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Pleading for diversity : the church Caspar Coolhaes wanted

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Citation

Gottschalk, L. S. (2016, April 6). *Pleading for diversity : the church Caspar Coolhaes wanted*. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/38762>

Version: Corrected Publisher's Version

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Issue Date: 2016-04-06

Chapter 5: Mature preoccupations

Coolhaes occupied himself with several causes throughout the years of his maturity, even while he continued his distilling and then eventually turned the business over to his son. He translated and defended Sebastian Franck, the German Spiritualist. He advocated toleration of Mennonites. In a fictitious work, he painted some Catholics in a positive light, while at the same time, in non-fiction, combated what he perceived as residual Catholic superstitious practices in society. He also rebuked Arminius and Gomarus over their conflict at Leiden University. These interests consumed him intensely. We will look in greater depth at each of these “preoccupations” by examining his writings on each cause.

Sebastian Franck *via* Coolhaes

The ideas of Sebastian Franck were well-known in the Netherlands. Franck was a major influence on such figures as Coornhert.¹ Two books which defend Franck are linked to Coolhaes. For the first, his authorship is not at all certain. The second, however, is surely written by Coolhaes. We will explore this below.

Since this dissertation’s main topic is Coolhaes’ ecclesiology, and since the foundation of that ecclesiology is, in our opinion, his Spiritualism, and since, furthermore, he was inspired a great deal by Franck in that Spiritualism, a more pointed discussion of Franck will come later under the heading of ecclesiology in Part II, Chapter 6. As well, Franck’s inspiration on Coolhaes in regards to tolerance and diversity will also be addressed in Part II, Chapter 9. However, this biographical sketch would be incomplete if we did not deal on a basic level with the interest that Coolhaes had in defending the late Franck at this point in his life, and introduce the works Coolhaes wrote at this time.

To begin with, it is clear that Coolhaes was inspired by the ideas of Franck on several levels. One of these levels was that of ecclesiastical diversity. For example, Franck deplored the lack of unity, the many sects, in Christendom. He believed that only “... the free, non-

1. Horst Weigelt, *Sebastian Franck und die lutherische Reformation* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlaghaus, 1972), 68-69. See also Cornelis Augustijn and Theo Parmentier, “Sebastian Franck in den nörderlichen Niederlanden 1550 bis 1600,” in Müller, *Sebastian Franck (1499-1542)*, 303-18; H. Bongers and A. J. Gelderblom, “Coornhert en Sebastian Franck,” *De zeventiende eeuw* 12 (1996), 321-39.

sectarian, impartial Christendom, that is bound to no thing, but stands free in spirit on God's Word and can be grasped and seen with faith, not with the eyes, is of God."² Also, Franck, as most other Spiritualists, talked about the need to go "from the outer to the inner, from flesh to spirit...."³ Coolhaes was equally absorbed with these issues, and was surely inspired by reading Franck's works.

One very significant difference can easily be seen between the two, however. Coolhaes did not agree with Franck about interpretation of Scripture. Franck's hermeneutic is based on the idea that Scripture appears contradictory to anyone not enlightened by the Spirit. In this he can be traced to Hans Denck, who in turn may have been influenced in this method of scriptural analysis by Karlstadt, Müntzer or Tauler. Denck had earlier collected forty pairs of supposedly contradictory quotations from the Bible in his *Wer die warheit/warlich lieb hat* (1526). Franck's method was clearly inspired by this. Then, Franck also drew inspiration from Luther's Heidelberg disputations (1518) and from Erasmus' *De Libero Arbitrio* (1524): Luther and Erasmus' ideas "cleared away space' within which Franck could "reconstruct his world view."⁴ Franck's ideas developed further when a certain Andreas Althamer, a student of Luther, intending to disprove Denck, asked Franck to translate, from Latin to German, scriptural passages which gave another interpretation to Denck's original quotes. At that time, Franck was still focused on the words of the written Bible, but became convinced, based on Denck's method, to focus on the words less.⁵ Denck's intention was not to denigrate the written Scripture, but to point readers to the Spirit, who would then enable the true seeker to understand the true meaning of a passage rather than to misread it.⁶ However, Franck took this to a new level. In Franck's view, any spiritual writings, including the Bible, had the potential to impact people in an untrue way, "because the truth could simply not be captured by the spoken or written word."⁷ "All Franck had to do [was] accentuate a bit more the role

2. Hayden-Roy, *The Inner Word and the Outer World*, 119.

3. Hayden-Roy, *The Inner Word and the Outer World*, 39, 166.

4. Weigelt, *Sebastian Franck und die lutherische Reformation*, 15-16; Hayden-Roy, *The Inner Word and the Outer World*, 28-30.

