hornius had published his annotated edition of Boxhorn's *Institutiones politicae*, a Dutch translation of the *Disquisitiones politicae* appeared. The translation was written by Jan Hendrikszoon Glazemaker (c.1620-1682) and published in Amsterdam by Jan Rieuwertszoon (c.1616-1687).² In his introduction Glazem-

¹ In 1650 the first two editions of the *Disquisitiones politicae* appeared, one by Johannes Verhoeve in The Hague, and the other by Philippe de Croy in Leiden. In 1651 Verhoeve published a new edition. Four years later, in 1655, Adriaen Vlacq published an edition of the work in Amsterdam. A French edition of the *Disquisitiones politicae* appeared in 1669. It was published by Caspar Commelinus, the man who had also been responsible for the 1668 edition of the *Institutiones politicae*. Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn, *Recherches politiques très curieuses, tirées de toutes histoires tant anciennes que modernes* (Caspar Commelinus; Amsterdam, 1669). In 1693 two inquiries about counterfeiting (numbers 45 and 46 from the 1650 Latin edition of Johannes Verhoeve) would appear separately in Dutch; *Overwegingen van staat: hoe men zeer zware straffen tegen de genen moet opstellen, die op de minste trap van enige schelmery betrapt, ten hoogsten kunnen hinderen, even als de genen, die op de hoogste trap van 't zelfde schelmstuk betrapt zijn ... als mede op welke wijze de valsche munt ... kan verboden en geweert worden* (Aert Dircksz. Oossaan; Amsterdam, 1693). An English translation of the *Disquisitiones politicae* – 'printed for James Knapton' – appeared in London in 1701. Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn, *Arcana Imperii Detecta: Or, Divers Select Cases in Government; with the Debates, Arguments and Resolutions of the Greatest Statesmen in Several Ages and Governments thereupon*. Finally, in 1653 a German work appeared in Frankfurt with the title 'Europe's Wounds Revealed: Adjoined by Sixty ... Political Cases ... Translated from Latin ... by N.J.B.' ((Nicolaus Johannes Bennich, *Europae auffgedeckte wunden: Nebenst Sechzig ... Politischen Unterredungen ... Aus dem Lateinischen ... durch N.J.B.* (Peter Haubolt; Frankfurt, 1653))). The title – the *Disquisitiones politicae* also counts sixty inquiries – and the fact that in the catalogue of Hermann Conring's library (see *Catalogus Bibliothecae Conringianae*, pp. 196-97) this book is listed immediately after a number of Boxhorn's works make it possible that this work contains a German translation of the *Disquisitiones politicae*. Unless stated otherwise, in this thesis all references are made to the 1650 Latin edition of Johannes Verhoeve.

² Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn, *Disquisitiones politicae, of Overwegingen van staat en bestiering: bestaande in zestig voorvallen van staat: daar in, op een geleerde en naaukeurige wijze, van yder vooraal verscheide gevoelens en besluitingen, en verscheide uitvallen, met een naaukeurig oordeel daar af, bygebracht worden: ten deel uit oude, maar meest uit nieuwe historien ... getrokken* (Jan Rieuwerstzoon and Pieter Arentszoon; Amsterdam, 1669). Both Glazemaker and Rieuwertszoon belonged to the 'Vlamingen', a conservative stream of Dutch Mennonites in Amsterdam. The two often worked together; both the translations of Descartes and Spinoza were published by Rieuwertszoon. For Glazemaker and

aker promised the reader that the *Disquisitiones politicae* revealed ‘the most hidden principles of state’ and ‘the best means to rule’, and that it offered the reader ‘a good opportunity to instruct himself in the functioning of states on other’s people cost’ and an easy way ‘to gather the secrets and mysteries of princes’.³ Glazemaker wanted not only the magistrates to make themselves familiar with this material, but also the private citizens who did not hold any administrative offices, for they had the duty to keep an eye on things and, if they detected or anticipated any problems, to notify the magistrate ‘in an orderly fashion’.⁴

In 1669 this appeal to civil watchfulness would not have fallen on deaf ears. The year before Johan de Witt had successfully concluded a Triple Alliance between the Dutch Republic, England, and Sweden to check Louis XIV’s expansionist ambitions. However, France’s ceaseless encroachments in the Southern Netherlands continued to worry the populace and the *regenten* alike, while Charles II’s commitment to the newly signed treaty was doubted. Furthermore, in Holland the calls became stronger to renounce the Perpetual Edict – the edict the States of Holland had passed in 1667 and that had abolished the stadholderate in that province – and to install the young William III in the offices his ancestors had held. Internally and externally tensions were mounting; this was not a time to sit back and relax, but to stay on the alert and to keep a look out for possible dangers.⁵

Glazemaker’s Dutch edition of the *Disquisitiones politicae* which was published amidst the mounting tensions of the late 1660s and all the other editions of the work which appeared between 1650 and 1701 indicate that Boxhorn’s

a bibliography of the works he has translated, see C.L. Thijssen-Schoute, “Jan Hendrik Glazemaker: de zeventiende eeuwse aartsvertaler”, in idem, *Uit de republiek der letteren: elf studiën op het gebied der ideeëngeschiedenis van de Gouden Eeuw* (Martinus Nijhoff; The Hague, 1967), pp. 206-61. Jonathan Israel has rated Glazemaker, ‘another reputed “atheist”’, among the ‘radical republicans, an intellectual coterie which crystallized around 1660, first at Amsterdam and soon also at The Hague, Rotterdam and Leiden’. Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, p. 787. For Glazemaker and Rieuwertszoon, see also idem, *Radical Enlightenment*, pp. 170, 278-79, 305.

³ Jan Hendrikszoon Glazemaker, “Voorreeden aan den lezer”, in Boxhorn, *Disquisitiones politicae, of Overwegingen van staat en bestiering*, iv-v. ‘... verborgenste grondregeels van Staat ... de treffelijkste middelen van bestiering ... bequame gelegenheit om zich in de bediening van heerschappijen op eens anders kosten t’ onderwijzen ... Eindelijk, men zal ‘er, met weinig moeite, de verborgentheden en geheimnissen der Vorsten uit verstaan.’

⁴ Ibidem, ii-iii. ‘De bezondere en onbeampte Liedden hebben mijns oordeels, ook geen reden om zich buiten de kennis en wetenschap van deze Staatbestiering te houden, en zich daar van uit te sluiten, dewijl het hen, in ‘t gemeen schip zijnde, vry staat, ja hun plicht is, om, gelijk men zegt, een oog in ‘t zeil te houden, en, merkelyk ongemak, en blykelyke zwaarigheid tegemoet ziende, den Stierman het nakende onheil, op een behoorlyke wijze, bekent te maken.’ Unfortunately, Glazemaker does not explain what he means by ‘orderly fashion’.

⁵ Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, pp. 739-95; Van Deursen, *Last van veel geluk*, pp. 293-98; Prak, *The Dutch Republic in the Seventeenth Century*, pp. 49-51. In this context Geyl’s discussion of the (pamphlet) literature printed between 1650 and 1672 still merits attention. Pieter Geyl, “Het stadhouderschap in de partij-literatuur onder De Witt”, in *Mededeelingen der Koninklijke Nederlandsche Akademie van Wetenschappen* (Noord-Hollandsche Uitgevers Maatschappij; Amsterdam, 1947), pp. 17-84.

contemporaries and successive generations thought that the *Disquisitiones politicae* contained a certain knowledge that had an importance that exceeded the time of their conception. Why they thought so will be discussed below. First, however, we will look at how and when the *Disquisitiones politicae* first came into being so that we will get a better understanding of the work.

Just like the *Commentariolus* and probably also the *Institutiones politicae*, the *Disquisitiones politicae* found their origins in Boxhorn's private lectures on politics.⁶ This means that they were taught outside the official curriculum at Leiden University in a setting which allowed Boxhorn more intellectual room to move than he would have had in public lectures. Like the content of the *Institutiones politicae*, it is therefore possible to see the content of the *Disquisitiones politicae* more as the embodiment of the *personal* political ideas of a professor who taught at Leiden, than as a representative example of the *politica* that was *officially* taught at Leiden University at the time that Boxhorn was working there.⁷

Evidence from the *Disquisitiones politicae* itself suggests that Boxhorn taught the content of the *Disquisitiones politicae*, or at least some parts of the work, around the same time as the *Commentariolus*, that is, somewhere in the early 1640s.⁸ As we have noted in the case of the *Commentariolus*, the early 1640s was a period of war and expansion for both Boxhorn personally and the Dutch in general. It was also a period in which the Dutch feared for the future of their Union and in which Europe was plagued by war and conflict.

Let us now turn to the question why Boxhorn's contemporaries and successive generations thought that the *Disquisitiones politicae* contained a certain knowledge that had an importance that exceeded the time of their conception. The reason why they did so had largely to do with the subject-matter of the *Disquisitiones politicae*. In the words of James Knapton, who had published an English edition of the *Disquisitiones politicae* in 1701 under the title of

⁶ See Baselius, "Historia vitae & obitus", viii-x, with the following quote on ix-x. 'Sed & Politicam discipulos suos docebat: non vulgarem modo & tritam, nudis praeceptis consistentem ... sed & ex Historiis desumptam adeoque practicam, imo παραδειγματικήν. Hinc natae disquisitiones Politicae, postmodum juris publici factae, sed tacito authoris nomine, quae & saepius recusae sunt. Hinc & natus commentariolus de statu foederati Belgii, eodem modo editus, saepius item recusatus & in Belgicam linguam versus.' See further chapter 5.

⁷ See chapter 8.

⁸ In one inquiry (number 3) the historical case study is the Portuguese revolt against the king of Spain. This revolt began in December 1640 (see footnote 48 below). In another inquiry (number 37) the historical example concerns a discussion in the Leiden town council about expanding the town. This discussion can be dated somewhere between 1642 and 1644 (see footnote 59 below). These two inquiries and the fact that Baselius claims that the *Disquisitiones politicae* and the *Commentariolus* originate from the same source (see footnote 6 above) strengthen me in my believe that Boxhorn stopped teaching the content of the *Disquisitiones politicae* and the *Commentariolus* somewhere in the middle of 1643, around the time that he started to preside public disputations on politics. See chapter 5.

Arcana Imperii Detecta, or Divers Select Cases in Government, that subject-matter refers 'principally, if not wholly ... to Government, without which no Nation or Community of Men can long subsist, but all must be quickly reduced to a Babel of Confusion'.⁹ 'Government' is one of the translations the English edition of the *Disquisitiones politicae* gives for the Latin word *res publica*.¹⁰ The title makes clear that Knapton closely connected it to *imperium*, the Latin word for, amongst others, 'command' or 'the power to command'. Read in this way, no political community could exist without some form of command, and it is with matters of command that the *Disquisitiones politicae* is mainly concerned.

Just like Glazemaker, then, Knapton clearly thought that the *Disquisitiones politicae* belonged to that genre that revealed the mysteries of command, 'government' as he would say, or 'the hidden principles of State' as Glazemaker would have it. Works belonging to this genre are now often categorised as 'reason of state' literature, after the Italian term 'ragion di stato', or its French equivalent 'raison d'état'. This has everything to do with the fact that in the seventeenth century the concepts of *arcana* and *ratio status*, as *ragion di stato* was translated into Latin, were not clearly distinguished from each other and often deployed interchangeably.¹¹ While the concept of *arcana* found its origin in the *Annals* of the Roman historian Tacitus¹² and was given a new impulse through the success of the *De arcanis Rerumpublicarum libri sex* (*Six Books on the Mysteries of Commonwealths*, 1605) of the German Arnoldus Clapmarus,¹³ the

⁹ James Knapton, "Preface", in Boxhorn, *Arcana Imperii Detecta*, 1-ii.

¹⁰ James Knapton was a specialist in voyage narratives. He published William Dampier's *New Voyage round the World* (London, 1697). In many of my translations I have greatly benefitted from the English translations to be found in Knapton's edition. However, with regard to the term *res publica*, I have consequently stuck to the term 'commonwealth' (which can also be found in Knapton's edition) since I think that 'government' lays too much focus on one side of the medallion, namely that of the rulers, to the neglect of the other side, that of the subjects, while in my reading of Boxhorn's conception of a *res publica*, Boxhorn thought of them to be so closely interconnected that they cannot be taken or seen separate.

¹¹ Michael Stolleis, *Arcana imperii und Ratio status: bemerkungen zur politischen Theorie des frühen 17. Jahrhunderts* (Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht; Göttingen, 1980), p. 6, and Horst Dreitzel, "Reason of State and the Crisis of Political Aristotelianism: An Essay on the Development of 17th Century Political Philosophy", in *History of European Ideas*, Vol. 28 (2002), p. 163.

¹² 'Haud dubium erat eam sententiam altius penetrare et arcana imperii temptari.' Tacitus, *The Annals*, II.36.1, p. 57. 'There was no doubt that that proposal made a deeper penetration and that the mysteries of command were being tested.' I follow Woodman in translating *imperium* as command or power to command instead of state, since the concept of the modern, independent, sovereign state was alien to the Romans and to most people living in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Furthermore, the word command makes more sense if we take into account that in the *politica* genre the *res publica* was conceived as an *ordo parendi et imperandii*. In this case I disagree with the translation offered by Peter Donaldson in his *Machiavelli and Mystery of State* (Cambridge University Press; Cambridge, 1988), pp. 112-40. Noel Malcolm seems to follow Donaldson when he claims that a part of the attraction of Tacitist political literature 'was that it offered the reader a key to unlocking all kinds of mystery of state ... politics thus became decipherable and legible'. Noel Malcolm, *Reason of State, Propaganda, and the Thirty Years' War: An Unknow Translation by Thomas Hobbes* (Oxford University Press; Oxford, 2007), p. 96.

¹³ See besides Stolleis, *Arcana imperii und Ratio status*, Donaldson, *Machiavelli and Mystery of State*,

concept of *ratio status* can be traced back to Francesco Guicciardini and the Italian archbishop of Benevento, Giovanni della Casa (1503-1566),¹⁴ and from them forward in time to Giovanni Botero (c.1544-1617) whose *Della ragione di stato* (*On Reason of State*, 1589) did much to make the term popular. *Ragion di stato* became a new, 'highly fashionable catchword' under which a lot of old problems were put. Among these problems were the ever-pressing question as how to act in cases of emergency and the eternal struggle to find a balance between the common good and the good of the individual.¹⁵ With regard to the first problem it was widely accepted that necessity has no laws,¹⁶ while in the second case Tacitus's *sententia* that 'each great example has some element of unfairness, which, as against individuals, is balanced by public expediency' offered an excuse for policies that sacrificed the well-being of individuals for a greater common good.¹⁷

The fact that the new 'reason of state' literature was in most cases nothing more than old wine in new bottles may explain why Boxhorn never used the concept of *ratio status*, but stuck to the concept of *arcana* or its Greek equivalents *stratagema* or *sophismata*. He stuck, in other words, to Tacitus and Aristotle. In the *Disquisitiones politicae* Boxhorn does not once mention Machiavelli, who was seen as one of the great instigators behind the concept of *ratio status* and the politics it stood for, although he himself had never used the concept.¹⁸

and Dreitzel, "Reason of State and the Crisis of Political Aristotelianism", also Tuck, *Philosophy and Government*, pp. 124-27.

¹⁴ Guicciardini and Della Casa used the term 'ragion(e) degli stati'. Maurizio Viroli, "The Origin and the Meaning of the Reason of State", in Iain Hampsher-Monk, Karin Tilmans and Frank van Vree (eds.), *History of Concepts: Comparative Perspectives* (Amsterdam University Press; Amsterdam, 1998), pp. 67-73. See also Peter Burke, "Tacitism, Scepticism, and Reason of State", in Dunn (ed.), *European Political Thought*, p. 479.