5. Hayden-Roy, *The Inner Word and the Outer World*, 15.

6. Hayden-Roy, *The Inner Word and the Outer World*, 11-17; Weigelt, *Sebastian Franck und die lutherische Reformation*, 13-18.

7. McLaughlin, "Sebastian Franck and Caspar Schwenckfeld: two Spiritualist *Viae*," 76.

of God's Spirit in the understanding of his Word, and the Word would come loose from the physical word of the Bible and settle directly in peoples' hearts."⁸ Franck went on to a method of expounding two contradictory interpretations of single scriptural passages.

Coolhaes, who longed for freedom and diversity, could not resist defending Franck, but did not go all the way with Franck's ideas. Coolhaes never "came loose" from the physical word of the Bible in his thinking. He quoted the Bible frequently, but without Franck's sense of irony or double-meaning, or believing that in so doing he is making a strong argument for his point of view. Coolhaes used a traditional hermeneutic which looked for one truth in the passages he quoted. As well, he expected these unidirectional arguments to be met by equally uncomplicated arguments from his opponents, and for the truth to emerge from this process of dialogue. Although he disagreed with the interpretation of his opponents, he expected them to engage him in the discussion of which interpretation was the correct one. He did not doubt that one correct interpretation existed.

At the same time, perhaps inconsistently, Coolhaes did not want to label any view as "heretical," but still considered some views less correct than others. This can be seen in his use of the well-known Franckist metaphor of flowers, bees and spiders in his own *Apologia* (1580): drawing on the belief, popularly accepted at that time, that the flower is used by bees to make honey but by spiders to make poison. Even so can the Bible be used by "heretics" to lead people astray, as well as by godly teachers to show them the right way.⁹ Even earlier, in his "Glaubensbekenntniss" (1571), Coolhaes used a simile that resembles this: when people listen to God's Word, the Word is like water; fish can swim in water, but people drown in it.¹⁰ But Coolhaes did not mean, as Franck did, that some people take the Bible and make something toxic out of it through their interpretation. Coolhaes meant by referencing the bees and spiders that any and all diversity of interpretation may exist and is part of the visible church. Even so, in his view some of the beliefs which are present in the visible church are in fact toxic, and some misguided or evil teachers are like the spiders. In comparing the Word to water, he is not employing the same hermeneutic as Franck would, but instead saying something similar to Paul's statement (2 Corinthians 2:16) that the same fragrance brings

8. Hayden-Roy, *The Inner Word and the Outer World*, 17.

9. Coolhaes, *Apologia*, 102Ccijr.

10. Coolhaes, "Glaubensbekenntniss," 7v.

death to some and life to others – in other words, some people are being saved while others are perishing. It is a much more orthodox way of thinking than that of Franck.

Still, despite this difference in hermeneutic, Coolhaes admired and rushed to the defense of the late Franck. Philips van Marnix, lord of St. Aldegonde, diplomat, writer, and associate of William of Orange, had written in 1595 against certain theologians and *geest-drijvers* (fanatics), various Mennonites and Spiritualists, and advocated punishment of such elements by the secular government.¹¹ Marnix accused them all of allegorizing in a devious way for their own rebellious ends, and over-emphasizing the role of subjective Spirit-leading, which resulted in the loss of piety and godliness.¹² Coolhaes, while he would have agreed that any punishment should be in the hands of the secular government and not the church, objected to Marnix' inclusion of fellow-Germans Sebastian Franck and Johannes Tauler in this list, which included extremists such as the Münsterites and David Joris. He wrote that he was compelled to respond in order “to be useful to my fatherland” and wanted to defend Franck especially, who “could not defend himself.”¹³ Marnix wrote back defensively that it certainly was true that Franck thought of Jesus only as an example of the internal Christ.¹⁴

A year later in 1596, *Verantwoordinghe van Sebastiaen Franck*¹⁵ was published. This is a work which has been associated with Coolhaes, but whose authorship is disputed. Rogge believes that it is written by Coolhaes. Burger does not; it is a “higher style” than Coolhaes uses, and it shows a fuller familiarity with Franck's works than Coolhaes supposedly had. Burger believes it might be by Cornelis Wiggertsz. Van Dooren agrees with Burger, saying that the work is not in the style of Coolhaes, nor does the motto on the inside of the title page (*Leeft altijd vroom*, “Always live piously”) reflect Coolhaes. He reports that some posit that a Franckish party existed and that the acrostic refers to several authors: CC would be for Coolhaes, W for Wiggers, H for Herbertsz, and S for Tako Sijbrants. However, Van Dooren

11. F. E. Beemon, “Marnix van Saint Aldegonde, Philip,” *OER*, vol. 3, 14.

12. Rogge, *Caspar Janszoon Coolhaes*, vol. 2, 72.

13. “*tot nut mijns vaderlands.*” Rogge, *Caspar Janszoon Coolhaes*, vol. 2, 74.

14. Rogge, *Caspar Janszoon Coolhaes*, vol. 2, 73-78.

15. Caspar Coolhaes?, *Verantwoordinghe van Sebastiaen Franck, jegens de onwaerachtighe beschuldiginghe, hem (onder meer andere) nu langhe jaren near zijn doot, opghedict, by Philips van Marnix, heere van St. Aldegonde, in zijn boecxken, ghenaemt, Ondersoekinghe ende grondelijcke wederlegginghe vande gheest-drytsche leer. Met naeck bewijs. Dat de wtghegeven schriften van Sebastiaen Franck niet en stricken tot oproer tethen de overheyden: noch tot wechneminghe van het wroegen der conscientien: nochte oock tot verachinghe der h. bybelsche schrift* (Rotterdam: D. Mullem 1596/1598).

concludes, Coolhaes has said he would not belong to any party, so it is unlikely he would belong secretly to a Franckish one.¹⁶

Our view is that the vocabulary and style are not the same as Coolhaes', and that it was likely written by a contemporary of his. However, since some of the content is similar to Coolhaes' ideas, and some scholars believe that Coolhaes is the author, we will look at it briefly. *Verantwoordinghe* begins with a sonnet¹⁷ in which the author encourages the poor, unlearned and pious to disregard the criticism of the learned against them, to sorrow over their sins, be subject to the government, and just to keep living piously. A dedication follows the sonnet, which is addressed to the States General of the United Netherlands, hoping that they will not allow a new inquisition now that the Netherlands is experiencing religious freedom. This sort of policy, the author continues, which lost the king of Spain his lands, could never work here.¹⁸ The author continues: Justus Lipsius, who had written that the Reformed were rebellious to the king of Spain, left discredited.¹⁹ And now the lord of Aldegonde, who knows personally how bitter it is to be forced in his Reformed conscience, wants to punish others.²⁰ Marnix attacks the thought of Tauler (whom the author says he would not defend in everything, but is so simple that he would never cause disturbances), and Franck. Marnix should remember the old motto, *Audi alteram partem*. This phrase might point to Coolhaes, as it is one of his favorite expressions, it is used for example in *Apologia*, although it is by no means unique to him. Then comes a foreword to the reader. The author says that upon reading Marnix' book, he was alarmed and re-read all the books of Franck he had read previously, to see if those awful things which Marnix mentions were there. He found human errors in Franck's work, but nothing of the magnitude of Marnix' accusations.²¹

16. "Dat Coolhaes in Francks gevoelen deelde omtrent de punten waarop deze door Marnix was aangevallen, en die hij in dit boek door Achitob en Clemens laat verdedigen, is zeker niet te betwijfelen. Hieruit af te leiden dat hij in alle opzichten een aanhanger van Franck was, zou zeker te gewaagd en ook moeilijk te bewijzen zijn." Rogge, *Caspar Janszoon Coolhaes*, II, 89-90. Moes and Burger, *De Amsterdamsche boekdrukkers*, 71-75. Van Dooren, *De nationale synode te Middelburg* 183-84.