¹⁵ Dreitzel, "Reason of State and the Crisis of Political Aristotelianism", p. 169. See also Donaldson, *Machiavelli and Mystery of State*, p. 113.

¹⁶ 'Necessitas non habet legem.' Boxhorn also adhered to this principle. See Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I.6, p. 75. The maxim finds its origin in Seneca the Elder, *Controversiae*, IX.4.5. 'Necessitas magnum humanae inbecillitatis patrocinium est ...' 'Necessity is a great defence for feeble humanity ...' Latin text and English translation taken from Seneca the Elder, *Declamations*, Vol. 2: *Controversiae, Books 7-10; Suasoriae; Fragments*. Translated by M. Winterbottom (Harvard University Press/William Heinemann; Cambridge/London, 1974), pp. 286-87.

¹⁷ Tacitus, *The Annals*, XIV.44.3, p. 295. Boxhorn used this *sententia* frequently. See, for example, Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I.6.10, p. 70; idem, *Disquisitiones politicae*, XIX, p. 87; idem, *Historia obsidionis Bredae*, p. 47. According to John Salmon, 'this passage was a notorious point of reference for those who argued that Tacitus was an apostle of reason of state'. Salmon, "Stoicism and Roman Example", p. 217. See also Robert von Friedeburg, "Introduction", in idem, *Murder and Monarchy*, pp. 9-10.

¹⁸ Stolleis, *Arcana imperii und Ratio status*, p. 8. Machiavelli did use the term 'stato'. For its different meanings in Machiavelli's works, see Maurizio Viroli, "Machiavelli and the Republican Idea of Politics", in Block, Skinner and Viroli (eds.), *Machiavelli and Republicanism*, pp. 162-71, and Quentin Skinner, "From the State of Princes to the Person of the State", in idem, *Vision of Politics*, Vol. 2: *Renaissance Virtues* (Cambridge University Press; Cambridge, 1st ed. 2002, 2004), pp. 374-78, 384-85. In this article, where he describes the political use of the term 'status' from the late Middle Ages to the seventeenth century, Quentin Skinner makes the important observation that originally 'status' did not refer to 'an agent distinguishable at once from rulers and ruled' (p. 378), that is, our modern concept of the state, but rather to 'the to state or

Boxhorn could easily do without the notorious Florentine, who until then had a bad reputation in the Dutch Republic,¹⁹ for he had Tacitus at his disposal, his favourite historian, whose writings revealed the secrets of princes and ‘made politics seem like a complex and ruthless game in which all players are self-interested and power is the prize’.²⁰ In Tacitus’s works this had led to all kinds of assumptions and advices that most of Boxhorn’s seventeenth-century contemporaries would find distasteful. ‘Among the most controversial of those was the assumption that religion must be regarded as an instrument of rule’,²¹ an assumption to which Boxhorn indeed adhered.²² But Boxhorn never went as far as Clapmarius to define the *ius dominationis*, the right of rulers to violate civil law, and that Clapmarius had associated with the concept of *ratio status*, as a legitimate form of tyranny.²³ No tyranny could be legitimate, and in the *Institutiones politicae* Boxhorn denounces many of Clapmarius’s examples of *iura dominationis* as scandalous acts (*flagitia*).²⁴ For Boxhorn the mysteries of command did not so much concern themselves with how people who are in power

standing of rulers themselves’ (p. 369) or ‘the state or condition of a realm or commonwealth’ (p. 370). In Renaissance Italy the term became used ‘to refer not merely to prevailing regimes, but also and more specifically, to the institutions of government and the means of coercive control that serve to preserve order within political communities’. (p. 377). Therefore, Istvan Hont concludes that ‘the expression “*ragione di stato*” had little to do with the idea of the modern state. Rather, it articulated the stern requirements of the preservation of “*status*”, that is, the preservation of the political standing of rulers or of the condition of the commonwealth. Istvan Hont, *Jealousy of Trade: International Competition and the Nation-State in Historical Perspective* (Belknap Press of Harvard University Press; Cambridge, 2005), pp. 11-12.

¹⁹ For example, in his inaugural oration as professor of politics (November 1613), published at Leiden in 1614 by Lowijs Elzevier under the title *De politica sapientia oratio (Oration on Political Wisdom)*, Heinsius had depicted Machiavelli as someone who had ‘plundered the work of Aristotle without scruple’ and who had an ‘open contempt ... for matters such as law and religion’. See Van Heck, “*Cymbalum Politicorum, Consulor Dolosus*”, pp. 53-55, with quotes on p. 53. See also E.O.G. Haitma Mulier, “A Controversial Republican: Dutch Views on Machiavelli in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries”, pp. 248-61.

²⁰ Malcolm, *Reason of State, Propaganda, and the Thirty Years’ War*, p. 96. See also Burke, “*Tacitism*”, p. 161ff; Kenneth C. Schellhase, “*Tacitus in the Political Thought of Machiavelli*”, in *Pensiero politico*, Vol. 4, No. 3 (1971), pp. 381-91; Salmon, “*Stoicism and Roman Example*”, pp. 199-225; Burke, “*Tacitism, Scepticism, and Reason of State*”, pp. 479-95; Morford, “*Tacitean Prudentia and the Doctrines of Justus Lipsius*”, pp. 132-51, esp. pp. 136-46; Tuck, *Philosophy and Government*, pp. 65-130.

²¹ *Ibidem*, p. 97. ‘Among the most controversial of those was the assumption that religion must be regarded as an instrument of rule. Fear of unknown powers was a very powerful factor in human psychology (here early modern Tacitism went hand in hand with the Epicurean psychology of religion found in Lucretius).’

²² See chapter 8.

²³ For Clapmarius’s conceptions and their mutual relationships, see Donaldson, *Machiavelli and Mystery of State*, esp. pp. 130-35.

²⁴ Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I.6.11, p. 70. ‘Non tamen idcirco, cum Clapmario. c. 2. legitimam Tyrannidem appellandam censeo, neque enim Tyrannis legitima dici potest, neque idem sunt, Tyrannis, & jus dominationis, cum hoc ad conservandam, illa ad subvertendam sit comparata Rempublicam: Neque interim abnuerim, in Tyrannidem facile illud posse deflectere, si quis facile sequatur, à Clapmario, & aliis, in medium introducta exempla, in quorum nonnullis, flagitium potius agnosco, quam jus dominationis.’ See Arnoldus Clapmarius, *De arcanis rerum publicarum, Illustratus A. Ioan. Corvino IC. Accessit Chr. Besoldi De eadem materia Discursus* (Lowijs Elzevier; Amsterdam, 1641), IV.2, p. 181. ‘Quare sic definitio, esse supremum quoddam jus sive privilegium, bono publico introductum, contra jus commune, sive ordinarium; sed tamen à lege divina non alienum, atque est jus veluti legitimae Tyrannidis.’

can stay in power,²⁵ but more with how rulers and subjects should behave to protect their mutual bond against internal and external foes²⁶ and to keep it in a healthy condition amid the dangers that threaten to overthrow the commonwealth.²⁷ In the early 1640s this was a subject of no little importance, with the Thirty Years' War still not concluded, with troubles on the British Isles, and with worries in the Dutch Republic itself about the future of the Union.

Addressing political questions. Content and method of the *Disquisitiones politicae*

In the *Disquisitiones politicae* Boxhorn explains the mysteries of command on the basis of historical case studies. Of the sixty case studies that the *Disquisitiones politicae* counts, forty-seven are drawn from the period after 1500; in twenty-six of these the Dutch Republic is the topic of conversation,²⁸ while France is worth ten case studies.²⁹ Of the remaining thirteen case studies, five are taken from medieval history. In only eight cases the historical case study is taken from antiquity; in five of these eight cases the historical case study is taken from Greek history, in three of them from Roman history.³⁰

²⁵ This is an important aspect in the second book of the *Institutiones politicae*. However, the effectiveness of the *arcana imperii*, or the *interiora consilia* ('the rather private counsels') as Boxhorn also called them, depended of course on their staying a secret. To expose and explain the *arcana imperii* to students of politics, and, in printed form, to the public at large, had the paradoxical effect of undermining the very power basis on which the *arcana* of a specific regime rested, namely secrecy, and even entailed the danger that the *arcana* could be used against the regime in question. Machiavelli's *Il principe* and the works of Tacitus could be and were read as a satire or critique on tyrants, exposing their wicked ways to the public eye. See Dreitzel, "Reason of State and the Crisis of Political Aristotelianism", pp. 166-67; Jacob Soll, "Empirical History and the Transformation of Political Criticism in France from Bodin to Bayle", in *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 64, No. 2 (2003), pp. 305-7; idem, *Publishing the Prince: History, Reading, and the Birth of Political Criticism* (University of Michigan Press; Ann Arbor, 2005), p. 76.

²⁶ Both Jan Hendrikszoon Glazemaker and James Knapton praise the use of the *Disquisitiones politicae* for both rulers and subjects, who Glazemaker divides into magistrates, on the one hand, and private men, on the other, while Knapton makes a tripartite division of princes, statesmen, and 'the people'.

²⁷ As we will see below, Boxhorn believed that violent 'changes', for example caused by natural disasters, were inevitable and likely to overthrow a commonwealth or to put it into a process of decline. In this sense, a study into the *arcana* is a study into the causes of change and decline. It is no coincidence that in the *Institutiones politicae* the chapter that deals with the *arcana* is immediately followed by the chapter that deals with the 'changes of commonwealths, and their causes'. Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I.15-16, pp. 233-57. In the introduction to his edition of Clapmarius's *De arcanis rerumpublicarum* (Lowijns Elzevier; Amsterdam, 1st ed. 1641, 1644) Johannes Corvinus (c.1582-1650), a pupil of Arminius and professor of law in Amsterdam, put forward the same argument. Hans W. Blom, "The Republican Mirror: The Dutch Idea of Europe", in Anthony Pagden (ed.), *The Idea of Europe: From Antiquity to the European Union* (Woodrow Wilson Center Press and Cambridge University Press; Cambridge, 2002), pp. 104-7.

²⁸ *Disquisitiones* IV-VI, X, XI, XV, XIX, XX, XXII, XXVII, XXIX, XXX, XXXVI, XXXVII, XXXIX, XXXXII-XXXVI, XXXVIII, L, LIV, LVII-LX.

²⁹ *Disquisitiones* I, II, VII, XIII, XXIII, XXVI, XXXII, XXXV, XXXX, LV.

³⁰ Respectively *disquisitiones* XIV, XVIII, XXI, LIII, LVI, and *disquisitiones* VIII, IX, XXXI. In total, the

Each inquiry (*disquisitio*) follows a fixed procedure. First the problem to be discussed is introduced with the help of a specific historical case (*casus*). This historical case is presented in such a way that the outcome stays in a state of uncertainty. 'Then the arguments *Pro* and *Con* with Replications and rejoinder, where there were any' for this or that solution (*sententiae*) are presented, which is followed by the decision (*decretum*) that is finally made in the case concerned.³¹ On the basis of the result (*eventus*) a judgement (*judicium*) is pronounced that reflects on the decision made, the consequences of this decision, and the lessons that could be learned from them or the case in general.

'The well-being of the commonwealth should be the highest law'

The central message of the *Disquisitiones politicae* is that, paraphrasing Cicero's famous words, 'the safety of the people is the highest law'.³² The concept that Boxhorn uses most to indicate this message is 'the well-being of the commonwealth' (*salus Reipublicae*).³³ Since Boxhorn could see the *res publica* in the Ciceronian sense of a *res populi*, that is, as a numerous gathering holding certain matters such as public offices in common, this equation makes perfect sense.³⁴ However, it should also be remembered that according to Boxhorn's description, a commonwealth is not just a numerous gathering, but a numerous gath-

Disquisitiones politicae counts some nineteen references to Roman history and fourteen examples and quotations taken from Tacitus.

³¹ Knapton, "Preface", ii.

³² Boxhorn, *Disquisitiones politicae*, XI, p. 55. 'Salus populi suprema lex sit.' From Cicero, *De legibus*, III.8. 'Regio imperio duo sunt, iique <a> praeuendo iudicando consulendo praetores iudices consules appellamino; militiae summum ius habento, nemini parento; ollis salus populi suprema lex esto.' 'There shall be two with royal power; and from their leading, judging and consulting they shall be called praetors, judges, and consuls. They shall hold the supreme military power and shall take orders from no one. To them the safety of the people shall be the highest law.' Latin text quoted from Cicero, *De re publica*, *De legibus*, *Cato maior de senectute*, *Laelius de amicitia*, p. 241. English translation quoted from Cicero, *The Republic and The Laws*, p. 152.

³³ Ibidem, XIII, p. 65. 'Sed & ubi ita poscit necessitas, salus Reipub. supra Privilegia omnia est & Leges.'; XXIV, p. 106. 'Salutem Reip. & Principis supremum semper esse & supra caetera mandatum ...'; XLVII, p. 223. '... salus Reip.: quae semel sancita & aeterna, & instar omnium lex est.' In Glazemaker's Dutch translation the first Latin sentence is translated as the 'well-being of the people' (*de welstant van 't volk*), while the other two speak about of the 'well-being of the commonwealth' (*de welstant van de gemene Staat*). Boxhorn, *Overweegingen van Staat*, XXXII, p. 240; XL, p. 301; LI, p. 367. In the English translation of 1701 we find these terms translated as the 'good' or the 'safety' of the 'government'. Boxhorn, *Arcana Imperii Detecta*, XVII, p. 81; XXXIII, p. 153; LI, p. 260.

³⁴ In his justification of the *ius dominationis* Boxhorn names the 'safety of the people' and the 'well-being of the commonwealth' in the same breath. Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I.6.13, p. 71. 'Salus Reipublicae facit, ut jus dominationis justum sit, non quod hactenus & ordinario jure receptum est, sed quod maximè Reipublicae in praesens est salutare, & lex, ac agendi ratio, quantumvis nova, & veterem subvertat, & quibusdam privatim noxia sit, tantò minùs, imò eo ipso nihil iniquitatis habet, quanto in commune plus utilitatis confert. Salus enim populi suprema lex esto.'

ering that is one body, which possesses *majestas* and that is constructed alongside an *ordo parendi et imperandi*. Thus, when Boxhorn speaks about the well-being of the commonwealth, it is the well-being of this organised relationship between rulers and subjects that he has in mind.³⁵

The primacy of the well-being of the commonwealth rests upon a simple logic: one should always take better care of the whole, the commonwealth, than of any part of it, private individuals or subjects, because the commonwealth, if it remains in good condition, can support the private individual if his condition should deteriorate and can protect him against external threats or natural disasters. A healthy private individual, however, can never do the same for the commonwealth if the commonwealth becomes endangered.³⁶ Therefore, one of the arguments put forward to end the quarrels between the English merchants and those of the VOC without seeking justice in every specific case, was that 'it was in the interest of the commonwealth that the quarrels between the subjects of England and those of Holland would not last forever, because greater evils and wars could easily arise from them'.³⁷ 'And any injury that is done to particular persons, is balanced by public expediency.'³⁸

The subjection of the well-being of private individuals to that of the commonwealth is almost absolute. Even if their cause is just, subjects do not have the right to pursue it if this will do the commonwealth any damage. Thus, the French king Louis XIII (1601-1643) had acted correctly when he had punished a group of soldiers, who, after the taking of La Rochelle in 1628, had risen in mutiny because they had not received the pay that was due to them. 'The most just cause of any private man and subjects is unjust, and therefore deserves to be punished, when someone prosecutes the same to the present detriment of the commonwealth.'³⁹

³⁵ "Boxhorn", p. 148.