17. Coolhaes?, *Verantwoordinghe van Sebastiaen Franck*, Aib.

18. Coolhaes?, *Verantwoordinghe van Sebastiaen Franck*, A2-A2b.

19. Coolhaes?, *Verantwoordinghe van Sebastiaen Franck*, A4-A4b.

20. Coolhaes?, *Verantwoordinghe van Sebastiaen Franck*, A5.

21. Coolhaes?, *Verantwoordinghe van Sebastiaen Franck*, A8.

Then follows the main part of the book – a conversation between two (fictional) men, Achitob²² and Balac,²³ who are traveling. Achitob notices that Balac is reading Marnix’ book. Balac, interested in the book, says that it describes many libertines such as Tauler, Franck, Joris, Niclaes, Müntzer, Jan van Leyden, and their heresies – that they all use double meanings and dark allegories. Under cover of spirituality and high-sounding words like a “spiritual Christ” and divinization (“godded,” or *vergoddinghe*) they turn the whole teaching of Christ into a spiritual allegory, denying God, Christ, eternal life and resurrection, and teaching that people only have to conquer their conscience and fulfill their heart’s desires. Whatever one thinks or does, that is the free Spirit of God. These people are all similar to those of the Münster uprising and will lead to more of the same.²⁴ Achitob is not at all convinced, saying he has read Franck more than the others and Franck is not like that.²⁵ The two discuss the issues Marnix raises, along with another man named Clemens, and meet later to continue the discussion. They list fourteen books Franck has written, and critique Marnix’ assessment of Franck using points from several.²⁶ They conclude the discussion by quoting the Reformers and Erasmus.²⁷

As mentioned above, this author’s view, based partly on differences in this book from Coolhaes’ other works, and an admittedly subjective feeling that it is not written in his style, is that it was written by another contemporary defender of Franck. The book does not seem to me to contain enough theological content to have been written by Coolhaes. Further, the author discusses Erasmus, which is not typical of Coolhaes. Also, the author lists himself as C.C.W.H.S., not an abbreviation used by Coolhaes elsewhere. Furthermore, Coolhaes never mentions this book in any of his others. This author also does not mention Coolhaes’ work, *Apologia Sebastiani Vranck* (see below), or its contents. Nevertheless, it might be possible that the book is indeed by Coolhaes. It should be noted that even if Coolhaes is in fact the

22. Achitob is a name from 1 Esdras 8:2 – a descendant of Aaron the chief priest.

23. Balac, or Balak, was a king of Moab, and was involved with the teachings of Balaam and with idol-worship (Numbers 22:4; Joshua 24:9; Judges 11:25; Revelation 2:14).

24. Coolhaes?, *Verantwoordinghe van Sebastiaen Franck*, B2-3.

25. Coolhaes?, *Verantwoordinghe van Sebastiaen Franck*, C3.

26. Coolhaes?, *Verantwoordinghe van Sebastiaen Franck*, D6r.

27. Coolhaes?, *Verantwoordinghe van Sebastiaen Franck*, F-G.

author of this *Verantwoordinghe*, this does not necessarily mean that he agreed with Franck completely or even in most areas, as alleged by some, notably Kamphuis.