³⁶ Boxhorn, *Disquisitiones politicae*, XIX, pp. 88-89. 'Cum igitur Respublica privatas quidem singulorum calamitates sustinere possit: singuli vero privati publicas ipsius calamitates nullo modo ferre queant, convenit eo qui de Republica consultant semper majorem totius, quam partium curam ac rationem habere.'

³⁷ Ibidem, p. 86. 'Interesse Reipublicae ne inter Angliae & Hollandiae subditos perpetuae sint lites: Ex iis enim majora mala & bella evenire facile posse.'

³⁸ Ibidem, p. 87. 'Quod in Republica singuli juvent, & quicquid in privatos peccatur, utilitate in publicum pensetur.' A clear reference to Tacitus, *The Annals*, XIV.44. "'habet aliquid ex iniquo omne magnum exemplum quod contra singulos utilitate publica rependitur.'" "Each great example has some element of unfairness, which, as against individuals, is balanced by public expediency." Latin text quoted from Tacitus, *Annalium ab excessu divi Avgvsti libri*, XIV.44. English translation quoted from Tacitus, *The Annals*, XIV.44.3, p. 295. Boxhorn, *Arcana Imperii Detecta*, XXII, p. 112. 'Were not all to give their helping Hand for the support of the Government, and any Injury that might be supposed to be done to particular Persons, was made up by the Benefit that redounded therefrom to the Government.'

³⁹ Ibidem, XXIII, p. 103. 'Aequissima cuiusvis privati & subditorum causa iniqua est, ac idcirco meretur poenam, ubi quis eam persequitur cum praesente damno Reipublicae.' Boxhorn, *Arcana Imperii Detecta*, XL, p. 192. 'The justest Cause of a private Man and Subject is unjust, and therefore deserves to

By applying the well-being of the commonwealth as the yardstick to measure what is right and what is wrong Boxhorn almost comes to Mandevillian conclusions. In the last case study, for example, Boxhorn advises to install certain taxes 'not so much under the pretext of public necessity, as under the pretext of correcting manners that are corrupt'.⁴⁰ In the preceding years, Boxhorn tells us, there was a discussion in the States of Holland, who were in desperate need of funds, about imposing a new tax 'upon those who were litigious and apt to go to Law for every Trifle; under the Denomination of reforming Men's Manners, seeing there were so many litigious Suits and Causes daily brought before their Magistrates and Courts of Justice'.⁴¹ The new tax was to be imposed as an extra fine on people who had lost their lawsuit. The new tax, it was argued, would kill two birds with one stone: it would ensure a new source of income for the States of Holland and it would function as a scare tactic to prevent people to go to court 'for every Trifle'; in this way, it would also combat corrupt manners. Despite some opposition the proposal was approved and the new tax imposed.⁴² The outcome (*eventus*) reads: 'In such an abundance of lawsuits these [taxes] were imposed as punishments for those who rashly go to court, although in such an unfairness of men manners can hardly be corrected. However, the commonwealth's treasury profits greatly [from these taxes]. That is to say, although both ends are not obtained, at least one of them is. And perhaps it is in the interest of obtaining the one to not obtain the other.'⁴³ That is, it is 'perhaps' not in the interest of the public treasury that men's corrupt manners are reformed. The reason is obvious enough: if men's corrupt manners are indeed reformed, the result will be less lawsuits, which, on its turn, will mean that the commonwealth will lose a

be punished, when any one prosecutes the same to the detriment of the Government.' Louis XIII had personally attended the siege of La Rochelle. His decision not to grant the rebellious soldiers forgiveness contrasts sharply with his decision to grant it to the equally rebellious citizens of La Rochelle. Alonson Lloyd Moote, *Louis XIII, the Just* (University of California Press; Berkeley, 1989), pp. 194-98.

⁴⁰ Ibidem, LX, p. 296. 'Quomodo imprimis probanda sint & facile admittantur ea vectigalia, quae non tam titulo Necessitatis publicae quam emendandorum, qui corrupti sunt, morum imponuntur.'

⁴¹ Boxhorn, *Arcana Imperii Detecta*, LXVIII, p. 356. Idem, *Disquisitiones politicae*, LX, pp. 296-97. 'Vrgente publica necessitate de novis vectigalibus constituendis superioribus annis est cogitatum. Inter alia quaesitum: An non in tanta multitudine litium & causarum quae vel Magistratibus Vrbanis vel Curiis offeruntur vectigal aliquod à temere litigantibus, titulò corrigendi corrupti Moris, exigendum videretur?'

⁴² These taxes were levied as early as 1596. *Ordonnantie vanden Staten van Hollant ende West-Vrieslant, inhondende!* sekere peynen ofte impositie tot laste vanden gheenen die eenighe onghefondeerde processen jnstituieren ofte vervolghen (Aelbrecht Hendrickszoon; The Hague, 1596). In the seventeenth century the States of Holland frequently sold the right to levy these taxes by auction.

⁴³ Boxhorn, *Disquisitiones politicae*, LX, p. 300. 'In tanta litium frequentia haec veluti poena temere litigantibus imposita, licet in tanta hominum iniquitate vix corrigantur mores: admodum tamen Reipublicae aerium adjuvatur. Licet enim non uterque finis, alter saltem obtinetur; & alterius obtinendi forsan interest, alterum non obtineri.'

profitable source of income. What Boxhorn is suggesting, at least in this case, is that private vices can also benefit the public good.⁴⁴

The overwhelming priority that Boxhorn gives to the well-being of the commonwealth does not mean, however, that he leaves subjects entirely defenceless against princes or magistrates who claim to be acting in the interest of the commonwealth. First of all, Boxhorn holds that the powers of princes can be restricted and their room to play precisely described and laid down in 'eternal laws'. In this way, by passing two new bills, the Venetians had curtailed the powers of the doge and protected their ancient freedom that had been threatened by the doge's aspiration to enlarge his power.⁴⁵ The logic behind such-like measures was that 'princes indeed never lack the ambition to increase what they [already] have. So there must always be a law, as a restraint on the most harmful ambition'.⁴⁶

Second, in extreme cases where even the law fails to protect the subjects there is always the possibility of a 'Just, Prudent and Seasonable Defection from an Unjust and Tyrannical Prince'.⁴⁷ By taking the recent revolt of the Portuguese against king Philip IV of Spain (1605-1665) as case study,⁴⁸ Boxhorn

⁴⁴ The Dutch doctor and writer Bernard Mandeville (1670-1733) had famously argued that men's private vices could lead to public benefits. Bernard Mandeville, *The Fable of the Bees, or Private Vices, Publick Benefits. Containing, Several Discourses, to demonstrate, that Human Frailties ... may be turn'd to the Advantage of the Civil Society* (Printed for J. Roberts; London, 1714).

⁴⁵ The first law decreed that everyone that was found guilty of acting against 'the freedom of the commonwealth and the authority of the senators' (*libertas Reipublicae ac Senatorum autoritas*) would be branded as 'unstable' and 'notorious' (*instabiles ac infames*), and that the same would hold good for his offspring. The second law decreed that everyone who proposed to abolish the first law would be put to death. Boxhorn, *Disquisitiones politicae*, XVII, pp. 78-81. It is not precisely clear to which period in Venice's history Boxhorn is referring to in this case study. After the disastrous expedition (1171-1172) led by the doge Vitale Michiel II (1159-1172) the Venetians had made some important constitutional reforms: the election of the doge was restricted to 11 members selected by and from the Council, a number that was soon increased to count 40. This greatly diminished the power of the people who before this time had played an important role in the election of a new doge; this reform measurement was clearly designed to curtail their influence. In 1268 'a further curtailment of ducal authority' followed. John Julius Norwich, *A History of Venice* (Random House; New York, 1989), pp. 109-10, 165-67. See also Baruch de Spinoza, *Political Treatise*. Translated by Samuel Shirley. Introduction and Notes by Steven Barbone and Lee Rice. Prefatory Essay by Douglas Den Uyl (Hackett Publishing Company; Indianapolis/Cambridge, 2000), VIII.25, p. 107. 'Finally, to ensure the permanence of all the absolutely fundamental laws of the state, it must be ordained that if anyone in the supreme council call into question any fundamental law such as that concerning the extension of command of any general or the reduction of the number of patricians and the like, he is guilty of treason, and not only must he be condemned to death with confiscation of his goods, but some sign of his punishment should be displayed in public as a permanent record of the event.'

⁴⁶ Boxhorn, *Arcana Imperii Detecta*, XXIII, p. 117. 'Princes indeed never want Ambition to increase the Power they are vested in; and therefore a Government ought never to be without a Law, that may serve as a Curb to such injurious Ambition.' Idem, *Disquisitiones politicae*, XVII, p. 81. 'Equidem nunquam deest Principibus ambitio ad augenda ea quae habent. Nunquam igitur deesse Lex debet, frenum nocentissimae ambitionis.'

⁴⁷ Ibidem, II, p. 5. Boxhorn, *Disquisitiones politicae*, III, p. 8. 'De Iustâ, Provida & tempestiva ab iniquo & Tyranno Principe defectione.'

⁴⁸ On December 1, 1640, a large group of dissatisfied Portuguese nobles had raised in armed resistance against their Spanish overseer and had taken over the country. They proclaimed the duke of

explains that 'the most justified cause for defection is when the unjust mastery of others is about to devour the last drops of freedom'.⁴⁹ The Portuguese grandees that had advocated this course of action had rightly foreseen that it was the only way to prevent that the Portuguese would be reduced to the utmost slavery.⁵⁰ Furthermore, since those who contemplate about defection have in fact already defected,⁵¹ the Portuguese had no other option than to pursue their freedom now that the time was ripe.⁵²

Thus, while the overriding importance of the well-being of the commonwealth gives magistrates the right and even the duty to pursue the commonwealth's well-being even at the cost of personal injustice, the law and the possibility of legitimate resistance curtail the indiscriminate abuse of power by magistrates. These two positions, however, are often at odds with each other. For what to do if the well-being of the commonwealth demands the breaking of the eternal laws that have been erected to guard the subjects' freedom? Indeed, is not the whole logic behind the concepts of *salus Reipublicae* or *salus populi* that they legitimate a *jus dominationis* that gives magistrates the power to override such laws in cases of emergency?⁵³ What then should be the guid-

Braganza (1603-1656) as king John IV. The next 25 years Philip IV would try to regain his Portuguese dominions. In 1665, three months before his death, he made a last attempt. His army, however, suffered defeat at Villaviciosa. Three years later, on February 13, 1668, the Junta that Philip IV had left behind to rule the dominions he had bestowed upon his now seven year old son Charles II (1661-1700) recognised in Charles's name Portugal's independence. See Elliott, *Imperial Spain, 1469-1716*, pp. 341-57.

⁴⁹ Boxhorn, *Disquisitiones politicae*, III, p. 15. 'Iustissima defectionis causa est, ubi iniqua aliorum dominatione ad extrema libertatis est devenitum.' Idem, *Arcana Imperii Detecta*, II, p. 12. 'The Cause of a Revolt is very just, when the Liberty of a Country, by the unjust Government of others, is reduced to utmost danger.' In the *Dissertationes politicae de regio Romanorum imperio*, in the dissertation that deals with the reign of Tarquinius Superbus, Boxhorn comes to the same conclusion. 'It is lawful for the nobles and the people to deprive the prince of the power to command and to expell him with force, if his crimes ... would lead without any doubt to the destruction of everyone and the whole commonwealth.' Idem, *Emblemata politica: accedunt dissertationes politicae de Romanorum Imperio et quaedamaliae*, VII.7, p. 229. 'Ergo si intoleranda sint omnibus ejus scelera, & nisi in tempore obviam eatur, in exitum omnium totiusque Reipub. haud dubiè sint exitura, & alia omnia ad flectendum coarcendumque ad meliora Principem nequidquam sint tentata, licere proceribus populoque eum imperio exuere & vi expellere judicamus.'

⁵⁰ Ibidem, p. 9. 'Censuere igitur justissimam esse jam causam ne, ut videbant jam extrema libertatis, tandem sublata omni remedii spe ferre cogerentur extrema servitutis.'

⁵¹ In other words, their opinion no longer unequivocal supported their supreme magistrate, the king; obedience was seizing or had seized to exist.

⁵² Boxhorn, *Disquisitiones politicae*, III, p. 15. 'Et Postremo, deliberasse jam se de defectione ac ideo audere debere: Qui enim deliberant, desciverunt; & in ejusmodi consiliis periculosius est deliberare quàm audere.' The last part of the sentence is a paraphrase of Tacitus, *Agricola*, XV.5. "'... iam ipsos, quod difficillimum fuerit, deliberare. porro in eius modi consiliis periculosius esse deprehendi quam audere.'" "We ourselves have undertaken the most difficult step: we have begun to plan. Besides, it will be more dangerous if we are detected planning in this way than if we dare to act.'" Latin text quoted from Tacitus, *Opera minora*, p. 12. English translation quoted from Tacitus, *Agricola and Germany*, p. 13.

⁵³ Idem, *Institutiones politicae*, I.6.13, p. 71. 'Salus Reipublicae facit, ut jus dominationis justum sit, non quod hactenus & ordinario jure receptum est, sed quod maximè Reipublicae in praesens est salutare, & lex, ac agendi ratio, quantumvis nova, & veterem subvertat, & quibusdam privatis noxia sit, tantò minùs, imò eo ipso nihil iniquitatis habet, quanto in commune plus utilitatis confert. Salus enim

ing principle if tensions arise between the well-being of the commonwealth and the subjects' rights: ancient laws, present-day needs, or expectations about the future?

Past, present, future. The direction of politics

In two specific cases Boxhorn addresses the tensions between the well-being of the commonwealth and the subjects' rights and privileges head on. The first case concerns the siege of Antwerp in 1584-85. During the siege there had been heated debates in the town about who should lead its defence: a new 'extraordinary authority' or, as was customary, the entire town council? In the end those who defended the 'ancient constitution' had won the day: a new 'extraordinary authority', they had pleaded, was against the ancient privileges and a new law to make a new 'extraordinary authority' possible would diminish the legitimacy of the laws already in force. The result was disastrous: without any central steering the town's defenders were no match for the troops of Alexander Farnese (1545-1592), the duke of Parma; the town fell and was plundered by her besiegers.⁵⁴ Boxhorn's conclusion is as harsh as it is clear.

Public privileges should not be taken for granted, when, with the changing of circumstances and times, they can do more harm than good. Thus, to use them continuously and unchanged, is rather stubbornness than prudence. Everything should be adjusted to the circumstances and times. The old order of commanding that is presented in extraordinary circumstances and that is acquired for other circumstances, is, if it is kept without interruption, confusion, not order in the commonwealth.⁵⁵

populi suprema lex esto.' This is at least the way James Steuart read Boxhorn's defence of *jus dominationis*. See Steuart, *Jus Populi Vindicatum*, p. 154.

⁵⁴ For the internal conflicts among the defenders of Antwerp during the siege of 1584-85, see C.E.H.J. Verhoef, *De val van Antwerpen in 1585* (De Vries-Brouwers; Amsterdam/Antwerp, 1985), pp. 21-25.