On the other hand, *Apologia Sebastiani Vranck*,²⁸ which appeared in 1598, is Coolhaes' without doubt, even as it contains a translation of Franck. Coolhaes mentions this *Apologia Sebastiani Vranck* in his *Wederantwoort*, where he says that he published the translation to refute Marnix. The publication of Franck's work brought Coolhaes under renewed fire by the "orthodox majority."²⁹ It contains a short preface to the reader (four pages, dated December 31) and then his translation of Franck's *Apologia*, which is the last section of Franck's book *Das verbüthschiert mit siben Sigeln verschlossen Büch*.³⁰ Surprisingly, the translation which Coolhaes made of this work of Franck's is a great deal longer than the original. The "translation" is fifty-three pages (not counting the four pages of introduction) compared to Franck's original eight pages. In fact, Coolhaes did not just translate – he commented upon the original text extensively, perhaps adding passages from other works of Franck into the text of the *Apologia*.³¹ He expanded and embellished what Franck

28. Coolhaes, *Apologia Sebastiani Vranck; De welke hy zelfs in synen leven gheschreven: ende achter syn boec van den seven zegelen: tot defensie van syn persoon ende schrijften, heeft doen drucken. Nu eerst in Nederduytsch over gheset door Caspar Coolhaes* (N. p., 1598). See also discussion of this book in Moes and Burger, *De Amsterdamsche boekdrukkers*, 25-26, 71-75. Note: The introduction exists, in photocopied form, at the University of Amsterdam library. Their catalog online lists the whole work, although they do not in fact have it. The whole work is only to be found in CBR, Erasmuszaal Erasmuscollectie (Erasmuszaal) Rem.Gem. 29 E 2. The author is listed as Sebastian Franck. I am deeply indebted to Prof. dr. Hans Trapman for locating this book for me there.

29. "Met deze uitgaaf van een werk van Franck die juist door Marnix zelve voor een verderfelijck geestdrijver verklaard was, en met de openhartige verzekering dat hij het met Franck eens was, en niemand om verschil van geloof wilden verdoemen, stelde Coolhaes zich op nieuw openlijk tegenover de rechtzinnige meerderheid." Moes and Burger, *De Amsterdamsche boekdrukkers*, 75. See Coolhaes, *Wederantwoort*, 114.

30. Sebastian Franck, *Das verbüthschiert mit siben Sigeln Verschlossen Büch, das recht niemandt auffthun, verstehen, oder laesen kan dann das lamb, und die mit dem Thaw bezeichne, das lamb angehören, sampt einer Vorred von den siben Sigeln, was sie seyen, und wie die auffthun werden. Zu letst ein klein einlaiting und anweysung in die Heylige Schrift, wie man sich in Mosen richten, die Propheten laesen, und Christum das Buch dess lebens verstehen soll, allen schuleren Christi, zur Christlichen vbung, vnd Götlichen räterschaftt, von Sebastian Francken fürgestellt. 1539. Facsimile reprinted Frankfurt/Main, 1975. For an admiring look at this work and at Franck in general, see Rufus M. Jones, *Spiritual Reformers in the 16th and 17th Centuries* (London: MacMillan and Co., 1914)], 10-11, 26-30.*

31. An example: Franck writes, "Ich acht aber das sich der frey hailig gaist (freihait mit sich bringt und geburt waer ist) nit also in ein boctshorn werden lassen zwingen, und ann gewiss regelmenschlicher ordnung und glosslassen binden, das es also und also muss lauten, wie ein jeder fürhat." Coolhaes translates and expands, "Maer ick houde het voor zeeker dat die vrije H. Gheest (die welke rechte Christelijcke vrijheyt met hem brengt ende baert waer hy is) hem niet en laet bedwingen, in een hoorn van eenen Boeck, ofte in ander diergelijcken plaetsen: ende dat hy hem niet binden laet, aen zeeckere menschelicke ordinantien, ende wtleggingen der heyligher goddelijcker Schriftueren, dattet juist dus, ofte zoo zoude moeten te verstaen zijn,

said. Sometimes he also noted, “As I wrote in the *Ark*, the *Paradoxa*, the *Chronijck*, the *Wereltboec*,” as though Franck were speaking of his other works, and adding things which are not in the original. He added many more pages of Bible passages with explanations. Coolhaes also brought in the “school of the Holy Spirit and the Cross”³² and his categories of *Jongeren* (youths), *Jongheren* (young men), and *Christen*, which are levels of maturity in that “school,”³³ which, as far as I have determined, is his own invention (although, as we have said, doubtless based on other writers’ similar ideas of levels of spiritual maturity).

Coolhaes begins his foreword by stating that he has read very little by Franck, as he has also read very little of other authors and theologians, because he would rather go directly to the fountain of Holy Scripture than to commentaries or explanations. This may well be a tactical statement, or one prompted by polite diffidence, especially given his expansion of the translation. However, he admits he has nevertheless read some books by Franck, and can easily see and understand the latter’s meaning - that Franck is totally impartial to everyone, condemning no one.³⁴ However, everyone must judge for themselves by reading Franck’s own *Apologia*, to see that he is impartial, peaceful and in no way like the Münster trouble-makers. He was not unchristian; his works were not poison. Coolhaes thinks that he has reason to hope that Franck is with the Lord.³⁵ We can see with Franck, Coolhaes says, that God is no respecter of persons;³⁶ that in all people, languages and nations all those who fear God and do righteousness are pleasing to him, and that we may embrace and love all God-fearing people as brothers and sisters in Christ.³⁷

Coolhaes’ “translation” of Franck’s *Apologia* follows this forward. Since it is the final section of Franck’s *Das verbüthschiert mit siben Sigeln verschlossen Buch* (often shortened in English to *The Seven-sealed Book*), it is useful to make a few observations about that work

gelijck elck bysonder wil, dat men het zoude moeten verstaen, ende niet anders.” Coolhaes, *Apologia Sebastiani Vranck*, Aviiiv.

32. Coolhaes, *Apologia Sebastiani Vranck*, Biiijr. For another place Coolhaes talks about this “school,” see Coolhaes, *Apologia*, folios 69 Sr–70 Siiv. We also address it in detail in Chapter 8.

33. Coolhaes, *Apologia Sebastiani Vranck*, folio BViv

34. Coolhaes, *Apologia Sebastiani Vranck*, folio Aijv.

35. Coolhaes, *Apologia Sebastiani Vranck*, folio Aijbv.

36. This idea comes from Acts 10:34 and Rom. 2:11.

37. Coolhaes, *Apologia Sebastiani Vranck*, folio Aiiijv.

as a whole. *The Seven-sealed Book* is an enormous volume (more than 800 pages) made up mostly of Scripture quotes arranged by topic. Franck's point throughout this collection of quotes is that the Bible is a mysterious book whose meaning is sealed.³⁸ The picture on the title page is of a large book on a stand, with seven round seals hanging from it, and a man who resembles a magician with a peaked hat and beard blindfolded before it, pointing towards it with his right hand.³⁹ Each theological/biblical topic introduced by Franck, has a selection of passages first for and then against it. He labels these *Schrift*, which are passages supporting the topic, and *Gegenschrift*, which are passages opposing it. To cite just a few examples: *Schrift*: Aaron and Moses are holy, pious servants [with supporting verses about their obedience]. Then, *Gegenschrift*: Aaron and Moses are unbelieving [verses citing their sins].⁴⁰ Another example: *Schrift*: Jerusalem is the beloved city of God [verses praising it]; *Gegenschrift*: Jerusalem must fall [prophecies of its judgment].⁴¹ There are hundreds of other topics addressed in this way.

Of all of the many verses and metaphors Franck uses in this book, Coolhaes draws on only a very few in any of his works. The most important to Coolhaes is that Franck gives verses to defend that God is impartial,⁴² and in a very long section gives the scriptural defense and refutation of free will.⁴³ Whenever Coolhaes mentions Franck, this is what he emphasizes. Also, Moses and Aaron, as we will see, are important to Coolhaes because for him they represent the secular and ecclesiastical governments. Jerusalem is the symbol of the invisible church. However Coolhaes does not say that they are both godly and ungodly. He does not say that Jerusalem will fall, but on the contrary, that it will endure forever.

Several more important arguments can be made against more significant influence on Coolhaes by Franck based on this book, despite the inspiration he draws from it about God's

38. This is a reference to Rev. 5:1-14.

39. See also Klaus Kaczerowsky, *Sebastian Franck Bibliographie* (Wiesbaden: Guido Pressler, 1976), 110-11.

40. Franck, *Das verbüthschiert mit siben Sigeln verschlossen Büch*, page V; this is the page after Aiiiijb; the page numbering is very irregular.