⁵⁵ Boxhorn, *Disquisitiones politicae*, XXXIII, p. 154. 'Privilegia publica, uti non indulta haberi debent, cum mutata rerum ac temporum conditione nocere magis possunt quam prodesse. In perpetuo igitur & immoto ipsorum usu, non tam prudentia est, quam contumacia. Omnia rebus ac temporibus accommodanda sunt. Vetus Imperii ordo in extraordinariis rebus oblatus, & ad res alias comparatus, si continuo observatur, confusio in Republica est non ordo.' Idem, *Arcana Imperii Detecta*, XX, p. 91. 'Publick Priviledges ought to be esteemed as if they were not in being, when, upon the Change of the Circumstances of Times and Things, they may do more hurt than good; and therefore to use them constantly and without intermission, does not savour so much of Prudence as Obstinacy: All things are to be suited

Likewise, the French king Louis XII (1462-1515), ‘an excellent prince’ (*Princeps optimus*), had taken away the privileges of the University of Paris because the professors and the students had been acting ‘rather bold’.⁵⁶ Although it was always dangerous to take away ancient laws and privileges ‘nevertheless, to tolerate these privileges, although old, [and] once granted’ would ‘gradually destroy the commonwealth, if these privileges are to the detriment of the public’. Princes, Boxhorn teaches us in this case, are not obliged to uphold the ancient laws ‘out of consideration for the authority of their predecessors’ unless ‘these laws preserve the power of command and the public peace’. Thus, ‘when necessity demands so, the well-being of the commonwealth supersedes all privileges and laws’.⁵⁷

Necessity and present-day concerns, then, hold sway over ancient privileges and customs.⁵⁸ From this standpoint it took Boxhorn only a small step to come to a somewhat paradoxical position: decisions should not be made on the basis of past examples, but on the basis of present and future demands. The paradox lies in the fact that he uses historical examples to prove this point.

One historical case study where this comes to the fore concerns Boxhorn’s own place of residence, Leiden. The case study in question teaches the reader that (at a certain moment in time) there was a discussion in Leiden’s town council if it would be beneficial for ‘the commonwealth’ if the town should

to Times and Things. If you constantly observe the old Methods of Government upon extraordinary Occasions, and when Matters do not suit, this will be found not to be the Order but Confusion in Government.’

⁵⁶ Ibidem, XIII, p. 61.

⁵⁷ Ibidem, p. 65. ‘Composita & antiquitus instituta in Republica tollere periculosum. Interim quamquam vetera, quamquam olim concessa, si cum damno publico conjuncta sint, tolerare, sensim Republicam evertit. Itaque praestat interpretande corrigere antiquitus instituta quam tollere. In tollendo enim vis aestimatur & odio est. In interpretando optimus finis praefertur & facile obtinetur. Et prudenter faciunt Principes & Magistratus, qui in omnibus Decretis, seu omnes illa seu singulos concernant in omnem eventum interpretandi sibi servant auctoritatem. Sed & ubi ita poscit necessitas, salus Reipublicae supra Privilegia omnia est & Leges. Denique non aliis servandis Principes sequentes praecedentium auctoritatis respectu obstringuntur, quam quibus Imperium & pax publica conservatur.’ Boxhorn, *Arcana Imperii Detecta*, XVII, p. 81. ‘It’s a dangerous thing to take away old Grants and Institutions from a Body of People, tho’ even to tolerate the same ancient Concessions, when to the detriment of the Publick, by degrees overturns the Government ... But if Necessity requires, the Good of the Government is to be preferred before all Priviledges and Laws whatsoever. Lastly, Succeeding Princes are tied to the observance of no other Acts depending upon the authority of their Predecessors, than those whereby the Government and publick Peace is maintained.’ That human laws could and should be altered if needed (due to necessity, changing circumstances, new vices, etc) was not a new or shocking idea. What was important, however, was who had the authority to change laws and under what circumstances. William J. Bouwsma, *The Waning of the Renaissance, 1550-1640* (Yale University Press; New Haven/London, 1st ed. 2000, 2002), pp. 52-111. See also Lloyd, “Constitutionalism”, p. 266, and Weber, “What a Good Ruler Should Not Do”, pp. 903-4, where Weber holds that the *leges fundamentales* were normally out of the prince’s reach and that it was a typical feature of ‘absolutist’ thinking that laws could be revoked for the common good in the case of an emergency.

⁵⁸ To plea for the removal of privileges from subjects everytime ‘necessity’ demanded such a course of action was a bold move in a province that had rebelled against its sovereign lord because of his violations of his subjects’ ancient privileges.

expand 'and, as a while before, to add a new town to the old one' in order to receive the poor Walloon refugees who 'in recent years' had flocked to Leiden and had sought admittance to the town.⁵⁹ One of the arguments put forward by proponents of a new expansion was that 'experience showed' that the expansion of 'a few years ago' 'had gone very well'. 'So why should they hesitate to follow a just and useful example?'⁶⁰ Those who were against a new expansion argued, amongst others, that 'not all ancestral examples, although they are recommended by their outcome, impose the necessity of approving them. Some of them are such, that they at once both have exhausted themselves and introduced a change of posterity'.⁶¹ The opponents of a new expansion won the day; Leiden was not expanded and 'by so doing they found that they enjoy'd great Peace and Tranquility for the present among them, and greater Security for their Posterity'.⁶²

Past examples, then, do not always merit imitation, all the more since past results do not guarantee future success.⁶³ As the citizens of Trier had replied to their bishop, who had argued in favour of Frenchmen holding administrative offices in their town on the ground that the French had until thus far always behaved correctly, what would guarantee that the French would continue to

⁵⁹ Boxhorn, *Disquisitiones politicae*, XXXVII, p. 168. 'Superioribus annis ex Gallo-Belgicis Provinciis injuriis bellorum, & hostium incursionibus continuo vexatis, plurimi tenuioris nulliusque (ut sic dixerim) fortunae in Bataviam se contulere, ac Lugdunum Batavorum, ob lanificia quae exercentur illic, quibusque illi domi assueverant, imprimis admitti cupivere. Sed Urbs utut maxima, tantae tamen multitudinis recipiendae nimis angusta videbatur. Deliberatum itaque in Urbano Senatu est; An non pmoeria civitatis latius extendere, &, ut paulo ante, novam urbem veteri adstruere, conveniens & pro Repub. esset.' After 1574 Leiden had witnessed an enormous revival, especially thanks to the large stream of immigrants from the Southern Netherlands. In 1611 it was therefore decided to expand the town. Although the number of immigrants smooth down after 1622, in 1642 there were again talks of expanding the town. The main supporters of expansion were the cloth fabricants who needed housing for their workers and room to expand their industry. The town council, however, feared that expansion would have a too big attraction on 'common people' (*gemeen volck*), who would do the economy more harm than good. It was also worried that expanding the town would concentrate too much power in the hands of the textile industry and that expansion would lead to a crash on the housing market. However, in 1644 the town council decided in favour of a small expansion. Van Maanen, "Stadsbeeld en ruimtelijke ordening", pp. 25-27, with quote on p. 26, and Noordam, "Demografische ontwikkelingen", pp. 49-53. The information above suggests that the historical example in this case study can be dated somewhere between 1642 and 1644, before the decision of the Leiden town council to once again expand the town.

⁶⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 169. 'Ea etiam de causa ante annos aliquot auctam nuper Civitatem, optime id cecisise experientiam testari; cur igitur aequum & utile exemplum imitari dubitent?'

⁶¹ *Ibidem*, p. 173. 'Non omnia Majorum Exempla, quamvis usu suo probata imponere probationis necessitatem. Quaedam ex illis talia esse, quae simul & se exhausierint & posterorum mutationem.'

⁶² Boxhorn, *Arcana Imperii Detecta*, XLVI, p. 233.

⁶³ This is not only confined to the *Disquisitiones politicae*. In Boxhorn's history of siege of Breda we find the story that one day Frederik Hendrik had decided to storm the walls, instead of sticking to the hard and tedious work of undermining the town walls, because 'experience had shown that the courage and preserverance of the enemy sooner give way than his fortifications'. However, 'the result did not comply to [his] wish'. The enemy had been prepared, and, after suffering heavy losses, the besiegers were forced to retreat. Boxhorn, *Historia obsidionis Bredae*, p. 116. 'Nonnunquam quoque experientia cognitum, animos saepe hostium & constantiam prius quam opera expugnari ... Sed eventus voto haud respondit.'

do so in the future? The answer goes without saying.⁶⁴ But if past examples are too unreliable to base one's decision upon, what, then, are the alternatives?

One possible answer is already given; present-day concerns or the present condition of a certain situation. But even this is questioned in certain *disquisitiones*. So we read in a case study that deals with the town of Wesel in the duchy of Kleef during the Dutch Revolt 'that of two evils, one should always choose the lesser one. But that should be considered as the lesser evil, not what is only the lesser evil now, but what is also the lesser evil in the future'.⁶⁵ In another case study Boxhorn discredits the (common) people because it is their nature to 'measure the future according to present matters'.⁶⁶

Thus, just as the past is not always a reliable basis for the present, so the present is not always a reliable basis for the future. Boxhorn seems to hint at just that in his discussion of the refusal of the representatives of the States General to restore to the citizens of the Frisian town Bolsward the privileges they had enjoyed before they had put themselves under the auspices of the parties belonging to the Union of Utrecht.⁶⁷ He justifies the refusal of the representatives of the States General with the following argument:

The word ancient and its authority deceives many. Because new matters, which have replaced the ancient ones and that have already been observed for some time, have, if they are in good condition, more authority than those ancient ones. But also those matters that now are

⁶⁴ Boxhorn, *Disquisitiones politicae*, XLVII, pp. 220-22. The result was that it became forbidden for any foreigner to hold an administrative office in the town of Trier.

⁶⁵ *Ibidem*, XLI, pp. 197-98. 'Ex duobus malis minus est eligendum semper, minus autem censi debet, non quod impraesens tantum tale, sed imposterum etiam tale futurum sit.' According to the case study, the Spanish general Francesco de Mendoza (1545-1628) gave the town of Wesel the choice either to pay a certain amount of money or to suffer the billeting of a Spanish garrison. In this case study Boxhorn is probably referring to a period at the end of the sixteenth century. In the autumn of the year 1598 Mendoza was with a strong army in the area of the German Lower-Rhine. In 1599 he tried to take the city of Zaltbommel. The citizens of Wezel thought that they were secure because of their neutral status. Schulten, *Met vliegende vaandels en slaande trom*, pp. 167-68. For the principle 'that of two evils, one should always choose the lesser one', see also Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1109a-1109b [II:9], p. 36. 'For one of the extremes is a greater missing of the mark, the other less so; and since hitting the mean is extremely hard, we must take the next best course, as they say, and choose the lesser of two evils.'

⁶⁶ *Ibidem*, XXXII, pp. 149-50. 'Namque ea fere populi indoles est, ut umbras rerum & Species à rebus plerunque non discernant: ut spes oblatas semper latius interpretentur: ut denique quae à Magistratibus in spem promissa sunt, tanquam certa & confirmata amplectantur; ex praesentibus enim futurum metitur.' The case study concerns the riots of the Parisian mob at the beginning of the French civil wars. The mob had rioted after the Parliament of Paris had decreed that the clergy would be exempted from taxes.

⁶⁷ *Ibidem*, XXXIX, pp. 179-85. Somewhere during the Dutch Revolt the citizens of Bolsward, fearing a possible Spanish occupation, had given up certain of their privileges (among them the important prerogative that they themselves could choose the town magistrates) to the stadholder or the States of Friesland. After the Spanish threat had receded the citizens had demanded that their ancient privileges should be restored to them and rallied against the town magistrates. The States General had sent some representatives to mediate between the two parties.

called ancient, and are demanded back only on the account of their being ancient, were once new, as Tacitus has Claudius say.

This means of course, as Tacitus himself had made clear, that what is new now will likewise grow old too with the passing of time, and, from Boxhorn's standpoint of view, can possibly lose the beneficial effect for which it was originally established.⁶⁸

In others words, what counts in politics is the practical usefulness of a certain measure that will not only sort the right effect in the present, but also, and above all else, in the future. We find this message once more explicitly underlined in a case study that has a specific Dutch ring to it. Inquiry 57 deals with the policy of Philip II towards his Dutch subjects in the first years of the Dutch Revolt. In that period one of the most important questions that had been brought up for discussion in the secret council of Philip II was what would be the best way of dealing with the revolts in the Netherlands. While some had pleaded for a mild policy, arguing that this was more in agreement with the 'freedom-loving' nature of Philip's Dutch subjects, the duke of Alva, had fiercely opposed such a policy.⁶⁹ He argued that the Dutch were trying to depose of their prince under 'the pretext of freedom', and he pointed to the lack of cooperation from the local Dutch gentry to explain why until thus far Philip's harsh policy had failed to bring success.⁷⁰ If the king would back

⁶⁸ Ibidem, pp. 184-85. 'Fallit plerosque antiquitatis autoritas & nomen. Nam nova, quae in veterum locum substituta & jam aliquandiu observata sunt, si bene se habeant, majoris sunt, quam vetera illa autoritatis. Sed & quae nunc antiqua dicuntur, & non alio titulo quam isto repetuntur, aliquando fuere nova, sicut ille apud Tacitum est locutus.' Boxhorn, *Arcana Imperii Detecta*, XLVII, p. 240. 'The Authority and Name of Antiquity deceives many; for new Institutions, which are substituted in the room of old ones, and now have for some time been observed, if they do well, are of greater Authority than those old ones. But for those which are called Antique, and have no other Foundation than that, they were once new, as Tacitus says.' Reference to Tacitus, *The Annals*, XI.24. "'omnia, patres conscripti, quae nunc vetustissima creduntur, nova fuere: plebeii magistratus post patricos, Latini post plebeios, ceterarum Italiae gentium post Latinos. inveterasset hoc quoque, et quod hodie exemplis tuemur, inter exempla erit.'" "Everything, conscript fathers, which is now believed most olden was new: plebeian magistrates came after patrician, Latin after plebeian, those of the other peoples of Italy after the Latin. This too will grow old, and what today we defend by examples will be among the examples.'" Latin text quoted from Tacitus, *Annalium ab excessu divi Augusti libri*, XI.24. English translation quoted from Tacitus, *The Annals*, XI.24.7, p. 208. The sentence is part of the famous speech that the emperor Claudius (10 BC-54) addressed to the Roman Senate in favour of granting Gauls 'the prerogative of acquiring honors in the City'. See Tacitus, *The Annals*, XI.23-25, pp. 206-8, with quote on p. 206. See also Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I.8, p. 106. Andrew Lintott has pointed out that already in the time of Cicero it had been a commonplace to argue that the laws and the *mos majorum* had to be constantly accommodated to the needs of time. Lintott, *The Constitution of the Roman Republic*, p. 5.

⁶⁹ Ibidem, LVII, p. 272. 'Eam indolem Belgarum Gentis esse, un non nisi & salva libertate & molli imperio in obsequio possit contineri. Optimam vero esse illam Imperii rationem, quae moribus & imperio subditorum, quantum licet, est accommodata.' See also Boxhorn's opinion on the best form of government. Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, II.1.4, p. 258. 'Utique enim, ut generatim dicam, quod sentio, ea optima censenda, quae ad ingenia suorum et commoda, maximè est comparata.'

⁷⁰ Ibidem. 'Fateri se, indolis gentis habendam esse rationem; jam autem eam Belgarum specie ac praetextu Libertatis in licentiam & exuenda Principum Imperia pronam esse ac proclivem.'

down now, Alva continued, he would lose his authority; only through violence could the king hope to restore the Netherlands to its original state of obedience.

Philip II, as we all know, chose to follow the advice of the duke of Alva and lost a part of his Dutch dominions.

And if anyone should ask me why this is so, I may come up with no other reason, than that that advice of Alva could be more easily supported with reasons during deliberations, than that it could be carried out effectively in this state of affairs and times. Thus, advices concerning public matters should not only be weight simply according to [their] reasons, but should also be weight seriously according to the future possibility or impossibility of carrying them out.⁷¹

In the *Institutiones politicae* Boxhorn had explained that to find out what is possible or impossible in this or that situation demanded of the policy maker that he was well informed about the local circumstances, the people's character, and the commonwealth's institutions. It is here where history, as a methodological tool of investigation, plays a crucial role. Then, after acquiring this knowledge, he should let his political decisions be guided by it; 'everything should be adjusted to the circumstances and times.'⁷² Philip II had failed to do so, for he underestimated the Dutch zeal to protect their freedom, a mistake that cost him dearly.⁷³

In this sense, then, the *Disquisitiones politicae* gives a firm expression to what Boxhorn also expounds in the first chapter of the *Institutiones politicae*:

⁷¹ Ibidem, p. 274. 'Cujus rei si quis ex me causam quaeret, non aliam attulerim, quam quod hoc Albani consilium facilius inter deliberandum rationibus probari poterat, quam hoc rerum ac temporum statu executioni utiliter mandari. Publica consilia igitur non ex rationibus simpliciter; sed ex futura etiam executione possibili aut impossibili expendenda serio sunt.' Boxhorn, *Arcana Imperii Detecta*, LXV, p. 338. '... the reason whereof, if any should ask me, I should give no other than this; That it was an easier matter in a Debate to approve of this advice of the Duke of Alva, and the Reasons thereof, than in that state of Time and Things, to put the same purpose in execution; thereof publick Councils are not simply to be weighed by the Reasons given for them, but the possibility or impossibility of the future execution of them ought seriously to be considered.' For the discussions in the secret council of Philip II during the first years of the Dutch Revolt, see Geoffrey Parker, *The Grand Strategy of Philip II* (Yale University Press; New Haven/London, 1st ed. 1998, 2000), pp. 115-46, and Koenigsberger, *Monarchies, States Generals and Parliaments*, pp. 216-24.

⁷² Ibidem, XXXIII, p. 154. 'Omnia rebus ac temporibus accommodanda sunt.'

⁷³ For a more positive verdict on Philip's decision-making capacities, see Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I.1, p. 6. 'Prout itaque ingenia, & tempora patiuntur, ita in usu scientia mutari debet; In ingeniiis respiciendum, ut volentibus imperia imponantur & illa quae efficere possint: In tempore maxime ad futura respiciendum. Quâ arte excelluit Philippus II. Hispaniarum Rex, qui omnia sua consilia ad futurum tempus dirigebat.' In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries Philip II's *prudencia* had become almost proverbial.

that political science has two sides, a theoretical one and a practical one, and that the first is subordinated to the last. We might even go as far as to say that each work represents one of the two sides of the *scientia politica*: while in the *Institutiones politicae* Boxhorn followed the more theoretical side of politics, in the *Disquisitiones politicae* he took up and explained the more practical side.

What gives the *Disquisitiones politicae* its distinctive mark is that Boxhorn's explanation of the practical side of politics did not restrict itself to an appeal to imitate the past slavishly. On the contrary! Although Boxhorn, just like Machiavelli had done before him, used historical examples to teach his students what kind of action was needed in this or that situation, his constant critique on those who wanted to protect or reinstall ancient laws or customs just because they were ancient and his warning to follow ancient examples, even if they had been successful in the past, shows that he, in opposition to Machiavelli, shared the assumption of Guicciardini that 'every historical event was unique, and that each maxim must be modified by present circumstances before it was applied'.⁷⁴ Indeed, Boxhorn's very questioning of the value of past experiences undermines the whole concept of *imitatio* that rests upon the assumption that because there is no real difference between the past and the present (*similitudo temporum*) and that because human behaviour is consistent, the past could and should be imitated. In chapter 7 we have already seen that Boxhorn's historical thought, centred as it is on explaining the causes and consequences of changes, does not easily match with this line of reasoning.⁷⁵ It is even harder to reconcile with Boxhorn's standpoint that nothing remains fixed and that everything is liable to changes. Changes, moreover, as the *Disquisitiones politicae* makes clear, that are not always the same.⁷⁶ And that is of

⁷⁴ Salmon, "Stoicism and Roman Example", p. 211. Machiavelli, for example, believed that 'in order for a religion or a republic to endure, it has to be taken back frequently toward its origins' (*Discorsi*, III.1, p. 259), a theory that is closely connected to another principle Machiavelli adhered to, namely that 'men who are born in a country conform more or less to the same nature for all time' (*Discorsi*, III.43, p. 370). For the difference between Machiavelli's and Guicciardini's approach to history and politics, see chapter 2 of this thesis.

⁷⁵ This seems to contradict with the praise Boxhorn gives to history for providing men with 'precepts' that they could follow. The paradox can be explained by pointing out that Boxhorn adhered to the apparent equally paradoxical view that historical examples taught men that men should be very careful in following them and that decisions should not be made on the basis of past examples, but on the basis of present and future demands. We should also not forget that Boxhorn praised history for its imitational value in an inaugural oration which he held after he had been given the task of holding public lectures on history. Thus, the rhetorical aspect of this praise should be taken into account.

⁷⁶ Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, I.16.1, p. 251. 'Equidem rerum omnium humanarum, aeterna quadam lege, quaecunque, optimâ licet ratione instituta, & confirmata, tandem aut mutantur, aut evertuntur, quod perinde in Rebuspublicis locum habet, quarum quaedam aut mutationes aut eversiones sunt.' Idem, "Oratio de Eversionibus Rerumpub. et Earum caussis", pp. 1-2. 'Ita agitur cum rebus humanis ut occulto quodam naturae instinctu immutentur. Orbis Fabula est, in qua personam, & accipit homo, & deponit; donec veram absolvat. Abeunt quippe omnia in hunc nascendi et pereundi gyrum. Longaevum aliquid in hac machina nihil aeternum.'

course exactly why Boxhorn recommends that ‘everything should be adjusted to the circumstances and times’.⁷⁷

In this way *historia* had not only become the policy maker’s most important methodological tool, without which he was unlikely to come to the right conclusions, and thus to sort the effect he wanted, but also his most important guiding principle. For since everything was liable to change, and change happened frequently, the policy maker had to investigate ‘the circumstances and times’ each time a new case presented itself. Even the people’s character, that most stable thought of feature of human life, could change.⁷⁸ Politics, then, was forced by its subject matter, men living together in organised communities in the continuum of past, present and future, to be a dynamic scientific discipline, that constantly needed to be updated by new fact material. With Boxhorn, politics had become an empirical, historical study much in the line as Hermann Conring and later Samuel Pufendorf studied it.⁷⁹ As the *Institutiones politicae* shows, Boxhorn believed that the *politica* had an important theoretical side, but that in the end this side should always have to give way to the demands of the circumstances and times, the more so because Boxhorn believed that even the categories and the ideas according to which men organise their thinking, that is, human reason and metaphysical theories, are also circumstantial and temporal, as I will show in the conclusion of this chapter.

‘Times change and we change with them’

In chapter 6 we have seen that Boxhorn praised the French philosopher René Descartes for setting up, ‘by his wit and experiments’, ‘a new and true way of Philosophizing’. According to Boxhorn, the reason Descartes had come up with a new philosophy was because the Frenchman had not been ‘satisfied with those things that were ancient, for their antiquity; nor did those that were modern dissatisfy by reason of their novelty for he was sensible

⁷⁷ The consequences of Boxhorn’s denial of a *similitudo temporum* for the interpretation of the *Disquisitiones politicae* are not quite understood by Harm Wansink. See Wansink, *Politieke wetenschappen aan de Leidse universiteit*, pp. 75-79.

⁷⁸ See chapter 7.

⁷⁹ These developments were already underway in the works of Arniseaeus and formed a central part of the *politica* genre, but got a new importance and were brought to a greater height, first by Conring, and later by Pufendorf. For Arniseaeus, see Dreitzel, *Protestantischer Aristotelismus und absoluter Staat*, pp. 86-87, 97-98, 112, 125, 130-32. For Conring, see Hammerstein, “Die Historie bei Conring”, pp. 226-27, and Dreitzel, “Hermann Conring und die Politische Wissenschaft seiner Zeit”, pp. 156-57. For Pufendorf, see Dufour, “Pufendorf”, pp. 584-85; Behme, *Samuel Pufendorf: Naturrecht und Staat*, p. 169; Von Friedeburg and Seidler, “The Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation”, pp. 167-68.

that what is now old was once new, and what is now new will in process of time become old'. Yet, as Boxhorn concluded, despite all the possible merits Descartes's new philosophy might possess it would also, after having lasted for a while, 'in time grow old'.

The resemblance to what Boxhorn had said in the *Disquisitiones politicae* about defending ancient laws just because they were old is evident.⁸⁰ In the epitome of Descartes's life we see the same logic that Boxhorn used to defend the necessity of adapting to new circumstances applied to the realm of science and ideas, which were just like the words that expressed them, the languages that transferred them, and the customs that formed them likely to change as time goes by and circumstances change.⁸¹ As his motto in the *Metamorphosis Anglorum* makes clear, 'times change and we change with them'.⁸² Boxhorn's historical and political works show that he believed this to be true for all aspects of human life. Like Bodin, for example, Boxhorn denies that even commonwealths will last forever.

Even to commonwealths thus organised and secured both at home and abroad, it cannot be possible to ascribe to them a certain eternity. So what remains is to end this first book [i.e. of the *Institutiones politicae*-JN] with the end and finish which generally is to want to befall all forms of command. It is indeed a characteristic of all human affairs, by some eternal law, that all matters, even if they are organised and secured in the best manner, eventually are changed or destroyed. Likewise happens to commonwealths, of which some are changed and others destroyed.⁸³

⁸⁰ In both the epitome and the *Disquisitiones politicae* (XXXIX) Boxhorn alludes to the same passage in Tacitus's *Annals* (XI.24.7, quoted in footnote 68 above) to make his point.

⁸¹ This, however, not in a Pythagorean cyclic way of movement. Boxhorn speaks here of a 'new way of Philosophizing' in the sense that it was a way of philosophising that had not been conducted before. For a nice example of how Boxhorn believed that circumstances influenced language, see his letter to Pontanus and Scriverius of April 1632, in which he deplores the loss 'of the splendor of the Roman language' after the loss of the *res publica* (a very Tacitean topic; see Tacitus, *Dialogus de oratoribus*). 'Quò altius, Viri Clarissimi, in populi Romani historiam penetra, eò longius, à pristino felicitatis flore illam terrarum, gentiumque Deam descivisse comperior. Nempe raro tam felicia gentibus fata sunt, ut in eodem statu tranquillae perdurent. Florentes populorum res fere cum singulis saeculis convertuntur. Praeter enim infinita alia, quae quotidie experimur, naturales quaedam imperiorum conversiones sunt, ut divinus Plato existimavit. Ex quo enim Bruti, Scipiones, Valerii, Marii, & praeclarae ejusmodi animae in Republica Romana defuere, praestantia ingenia non illuxere. Semel dicam: cum re Romana etiam lingua defecit, quae quo longo ab Augusti aevo decessit, eò magis splendorem amisit.' Boxhorn, *Epistolae et poemata*, pp. 21-22.

⁸² Boxhorn, *Metamorphosis Anglorum*, p. 274. 'Tempora mutantur et nos mutamur in illis.'

⁸³ Idem, *Institutiones politicae*, I.16.1, p. 251. 'Rebuspublicis constitutis ita, & domi forisque confirmatis, neque aeternitatem quandam liceat polliceri. Restat igitur, ut libro primo imponat finem finis & exitus, qui fere omnium imperiorum esse consueverit. Equidem rerum omnium humanarum, aeterna quadam lege, quaecunque, optimâ licet ratione instituta, & confirmata, tandem aut mutantur, aut ever-

The world, as described by Boxhorn in his younger days, was a play, where 'all things are lost in a cycle of growth and decay', in which 'nothing of great age is eternal'. Everything ends, everything changes; the only thing that does not seem to be exposed to change is the eternal existence of change itself.

Boxhorn's epitome of Descartes's life shows that he thought that even philosophies and human ideas are conditional and temporal. To understand them historically, as Boxhorn would have had it, we would have to trace their 'origins', and from there follow their 'changes' as they pass through time, adjusting themselves constantly to the 'circumstances and times'.⁸⁴ We would have to understand them in their (always changing) contexts.⁸⁵ As Hornius made clear in his preface to the *Institutiones politicae*, this is exactly how we should interpret Boxhorn's own main political work, for Boxhorn had 'adapted his Instructions to the condition of the Dutch Republic; elsewhere there exists another method'.⁸⁶ Boxhorn, then, followed a logic that we now take for granted: ideas about human life, the way it should be organised within a structured environment, the commonwealth, and maybe even the principles that underlie it, are, much like any other aspect of human life, historical products, and to understand them correctly we have to understand them for what they are: the outcomes of certain 'circumstances and times'.

tuntur, quod perinde in Rebuspublicis locum habet, quarum quaedam aut mutationes aut eversionses sunt.' See Bodin, *The Six Bookes of a Commonweale*, IV.1.i-k, p. 406. 'So the Commonweale having taken beginning if it well rooted and grounded, first assureth it selfe against al external force, and then against the inward diseases of it self, and so little & little gathering strength groweth vp vntill it be come to the full perfection of it selfe: which wee may call the Flourishing estate thereof; which cannot be of any long continuance, by reason of the chaunges of worldly things, which are so mutable and vncertaine, as that the greatest Commonweales oftentimes fall euen all at once with the weight of themselves ...'

For this theme Boxhorn relies heavily on Plato. The key passage is Plato, *Republic*, 546a, p. 280, where Plato comments on the degeneration of his ideal political system. 'Hard though it may be for a community with this structure to undergo change, yet everything that is born must die, and so even this kind of structure will not last for ever, but will fall apart.' After which follows Plato's famous theory of the cyclic change of the forms of government that was later picked up and popularised by Polybius. Polybius, *The Rise of the Roman Empire*, VI.3-9.

⁸⁴ See chapter 7.

⁸⁵ Just likes Thomas Hobbes, then, Boxhorn was aware that ideas were influenced by their context. See Hobbes, *Leviathan*, pp. 149-50. 'In these western parts of the world, we are made to receive our opinions concerning the Institution, and Rights of Common-wealths, from Aristotle, Cicero, and other men, Greeks and Romanes, that living under Popular States, derived those Rights, not from the Principles of Nature, but ... out of the Practise of their own Common-wealths, which were Popular; ... And because the Athenians were taught, ... that they were Free-men, and all that lived under Monarchy were slaves; therefore Aristotle puts it down in his *Politiques*, (*lib.6.cap.2.*) *In democracy, Liberty is to be supposed: for 'tis commonly held, that no man is Free in any other Government.*' Likewise, Boxhorn deemed Greek and Roman knowledge imperfect because the ancient Greeks and Romans did not have any knowledge of such foreign regions as the Americas and the Indies. Boxhorn, "Dedication to the States of Holland", in idem, *Historia universalis*, iv. 'Qualencunque opus hoc Vestrum facere, Dare vobis, Dicare ac Dedicare, Patres, nunc adeo; pro [aeternitate-JN] quorum Imperii, quod per inaccessas olim Graecis Romanisque nec visitatas gentes, aut incognitas, longe lateque, & majoribus indies incrementis, se exporrigit ac diffundit.'

⁸⁶ Hornius, "Preface to the reader", ii. 'Sicut etiam ipse Boxhornius suas Institutiones ad statum Reipublicae Belgicae composuit; alibi alia ratio est.'

That all aspects of human life are conditional and temporal also has consequences for the sciences. In the *Antwoord* Boxhorn spells them out. 'In unnecessary changes of commonwealths [innovations] are detestable and horrible; in sciences, innovations, which are based on the truth, are always necessary.'⁸⁷ Here Boxhorn agrees with Francis Bacon, the English philosopher and statesman, who was much praised in the Dutch Republic for his scientific empiricism.⁸⁸ In his essay on innovations Bacon had warned his readers that 'he that will not apply New Remedies, must expect New Evils: For Time is the greatest *Innovatour*: And if Time, of course, alter Things to the worse, and Wisdome, and Counsell shall not alther them to the better, what shall be the end?'. Bacon had acknowledged that 'if Time stood still' custom should be preferred to 'New Things'. However, time 'moveth so round that a Froward Retention of Custome, is as Turbulent a Thing, as an *Innovation*: And they that Reverence too much Old Times, are but a score to the New'.⁸⁹ As *Novum Organum* (*New Instrument*), the title of the book, in which he, against the great authority of ancient times, Aristotle, set forth his scientific method to acquire true knowledge about natural phenomena, reveals, Bacon believed that the sciences of his days had a need for 'New Remedies'.

But Bacon also preached caution; innovations should not be introduced too hasty but by degrees, especially in the fields of politics, where, if possible, they should be eschewed all together. 'It is good also, not to try Experiments in States; Expect the Necessity be Urgent, or the utility Evident: And well to beware, that it be the Reformation, that draweth on the Change; And not the desire of Change, that pretendeth the Reformation.'⁹⁰ If Bacon felt that change was sometimes necessary and unavoidable, he equally made it clear that it was not something to be desired. For despite all its possible advantages, change was potentially dangerous, a danger Bacon tried to neutralise with the words from Ecclesiastes that 'There is no New Thing upon the Earth'.⁹¹

⁸⁷ Boxhorn, *Antwoord*, pp. 20-21. 'Ende of het als schoon waer was, dat dese onse meeninghe verdiende de naem van nieuwigheit, soude de waerheit des nieuwigheits wille moeten swichten? Geensins. My behaeght hier wonderlijck wel, het gene ick lese by die deftige ende statige schrijver, Cornelius Tacitus; *Quae nunc nova sunt, aliquando erunt antiqua; & quae nunc antiqua, aliquando fuerunt nova*: Dat is; het gene nu nieuw is, sal oudt werden, ende het gene nu oudt is, was eenmaal nieuw. Nieuwigheden mogen ons dan hier niet rechtelijck te last geleght werden. In onnoodige veranderingen van Republijcken zijn [nieuwigheden-JN] verfoeijelijck ende afgrijselijck; in wetenschappen zijn altydt noodigh nieuwigheden, die op de waerheit gegrondevest zijn.' Once again, Boxhorn refers to Tacitus, *The Annals*, XI.24.7, to support his view.

⁸⁸ Frijhoff and Spies, *Hard-Won Unity*, p. 288.

⁸⁹ Francis Bacon, "Of Innovations", in idem, *The Essayes or Counsels, Civill and Morall*. Edited with Introduction, Notes and Commentary by Michael Kiernan (Clarendon Press; Oxford, 2000), XXIII, pp. 75-76.

⁹⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 76.

⁹¹ Francis Bacon, "Of the Vicissitude of Things", in idem, *The Essayes or Counsels, Civill and Morall*, LVIII, pp. 172-76. In this essay Bacon adheres to the theory of matters (e.g. the condition of states or learning) moving according to a cycle of birth, growth, and decay.

Bacon was not alone in his fear of change. Most people living in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, even they who just like him and Boxhorn acknowledged the importance of time and change, were deeply worried about the disruptive effects of change.⁹² To counter its potential danger, many tried to diminish the importance of change by emphasising the ‘immutability’ and ‘continuity’ of things. Both Vossius and Heereboord adopted this technique.⁹³ Boxhorn, however, did not. This is not to say that Boxhorn denied the dangerous potential change carried with it. On the contrary, as his historical works testify, Boxhorn was well aware of the havoc change could create, especially in the field of politics and religion. He therefore agreed with Tacitus that ‘frequent changes were not useful’.⁹⁴

But Boxhorn also believed that, as time goes on, the occurrence of change was inevitable. Almost everything on earth was temporal and subjected to change. Sooner or later something ‘new’ was bound to show up. For Boxhorn the question was not so much how to stop change from happening or how to diminish its importance, but how to best deal with it when it occurred, even if the change in question involved or led to matters previously unknown, as in the case of the discovery of the Americas by the Europeans at the end of the fifteenth century. In a world of change adaptation to the changing circumstances of time becomes crucial and, in the realm of politics, should even determine the forms of government.

Because usually it so happens in human affairs that, as the nature of the circumstances changes, one and the same way of commanding, at one time rightly to be praised, must then rightly be detested, it seems. That is why the commonwealth [of Rome-JN], which was exhausted by civil dissensions, was bound to have first kings, then the command of the Senate and the people, and finally again the command of one ruler.⁹⁵

⁹² See for this theme Bouwsma, *The Waning of the Renaissance*, chapters 4-8 and 12-15.

⁹³ See chapters 3 and 6.

⁹⁴ Tacitus, *The Annals*, XII.11.3; Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, II.4, p. 304; idem, *Emblemata politica: accedunt dissertationes politicae de Romanorum Imperio et quaedamaliae*, I.1, p. 151, and XIV.9, p. 326; idem, “De Veteri Achaeorum Republica”, 4, p. 570; idem, *De majestate*, p. 5.

⁹⁵ Boxhorn, *Emblemata politica: accedunt dissertationes politicae de Romanorum Imperio et quaedamaliae*, XV.5, p. 332. ‘Ita enim fere fit in rebus humanis, ut, pro diversa temporum conditione, una atque eadem imperandi ratio, laudanda nonnunquam, subinde detestanda merito videatur. Primo ergo Reges, dein Senatus & populi, tandem iterum unius principis imperium fatigatae discordiis civilibus Reip. debebantur.’ See also *ibidem*, I.1, p. 140. ‘Ex quo apertum est, quae Reipub. forma melior sit, frustra plerumque disputari. Quaevis enim optima & longè caeteris praeferenda, quae suorum ingenii est attemperata. Quare & post exactos Reges, Senatus & Populi, post certamina populi & potentiorum, Caesarum Imperium Romanis maximè convenisse censendum est.’

In the field of science and philosophy the fear of change or innovations should not be the guiding principle. For Boxhorn that certainly was not the case. While in the opinion of many of his contemporaries it was the introduction of innovations into the field of philosophy that Descartes was guilty of, it was precisely for that particular reason that Boxhorn admired the Frenchman.⁹⁶ For just as the policy maker, so the scholar has to constantly adjust himself, his ideas, and his methods to new circumstances, always taking into account new discoveries and data, questioning and discussing how these relate to knowledge already received and accepted, and then, after carefully examining all the pro and cons, to decide if he will stick to what is old and familiar, but maybe outdated, wrong or even harmful, or if he will trot a new and unknown path that could sort more effect and might bring him closer to the truth. Whatever the decision, both the policy maker and the scholar have to give account to the past and to take care of the present, but always with keeping one of their eyes on the future. Boxhorn had turned *politica*, and most other sciences, into *historia*.

⁹⁶ See chapter 6.

Chapter 10

Conclusion

At the beginning of our investigation we had formulated two goals. Our primary goal was to unearth Boxhorn's historical and political thought, or at least to discover and present their most central features. Our secondary goal was to try, on the basis of the results of our investigation, to make some more general observations about the nature and development of Dutch historical and political thought in the seventeenth century. Now that we have reached the end of our investigation it is time to draw some conclusions from all the information we have gathered and to place Boxhorn's historical and political thought in the larger framework of the general developments we have sketched in the introduction.

We will begin on the personal level. Boxhorn was the scion of a family of ministers. Many of his kinsmen, including his father and his twin brother Hendrik, wore the robe of the Reformed church. His grandfather Hendrik Boxhorn was one of the leading figures in the Calvinist offensive against Catholicism at Breda, while his patron Heinsius belonged to the orthodox stream of Dutch Calvinism. Yet despite his orthodox Calvinist background, Boxhorn's moderate position in social issues suggests that he was not a supporter of the efforts of the orthodox Calvinists to reform Dutch society along godly lines. Boxhorn did believe that ministers had something to say about the morals of the people, but our analysis of the *Nederlantsche historie* suggests that he wanted them to stay out of the political realm. If on religious questions Boxhorn belonged to the orthodox camp within Dutch Calvinism, his subordination of religious concerns to 'political' concerns in the *Institutiones politicae* would certainly not have gone down well with the majority of the orthodox Calvinists. Whatever Boxhorn's personal religious convictions may have been, his political ideas, at least with regard to religion and morality, were not those of a Counter-Remonstrant.

Boxhorn was a refugee from Brabant in the Southern Netherlands who spent almost his entire adult life at Leiden, which was one of the biggest commercial towns in the province of Holland. He also had close ties with Zeeland; his father-in-law was a *regent* from Middelburg, which was one of the main commercial maritime centers of the Dutch Republic. In Boxhorn's works these three geographical backgrounds – Brabant, Holland, and Zeeland – all come to the fore. Like many refugees from Brabant and Flanders, but also like

many people from Zeeland and Leiden, Boxhorn was a supporter of the war against Spain.¹ Why he supported the war cannot be determined for certain. Boxhorn's motives could have been personal, religious, professional, political, economic, or historical. Probably it was some combination of all six of them.²

While Boxhorn's pro-war stand aligned him with the refugees from Brabant and the people from Zeeland, his defence of Dutch maritime activities put him in the camp of the fishermen and merchants of Holland and Zeeland. The importance of Dutch maritime activities was obvious to Boxhorn. The fishing industry provided the Dutch with jobs and income; the VOC and WIC brought the Dutch great riches. The economic interests involved in Dutch maritime activities might have concerned Boxhorn's immediate circle of family and friends, and perhaps also Boxhorn himself.³ But although private interests may have been involved, Boxhorn's defence of Dutch maritime activities is best understood if we connect it to his stand on war. To wage war, either defensive or offensive, costs money. As Boxhorn knew, the personal wealth of subjects constituted an important source of revenue for the public authorities, which they could use to finance the commonwealth's war efforts. The more wealth subjects possessed, the larger the potential reservoir that public authorities could tap to provide for the commonwealth's needs. In short: in Boxhorn's eyes a pro-fishing and pro-commerce policy benefitted a pro-war policy, because economic prosperity strengthened the military prowess of the Dutch Republic. This view on the relationship between economics and Dutch foreign policy puts Boxhorn at odds with Pieter de la Court, who favoured peace because he believed that war was harmful for Holland and its maritime interests.⁴ Thus, while Boxhorn placed

¹ The fact that in 1648 Boxhorn held an oration in which he celebrated the peace of Münster seems to undermine this conclusion. However, the fact that Boxhorn held this oration can be explained by pointing out that Boxhorn, as a professor of eloquence at Leiden University, could hardly openly voice opposition against a peace that had the backing of the majority of the States of Holland, who, 'when it came to the crunch, were actually the highest authority' as far as Leiden University was concerned. Sluijter, *Tot circaet, vermeerderinge ende heerlyckmaeckinge der universiteyt*', p. 51. To this we can add that the oration of 1648 was not only a eulogy on peace; in the oration Boxhorn also made clear that the peace the Dutch had won in 1648 was not without its dangers.

² Personal: perhaps Boxhorn wanted revenge on the Spanish foe, who had forced him to leave Breda. Religious: Boxhorn came from an orthodox Calvinist background. He may have seen the war against Spain as a holy or religious war to free the Southern Netherlands and the true believers from Catholicism. Professional: as mentioned before, it was Boxhorn's duty as a (extra)ordinary professor of eloquence to exalt Dutch war efforts and to legitimise or at least to excuse Dutch actions. Political: Boxhorn saw the war as an attempt to free his fellow-countrymen from the tyranny of Spain. Economic: as Boxhorn made clear in the *Theatrum* and the *Historia obsidionis Bredae*, the war against the enemy, at least at sea, benefitted both the private Dutch individual and the commonwealth. Historical: Boxhorn believed that the Northern and Southern Netherlands were once a political unity. Seen from this perspective, the war was an effort to restore this unity.

³ It is possible, for example, that Boxhorn held shares in the WIC. According to Josua van Iperen, Boxhorn's father-in-law Pieter Duvelaar was a director of the WIC. Van Iperen, *Historische redenvoering*, p. 178.

⁴ See V.D.H., *Interest van Holland*, pp. 63-65.

Dutch economic interests in the service of Dutch foreign policy, Pieter adapted Dutch foreign policy to serve the economic interests of the province of Holland.

What Boxhorn did have in common with Pieter de la Court was his positive view on religious toleration. Boxhorn believed that religious toleration led to population growth and appreciation of the public authorities, while Pieter held that 'religious freedom and toleration were "powerful means to preserve many inhabitants in Holland, and allure foreigners to dwell among us"'.⁵ However, his view on religious toleration set Boxhorn apart from the majority of the people in Zeeland, where, for example, the town council of Middelburg, the province's biggest town and most important commercial center, did not follow 'a policy of tolerance' like Amsterdam; Middelburg remained 'strictly Reformed'.⁶ In sum, Boxhorn combined in his person the ideas of the refugee from Brabant, of the entrepreneur from Zeeland, and of the 'tolerant' merchant from Holland.

Considering Boxhorn's personal background it is not surprising to see that he was a 'Union man'. Boxhorn does not seem to have questioned the principal of provincial sovereignty, but when push came to shovel he seems to have favoured the common good of the Union above the common good of the individual provinces. Boxhorn did not see these two common goods as diametrically opposed. Although he was aware that 'the good of the common Union' and 'the good of each particular province' were two distinctive matters and that the interests of the Union could differ with the interests of the individual provinces, Boxhorn probably believed that in the end self-interest would keep the seven united Dutch provinces together.

Boxhorn's works and letters do not reveal any strong political allegiance to either the Orangists or the States Party. He was certainly not a supporter of the States Party; Boxhorn did not oppose the princes of Orange nor did he object to the office of stadholder. His sympathies seem to have lied with the Orangists, of whom many were supporters of the war with Spain, just like Boxhorn. Besides this point and the high regard Boxhorn had for the efforts of the princes of Orange in the Dutch war against the king of Spain, Boxhorn might also have favoured the side of the Orangists out of self-interest. For the greatest part of Boxhorn's life the prince of Orange was the most influential man in the Dutch Republic. His influence and patronage were powerful tools to help a person or his family and friends to move up in the world. Boxhorn clearly sought the patronage of the prince of Orange, although not directly, but indirectly, through Constantijn Huygens. Boxhorn's attempts were only half succesful. His father-

⁵ Van Gelderen, "The Low Countries", p. 407.

⁶ Kluiver, *De souvereine en independente staat Zeeland*, p. 23.

in-law got appointed as burgomaster of Middelburg, but only once. Boxhorn himself received 500 guilders from Frederik Hendrik for his history on the siege of Breda, but he failed to become appointed as the prince's historiographer.⁷

However, even if, like we have said in chapter 3, Boxhorn can more easily be rated among the Orangists than among the supporters of the States Party, we should not forget that he also believed that the authority of a stadholder was checked and that the prerogatives of the captain-general, the other office the princes of Orange usually occupied, were restricted. Boxhorn never questioned the fact that supreme power in the Dutch Republic rested with the provincial States and the States General. Furthermore, in the *Commentariolus* he also implicitly opposed to Frederik Hendrik's attempt to acquire all the provincial stadholderates in the Dutch Republic. In the Dutch case the concentration of power, be it in the hands of the States General or in those of the princes of Orange, could not count on Boxhorn's approval. Boxhorn accepted the fragmented political infrastructure of the Dutch Republic and the existence of the different players involved in Dutch politics: the provincial States, the stadholders, the States General, and the captain-general.

In general we can say that Boxhorn was not a political revolutionary. It is true that at times Boxhorn was critical of princes and that he, even in his most 'absolutist' work, the *De majestate*, defended the right of subjects to resist a tyrant. But Boxhorn never incited to the overthrow of legitimate governments. Neither did men like Lipsius or Grotius, nor for that matter so-called 'radicals' like Johan de la Court or Spinoza. We can savely say that with regard to the subject of political revolution Boxhorn was as conservative as all the other seventeenth-century Dutch political thinkers.⁸

However, although Boxhorn did not preach revolution, before 1648 he did allow, indeed was in favour of, changing the form of government after a tyrant was deposed or when circumstances had changed. This positive view on regime change distinguishes Boxhorn from someone like Spinoza, who in the *Tractatus Theologico-Politico* (*Theological-Political Treatise*, 1670)

⁷ For the money Boxhorn received from Frederik Hendrik for his history of Breda, see Constantijn Huygens's letter to Boxhorn, dated July 31, 1640. Constantijn Huygens, *De briefwisseling van Constantijn Huygens (1608-1687)*, Vol. 3: 1640-1644. Uitgegeven door J.A. Worp (Martinus Nijhoff; The Hague, 1914), p. 76, letter 2467. 'Ik heb er voor gezorgd, dat u f 500 uit de kas van den Prins zullen worden uitbetaald. Het mandaat er voor vindt gij in den Haag bij den heer Buysero, schoonzoon van den thesaurier. Het is weinig geld voor zooveel arbeid, maar gij moet den roem ook meetellen.' To compare, for the same work Boxhorn received a 'mere' 100 guilders from the curators of Leiden University. Molhuysen, *Bronnen tot de geschiedenis der Leidsche Universiteit*, Vol. 2, p. 248. Taking this into account, the prince of Orange served as a lucrative extra source of income for professors like Boxhorn.

⁸ For Johan de la Court's conservatism concerning political revolution, see V.H., *Consideratien en Exempelen van Staat*, IX.10 [IX.12], pp. 368-69. For Spinoza's, see below.

claimed 'that the form of each state must necessarily be retained and cannot be changed without risking the total ruin of the state'.⁹ Boxhorn reasoned differently; sometimes the form of government must be changed precisely in order to save the state from total ruin.

After 1648, however, Boxhorn sang a more conservative tune. In the *De successione et iure primogenitorum* and the *Metamorphosis Anglorum* he denied the legitimacy of the republican regime that ruled England after the execution of Charles I, while in the *De majestate* he defended the Dutch Revolt in words that suggest that he followed the Dutch resistance thesis which placed sovereignty in the hands of the provincial States. In its most elaborated expression this Dutch resistance thesis emphasised the continuity of Dutch political practice and traced it back to Roman times.¹⁰ A possible explanation for Boxhorn's change of tune is that he was sincerely shocked by what had happened in England. Perhaps he also feared that the execution of Charles I might lead to another European war in which the Dutch Republic would be caught up. On the other hand, it might also be the case that Boxhorn wanted the Dutch Republic to take a more aggressive stand towards the English Commonwealth, as stadholder William II would have loved to see.¹¹ For now, however, the real motives behind Boxhorn's change of tune with regard to regime change remain illusive for us.

But how, then, should we interpret Boxhorn's plea for the 'democratisation' of government in the province of Holland? For one thing, it should not lead us to think that deep down inside Boxhorn harboured strong democratic sympathies. He did not believe that monarchies were intrinsically bad and that democracies, in which the people – either directly or indirectly – rule themselves, were the only good and legitimate forms of government. Furthermore, like most seventeenth-century Dutch political thinkers, indeed like most seventeenth-century European political thinkers, Boxhorn did not have a high opinion of the common people.

However, Boxhorn's plea for the 'democratisation' of government in the province of Holland does put him in the same camp of those people who were critical of the closed-off oligarchical *regenten* regime that ruled the towns of the Dutch Republic and who pleaded for a more open and accessible form of government that would allow a larger part of the Dutch (male) popula-

⁹ Baruch de Spinoza, *Theological-Political Treatise*. Edited by Jonathan Israel. Translated by Michael Silverthorne and Jonathan Israel (Cambridge University Press; Cambridge, 1st ed. 2007, 2008), XVIII.10, p. 228.

¹⁰ At least as far as the province of Holland was concerned.

¹¹ William II supported the cause of the Stuarts, his family-in-laws, both before and after the execution of Charles I. 'Hostilities against the English Commonwealth' was one of William II's 'firm goals'. Rowen, *The Princes of Orange*, pp. 81, 91, with quotes on the latter.

tion to participate in government. Not by accident men who can be placed in this camp, like the brothers De la Court and Spinoza, were political outsiders, men who themselves were not members of the Dutch ruling elite.¹² Opposed to this camp of outsiders was a camp of political insiders, of men like Hugo Grotius or grand pensionary Johan de Witt, who defended the oligarchical *regenten* regime to which they themselves belonged.

What men of both camps had in common was that none of them was a democrat, at least not in the modern sense of the word. Boxhorn, for example, did not advocate universal male suffrage, let alone universal female suffrage. But neither did Pieter de la Court nor Spinoza, who both excluded certain groups of society from participating in politics.¹³ What we do see in seventeenth-century Dutch political thought is a development, beginning with Burgersdijk and then forward in time to Boxhorn and then onwards to the brothers De la Court and Spinoza, in which the monarchical model lost the almost self-explanatory supremacy it had for a man like Lipsius and received ever more criticism.

Indeed, despite his defence of the majesty of kings in the *De majestate*, Boxhorn's observations on monarchy in the *Institutiones politicae* and his critical remarks on the behaviour of princes in the *Institutiones politicae* and *Disquisitiones politicae* make it hard to conclude that behind his constitutional relativism Boxhorn was in reality a monarchist. He certainly did not envisage the stadholder as constituting some kind of monarchical figure within the political infrastructure of the Dutch Republic, nor did he want the prince of Orange to become a sovereign prince of one of the Republic's seven provinces. For Boxhorn princely rule seemed to have been a thing of the past as far as the Dutch Republic was concerned. The failure of the Orangist campagne to get William III elected to count of Holland in 1672 and the opposition against the plan to appoint that same William as duke of Gelderland in 1675 indicate that this was the general consent of the Dutch during the seventeenth century.¹⁴

On the other hand, Boxhorn's observations on monarchy in the *Institutiones politicae* and his critical remarks on the behaviour of princes in the *Institutiones politicae* and *Disquisitiones politicae* should not lead to the conclusion that

¹² This is not to say that this was necessarily always the case.

¹³ In the third edition of the *Consideratien van Staat* (*Considerations of State*) Pieter de la Court holds that 'the best government imaginable among humans ... shall be found with a council, consisting of all the residents of the country, who can be presumed to have enough power and knowledge to take care of their own well-being'. He excludes from this council, amongst others, women and people who live on alms. See V.H., *Consideratien van Staat, Ofte Politike Weeg-schaal*, Vol. 3, III.5, pp. 661-64, with quote on p. 662. For Spinoza, see Spinoza, *Political Treatise*, XI.3-4, pp. 136-37.

¹⁴ For the failed Orangist campagne of 1672, see Michel Reinders, *Gedrukte chaos: populisme en moord in het Rampjaar 1672* (Uitgeverij Balans; Amsterdam, 2010), pp. 196-200. For the opposition against William III being appointed as duke of Gelderland, see Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, pp. 815-17.

behind a veil of relativism Boxhorn was in fact a republican, if by that term we mean someone who principally opposes monarchical forms of government and favours non-monarchical ones instead.¹⁵ Boxhorn's constitutional relativism seems genuine, while the extension of the possible implications of his judgement that aristocracy is 'the most commendable form of government' is limited by Boxhorn's own observation that 'there are in the world seldom good people' to be found, which makes the perfect aristocracy 'easier to describe than to detect'.¹⁶ In the real world local circumstances ultimately determine what is the best and most desirable form of government for a certain people, not lofty ideals about virtue, freedom, or self-government.

Let us now turn to the question of what Boxhorn's works tell us about his profile as a scholar and the nature of his historical and political thought. It is clear that as a scholar Boxhorn never renounced or shaken off the thorough humanist education he had received as a child and a student. His attempt to imitate the style of Tacitus, his use of Biblical and classical examples, and his philological approach in, for example, the *Theatrum* all testify to that. In addition, Boxhorn's editions of classical authors like Caesar, Tacitus, and Suetonius can be read as a sign that as a scholar he still followed the humanist principle of *ad fontes* – to the sources. The *Nederlantsche historie* shows that he also adapted the humanist principle of *ad fontes* in historical research, like his patron Heinsius had advised. Seen from this perspective, the historical approach which is so visible in Boxhorn's works is the result of his humanist education.

However, the critical remarks on the ancient Greeks and Romans that can be found in some of Boxhorn's works demonstrate that Boxhorn did not have the same high regard for the ancient Greeks and Romans as the large majority of his humanist predecessors had. Like Perizonius some several decades later, Boxhorn did not believe that the classical authors were infallible and with his critique he contributed to their fall from their pedestal. Furthermore, Boxhorn did not devote all his time and energy in studying the heritage of the classics.

¹⁵ In the introduction to the two *Republicanism* volumes edited by Martin van Gelderen and Quentin Skinner we can read the following: 'Whatever else it may have meant to be a republican in early-modern Europe, it meant repudiating the age-old believe that monarchy is necessarily the best form of government'. See Van Gelderen and Skinner (eds.), *Republicanism: A Shared European Heritage*, Vol. 1, p. 1. This description of what 'it may have meant to be a republican in early-modern Europe' seems flawed, since it would lead to the conclusion that every constitutional relativist in early modern Europe was a republican, which to this author seems to be a too inclusive use of the term 'republican'. If one wants to use the term 'republican', of which this author is no particular supporter, a more exclusive use of the term as described in the text above seems to this author a more helpful tool in the study of early modern European political thought.

¹⁶ Boxhorn, *Institutiones politicae*, II.5, p. 328. 'Quod enim providere unus aut solus non potest, alter velut in partem curarum bono Reip. vocatus providet et impendit, unde maxime laudabilem hanc Reip. formam existimamus & optimam Aristot. appellat.' Ibidem, p. 329. 'Sed quia rari in mundo boni, facilius est hanc describere quam invenire.'

Besides editing the work of classical authors like Tacitus, he also published several works on Dutch history. In addition to this, Boxhorn's philological exercises led him away from the classical languages Greek and Latin towards 'barbaric' languages like Turkish or Celtic. The 'passionate humanist' Nicolaas Heinsius (1620-1681), who was the son of Daniel Heinsius and at the time of Boxhorn's death in the service of queen Christina of Sweden, could not appreciate this 'neglect' of the classics in favour of Dutch history and barbaric languages by his father's former protégé.¹⁷ We can conclude that as far as interests are concerned, Boxhorn's humanism differs from that of more traditional humanist scholars like Scaliger and Daniel Heinsius.

Concerning the literary style and the content of his works Boxhorn can rightfully be considered a Tacitist. Boxhorn's 'political Tacitism', however, is as ambiguous as the ideas of the Roman historian himself. On the one hand, Boxhorn could use Tacitus to argue in favour of power being exercised by one man and to defend the subjection of the well-being of private individuals to the well-being of the commonwealth. On the other hand, he could also use that same Tacitus to warn against the evil machinations of devious monarchs, cunning flatterers and would-be usurpers, and to offer his audience a range of measures to counter them. But the use of Tacitus for Boxhorn did not remain restricted to offering political insights and advice. In Tacitus Boxhorn also found support for his historical relativism. This relativism, which is one of the main characteristics of Boxhorn's historical and political thought, is an argument for connecting Boxhorn with the early modern tradition that made a more critical use of Tacitus.¹⁸

Besides Tacitus, Boxhorn's political works also betray a strong influence of Aristotle. For example, Boxhorn followed Aristotle in the Stagirite's positive analysis of aristocracy and the specific polity, a move that sets Boxhorn apart from the 'monarchical' Aristotelian tradition at Leiden University. However, on some crucial points Boxhorn's political ideas also differ from those of Aristotle. First of all, Boxhorn does not seem to have believed that man is a political animal, a social being who is naturally inclined to live with his fellow men. In Boxhorn's analysis of the commonwealth and its origin the state does not appear as a 'creation of nature', but as an artificial construction, whose hierarchical division into rulers and subjects even goes against the nature of man.¹⁹ Second, the content of the *Institutiones politicae* suggests that the goal of

¹⁷ F.F. Blok, *Nicolaas Heinsius in dienst van Christina van Zweden* (Ursulapers; Delft, 1949), p. 45. "Heinsius, Nicolaas (1620-81)", in Van Bunge et al. (eds.), *The Dictionary of Seventeenth and Eighteenth-Century Dutch Philosophers*, Vol. 1, pp. 407-8, with quote on p. 408.

¹⁸ I owe this point to Jan Waszink.

¹⁹ Aristotle of course does hold 'that the state is a creation of nature'. Aristotle, *Politics*, 1252b1 [I:2], p. 13.

political society is not to obtain the virtuous Aristotelian good life, but rather the advantage of the commonwealth and its inhabitants. Thus, not only the Aristotelian notion of man's natural sociability, but also Aristotle's moral teleology is missing in Boxhorn's political thought. A third difference between Boxhorn's political ideas and those of Aristotle lies in Boxhorn's instrumentalisation of self-interest. While the language of interest can also be found in Aristotle's *Politics*,²⁰ Boxhorn's instrumentalisation of self-interest – which is one of the key features of his political thought – led Boxhorn, amongst others, to the very un-Aristotelian conclusion that the rich should rule.²¹ These three points all clearly demonstrate that Boxhorn's adherence to the intellectual heritage of Aristotle was only partial. They have more in common with the ideas of men like Hobbes and the brothers De la Court than with the academic Aristotelian tradition. If Boxhorn was an academic Aristotelian scholar, then his case nicely illustrates that the scholastic Aristotelian tradition was not a static whole in which changes did not occur.

The way Boxhorn dealt with political questions reveals a strategic rather than a moralistic approach to politics.²² His discussion of the right policy to deal with the revolts in the Netherlands in the *Disquisitiones politicae* proves this point. Boxhorn did not condemn Philip II's choice to use violence on moral grounds. Rather he found the choice imprudent because it was hard to carry it out in practice effectively. This practical, utilitarian view on politics, rather than moral preoccupations, characterises Boxhorn's political works and connects him with Machiavelli and the reception of the Florentine's work in early modern Europe. That Boxhorn could reason like Machiavelli is demonstrated by his refutation of Machiavelli's argument that no concord can exist 'among those equal in power'. Furthermore, Boxhorn shared with Machiavelli and with Dutch humanists like Lipsius and Vossius a strong belief in the educational value of the past for present and future generations. For example, like Machiavelli Boxhorn also made use of historical examples in his teaching of politics. For both men, as for most humanists, *historia* was *magistra vitae*.

An important difference between Boxhorn and Machiavelli is their different views on time and human nature. While Machiavelli believed in the 'similarity of times' (*similitudo temporum*) and had a static view on human nature, Boxhorn believed that 'times change and we change with them'. The result

²⁰ See Aristotle, *Politics*, 1261b1[II:3], p. 33, where Aristotle claims that 'everyone thinks chiefly of his own, hardly at all of the common interest; and only when he is himself concerned as an individual.'

²¹ Aristotle classifies a form of government where the rich rule as an oligarchy, which in his constitutional typology constitutes one of the three bad forms of government. See Aristotle, *Politics*, 1279a1-1280a1 [III:7-8].

²² See also "Boxhorn", p. 149.

of this difference was that where in Machiavelli's *Discorsi* the presentation of 'general rules' triumphed over 'historical discrimination', in Boxhorn's *Institutiones politicae* and *Disquisitiones politicae* 'historical discrimination' served as a general rule.²³ It is on this particular point that we can see a clear connection between Boxhorn's historical thought and his political thought.

Looking at the general developments in early modern European historical thought we can say that Boxhorn's historical thought belonged to a current of humanists who made a more critical use of the past, like Guicciardini, and who favoured a more scientific approach of the study of the past, like Patrizi. In typical humanist fashion Boxhorn's scientific approach of the past was primarily philological in character. However, he was also aware that auxiliary sciences like numismatics, geography, or chronology were of importance for historical research. While Boxhorn was predominantly interested in the religious and the political 'spheres' of the past, he also took an interest in customs, monuments, and settlement patterns. In other words, as a historical scholar Boxhorn combined in his person elements of both the early modern historian and the early modern antiquarian.

Boxhorn's works show that he had an understanding that there was a distinction between different times. In addition to this, Boxhorn also had a strong sense of causation. Present circumstances could be explained by tracking down their causes in the past. In this way Boxhorn 'contributed to ... the development of a new framework of understanding society, based on recognizing specific societal interest shaped by specific historic experiences leading into the present'.²⁴ In this way he also helped to make possible the transformation of politics into a more empirical, historical study. An understanding of the specific interests of individual nations or the political problems of the day could be achieved by investigating their causes in the past. This made historical research an important analytical tool in the arsenal of the policy maker.

In sum, we can conclude that 'Boxhorn's publications ... mirror the fundamental, but gradual and piecemeal, shift from Aristotelian politics and humanist historiography to the new philosophy of politics and the new place of history in its wake'.²⁵ While on the surface it may seem that Boxhorn can indeed be put in the traditional Aristotelian-humanist mould, he was actually at certain crucial points diverting from it. He undermined the principle of *imitatio*, which in tra-

²³ Quotes taken from the introduction by James Atkinson and David Sices in *The Sweetness of Power*, xxxi-xxxii.

²⁴ "Boxhorn", p. 147.

²⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 149.

ditional humanist scholarship formed a crucial connection between history and politics. His historical interests went beyond antiquity and had a global reach. For Boxhorn ancient history no longer constituted the first or only source from which interesting material could be drawn to teach politics, as the *Disquisitiones politicae* clearly shows. Boxhorn's strategic approach to politics, in which moral concerns reside to the background, contrasts with the view of his patron Heinsius, a more traditional humanist scholar, who thought that politics was primarily concerned with virtuous behaviour. Some of Boxhorn's ideas deviate from the teachings of the academic Aristotelian tradition and connect him with more 'modern' thinkers like Hobbes and the brothers De la Court. Thus, while Boxhorn was educated in the Aristotelian-humanist tradition, worked at a Dutch university, and followed certain traditional beliefs, he at the same time took steps that led away from the traditional intellectual heritage and towards the intellectual world of the Early Enlightenment. Boxhorn was, in short, a less traditional figure than most modern scholars have hitherto taken him for. Rather, it is better to regard him as an important transitional figure between the age of late humanism, in which the Bible and the ancients dominated the world of learning, and the age of the Early Enlightenment, in which both the Bible and the ancients came under increasing attack and in which the old humanist and Aristotelian precepts came to be replaced by new notions of the law of nature.

The case of Boxhorn illustrates that in the first half of the seventeenth century Dutch historical and political thought were not caught in the stranglehold of traditional beliefs. For example, the *Nederlantsche historie* shows that, in contrast to most Dutch historians of his time, Boxhorn did put the past 'in a broader framework of long-term structural change'.²⁶ For Boxhorn the past was not only a treasure chest of examples of right moral conduct or political prudence, but also the source that had produced the present. This view of the past made possible the political-historical analyses conducted by Valckenier in *'t Verwerd Europa*. Without presenting any more examples, we can say that our analysis of Boxhorn's historical thought shows that the changes that had occurred by the later seventeenth and the early eighteenth century in the attitudes towards the past, the study of the past, and historiography had already been on their way in the Dutch Republic in the first half of the seventeenth century.

Concerning seventeenth-century Dutch political thought we can say that the results of our investigation into Boxhorn's political thought suggest that the break between the 'old' Aristotelian-humanist tradition and the 'new' modern ideas of men like the brothers De la Court or Spinoza was somewhat less

²⁶ Haitsma Mulier, "De humanistische vorm", p. 30.

radical than sometimes has been thought.²⁷ For example, the *Institutiones politicae* shows that by abandoning certain fundamental ideas of tradition, like the belief in man's natural sociability, while at the same time holding on to certain others, like the belief in man's natural equality and natural liberty, it was possible for a Dutch political thinker in the first half of the seventeenth century to come to certain views about man and political society that show resemblance with the ideas of more 'modern' political thinkers like the brothers De la Court. The content of Boxhorn's political works makes it possible to see the transition from the 'old' Aristotelian-humanist tradition to the 'new' modern ideas of the post-1650 period not so much as a breach with the past, but more as an ongoing development in the field of seventeenth-century Dutch political thought.

An interesting feature of Boxhorn's case is that the origin and the publication history of his two most important political works, the *Institutiones politicae* and the *Disquisitiones politicae*, hint at the possibility that Boxhorn was not the only 'traditional' academic scholar in the first half of the seventeenth century who already shook off some of the old traditional beliefs and made intellectual steps towards the future. As we have seen, the *Institutiones politicae* and the *Disquisitiones politicae* both originate from Boxhorn's private lectures on politics. This means, as we have already said in the case of the *Disquisitiones politicae*, that they were taught outside the official curriculum at Leiden University in a setting which allowed Boxhorn more intellectual room to move than he would have had in public lectures and which, like we have said in the case of the *Institutiones politicae*, made scholars feel safe to say more than was officially allowed or publicly acceptable. The publication history of the *Institutiones politicae* and the *Disquisitiones politicae* makes it very well possible that both works were published without Boxhorn's knowledge and without his approval.²⁸ If we add these two elements together, i.e. the origin of the *Institutiones politicae* and the *Disquisitiones politicae* and their publication history, it is possible to conclude that the content of both works reflects what Boxhorn 'really' thought and taught to his students and not necessarily what he wanted

²⁷ This suggestion fits with the observation made by Martin van Gelderen that 'De La Court's break with the traditional study of politics was perhaps less sharp than Pieter claimed it to be. In structure and vocabulary, the main work of the brothers, *Political Balance*, still followed many of the conventions of the discipline which the brothers condemned so strongly'. Van Gelderen, "The Low Countries", p. 406.

²⁸ The first edition of the *Institutiones politicae* was published in Germany in 1656, some three years after Boxhorn's death. The *Disquisitiones politicae* was published for the first time in 1650, thus during Boxhorn's lifetime, but there is no conclusive evidence that he was behind its publication. For example, the two editions of the *Disquisitiones politicae* published by Johannes Verhoeve in 1650 and 1651 do not mention the name of the author, i.e. Boxhorn. Nor do they contain a preface written by the author. See also Baselius, "Historia vitae & obitus", ix. 'Sed & Politicam discipulos suos docebat: non vulgarem modo & tritam, nudis praeceptis consistentem ... sed & ex Historiis desumptam adeoque practicam, imo παραδειγματικήν. Hinc natae disquisitiones Politicae, postmodum juris publici factae, sed tacito auctoris nomine, quae & saepius recusae sunt.' If Boxhorn was behind the publication of the *Disquisitiones politicae* or approved of it, he did not want the public to know that he was the author of the work.

people to read in a work that was published under his name with his approval, thereby signalling that he as the author of the work *publicly* agreed with its content. In short, the content of the *Institutiones politicae* and the *Disquisitiones politicae* is possibly not affected by self-censorship.²⁹ The case of Scaliger, who did not dare to publish the results of his biblical exegeses, nicely illustrates that self-censorship influenced what early modern scholars officially published.³⁰ With regard to scholars who taught at the universities and academies of the Dutch Republic, this implies that what these scholars published does not necessarily reflect the extent and depth of what they thought and taught. They may have taught 'radical' or 'revolutionary' ideas to their students, but published ideas that conformed to the received academic tradition. This means that possibly there may have been more 'traditional' academic scholars in the Dutch Republic who, in and through their teachings, were in fact, just like Boxhorn, important transitional figures between the age of late humanism and the age of the Early Enlightenment. On its turn, this possibility is an argument that in the Dutch Republic the origins of the transition from the old world of learning to the new 'modern' world of learning did possibly not, at least not completely or solely, lay outside the universities and academies. In this case it is worth remembering that 'modern' critics of the academic tradition like Descartes and Johan de la Court had studied at a Dutch university. Some of the connections that can be made between Boxhorn's ideas and those of the brothers De la Court, who had both studied at Leiden University at the time that Boxhorn taught politics at Leiden, are possible arguments to substantiate the view that the 'modern' critics of tradition might have learned a thing or two from their 'traditional' teachers.³¹ Therefore, scholars like Boxhorn deserve attention not only because of what they can tell us about the nature of 'traditional' streams of historical and political thought and about developments within them, but also because of what they can possibly reveal to us about the origins of the historical and political ideas of the Early Enlightenment and, from there, about those of our modern age.

²⁹ The same holds good for the *Commentariolus*. As we have seen in chapter 5, the *Commentariolus* also originated from Boxhorn's private lectures on politics. Like the two editions of the *Disquisitiones politicae* published by Johannes Verhoeve in 1650 and 1651, both the first Latin edition, i.e. the 1649 Verhoeve edition, and the first Dutch edition of the *Commentariolus* lack the name of the author, i.e. Boxhorn, and a preface written by the author. Although no conclusive evidence is available, it is very well possible that both the first Latin edition and the first Dutch edition of the *Commentariolus* were published without Boxhorn's knowledge or approval. See also chapter 5.

³⁰ See chapter 2, footnote 125. For a broader view on self-censorship by scholars in early modern Europe and their concealment of their true beliefs and the problem of dissimulation that can be connected to it, see Perez Zagorin, *Ways of Lying: Dissimulation, Persecution, and Conformity in Early Modern Europe* (Harvard University Press; Cambridge/London, 1990), pp. 289-330.

³¹ Here, however, it needs reminding that there is no conclusive evidence that Johan or Pieter de la Court ever studied with Boxhorn.

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Summary in Dutch

(Samenvatting in het Nederlands)

Deze studie betreft het historische en politieke denken van de Nederlandse geleerde Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn (1612-1653), hoogleraar aan de Leidse universiteit tussen 1633 en 1653. In deze studie komen zowel Boxhorns wetenschappelijke activiteiten aan bod, alsook zijn persoonlijk leven en belangrijke politieke en wetenschappelijke gebeurtenissen uit zijn tijd. Naast Boxhorns wetenschappelijke werken die tijdens of na zijn leven zijn verschenen, is in deze studie tevens gebruik gemaakt van Boxhorns brieven, verslagen van tijdgenoten en manuscripten van Boxhorns werk.

Uit zijn geschriften blijkt dat Boxhorn een verdediger van de Nederlandse activiteiten op zee was en een voorstander van de oorlog met Spanje. Ondanks zijn orthodox calvinistische achtergrond maakte Boxhorn religieuze zaken ondergeschikt aan politieke. Hoewel Boxhorns sympathieën lijken te hebben gelegen bij het kamp van de Orangisten, was hij geen voorstander van de concentratie van macht in de handen van de prinsen van Oranje. Boxhorn accepteerde de gefragmenteerde politieke infrastructuur van de Nederlandse Republiek en het bestaan van de verschillende spelers op het Nederlandse politieke toneel: de provinciale Staten, de stadhouders, de Staten-Generaal en de kapitein-generaal.

Boxhorn was duidelijk een product van zijn humanistische scholing. Hij probeerde de stijl van de Romeinse geschiedschrijver Tacitus te imiteren, deed taalkundig onderzoek en maakte in zijn politieke werken volop gebruik van historische voorbeelden. Zoals voor zoveel humanisten was ook voor Boxhorn de geschiedenis de leermeester van het leven (*historia magistra vitae*) en in zijn politieke werken spelen Tacitus en de Griekse filosoof Aristoteles een belangrijke rol.

Daar staat tegenover dat Boxhorn het principe van de *imitatio* – het imiteren van historische voorbeelden in het heden – ondermijnde. Dit principe vormde in de traditionele humanistische wetenschap een cruciale verbinding tussen geschiedenis enerzijds en politiek anderzijds. Daarnaast ontbreekt in Boxhorns politieke denken bijvoorbeeld het idee dat de mens een sociaal wezen is dat van nature geneigd is om samen te leven met zijn medemens. Een aantal elementen in Boxhorns politieke werken, zoals de instrumentalisatie van het eigen belang, toont meer overeenkomsten met de ideeën van ‘moderne’ denkers als de Engelse filosoof Thomas Hobbes dan met de academische aristotelische traditie. De belangrijkste conclusie van deze studie is dan ook dat

Boxhorn een minder traditioneel figuur was dan waarvoor de meeste moderne wetenschappers hem tot dusverre gehouden hebben, en dat het beter is om hem te beschouwen als een belangrijk overgangsfiguur tussen het tijdperk van het laat-humanisme en het tijdperk van de vroege Verlichting.

Curriculum vitae

About the author

Jaap Nieuwstraten was born on December 10, 1980, in Haarlem, in the Dutch province of Noord Holland. Between 1999 and 2004 he studied history at the Erasmus School of History, Culture and Communication (formely known as the Faculty of History and Arts) at the Erasmus University Rotterdam (EUR). In 2005 he became a Ph.D. student at the Erasmus School of History, Culture and Communication. There he works on the research project *Boxhorn's empirical art of governance*, in which he studies the historical and political thought of the Dutch scholar Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn (1612-1653). This research project forms a part of the research programme *Conquest, Competition and Ideology: Inventing Governance in the Dutch Golden Age*, which is funded by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO). Jaap Nieuwstraten's research interests lie in the history of historical thought and the history of political thought, particular in the Dutch Republic.

Publications

Books:

Public Offices, Personal Demands: Capability in Governance in the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic (Cambridge Scholars Publishing; Newcastle upon Tyne, 2009). Together with Jan Hartman and Michel Reinders.

Articles:

“Why the Wealthy should rule: Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn’s Defence of Holland’s Aristocratic Mercantile Regime”, in Jan Hartman, Jaap Nieuwstraten and Michel Reinders (eds.), *Public Offices, Personal Demands: Capability in Governance in the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing; Newcastle upon Tyne, 2009), pp. 126-49.

Other publications:

“Introduction”, in Jan Hartman, Jaap Nieuwstraten and Michel Reinders (eds.), *Public Offices, Personal Demands: Capability in Governance in the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing; Newcastle upon Tyne, 2009), pp. 1-19. Together with Jan Hartman and Michel Reinders.

This book offers the first comprehensive study of the historical and political thought of the Dutch scholar Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn (1612-1653). It shows that Boxhorn, who was one of the most prolific scholars of his age and whose works were translated into Dutch, French and English, and published in England and the Holy Roman Empire, can best be regarded as an important transitional figure between the age of late humanism and the age of the Early Enlightenment. Thanks to a careful analysis that takes into account both long-term intellectual developments within early modern Europe and the Dutch Republic and local events, Boxhorn's historical and political ideas appear to have common ground with both the Aristotelian-humanist tradition in which he was brought up and with the modern ideas of famous philosophers like Thomas Hobbes and Samuel Pufendorf. The book's broad approach and the different subjects it discusses – history, politics, philosophy, economics, linguistics – make this book an interesting case study in early modern historical and political thought.

Cover illustration: detail from the copperplate of Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn by Jonas Suyderhoef (engraver) and Pieter Dubordieu (illustrator), c.1640. VU University Library Amsterdam, PORTRET 1 BOX 001.