41. Franck, *Das verbüthschiert mit siben Sigeln verschlossen Büch*, Dr-Dijv; also CCCLIII-CCCLXIb. For more discussion on this work, see Hayden-Roy. *The Inner Word and the Outer World*, 182-83.

42. Franck, *Das verbüthschiert mit siben Sigeln verschlossen Büch*, XVIIIb.

43. Franck, *Das verbüthschiert mit siben Sigeln verschlossen Büch*, P-S (37 pages).

impartiality. First, as I pointed out earlier, Coolhaes never uses Scripture against itself in this way. He does not argue both sides of an issue. There are no works in his corpus in which he uses this kind of hermeneutical approach. On the other hand, all of Franck's work is in the tradition of the *via negativa*; God is not to be apprehended. Franck continually gives evidence for the insufficiency and incapability of the human languages to express theological truth.⁴⁴ Second, on the question of the body of Christ (the church), Coolhaes and Franck also differ. We will discuss this in more depth in Part II, but here it is enough to say that Franck argues about whether Christians are one, or whether they are divided.⁴⁵ He deplors division, but neither the words he uses nor the verses he lists are reminiscent of Coolhaes' reasoning relating to the unity of the invisible church or the tolerance Coolhaes would like to see in the visible church. On the other hand, for Coolhaes, the visible church is one Christendom, and should act like it. Third, in the aforementioned passages about Jerusalem, Franck spends many pages discussing the temple and whether or not it will be rebuilt. The temple is a symbol of the external church, which Franck does not believe that Christians need.⁴⁶ However, the temple is not a symbol which Coolhaes uses even though he agrees that many externals are at the very least non-essential for true faith. All in all, although Coolhaes chose to translate and expand only the concluding eight pages, a book-within-the-book which Franck calls *Beschlus des buchs Sebastiani Franck aller seyner vortgenn bücher gleichsam/Apologia*, Coolhaes does not seem to have drawn much direct inspiration from the bulk of the rest of *The Seven-sealed Book*, which, as we have said, is largely composed of hundreds of *Schrift* and *Gegenschrift* examples. It was the short *Apologia* section, written in regular prose, with its theme of impartiality, which captured his attention.

We have said that Coolhaes did not only translate, but that he also expanded Franck's small *Apologia*. In looking at Coolhaes' version, the two most striking ideas are first, that God is impartial, and second, that there is still time for people to repent. First, God accepts all servants in his vineyard. As in Jesus' parable, some servants come to work in the vineyard early, while others do not arrive until late. Some work early and rest later, others rest early

44. Christoph Dejung, "Wahrheit und Haeresie. Eine Untersuchung zur Geschichtsphilosophie bei Sebastian Franck" (Zürich: University of Zürich doctoral dissertation, 1979), 194.

45. Franck, *Das verbüthschiert mit siben Sigeln verschlossen Büch*, CCXXXIIIb–CCXXXIIIb.

46. Dejung, "Wahrheit und Haeresie," 129.

and work later. Only Christ determines when someone has to work. When someone repents and comes to work, that work is worthy. Second, there is enough time for repentance and many more workers coming into the vineyard. Time also heals disagreement and changes opinions; unity and agreement can be possible later; for example, Saul turned into Paul.⁴⁷ However, these differences should not lead to condemnation or party-spiritedness. God is the savior of the whole world, and will accept anyone who accepts him.⁴⁸

Franck and Coolhaes continue by emphasizing that the Bible's message is difficult to understand. Many have not understood; God's Spirit was not yet given, and the educated do not know any more than the uneducated. In fact, the more educated they become the less they know, a theme expressed by the saying found in Franck's *Paradoxa: Quo doctior, eo perversior: ye gelerter, ye verkerter*.⁴⁹ Throughout Christian history various groups have thought that they had the truth, whereas God does not look at sects and denominations but accepts those who fear him. Everything should be examined and the good should be kept, not quenching other opinions or despising others. Franck says one should be neutral towards everyone - remain silent, be peaceful and see whether an idea will blossom, because if something is incorrect God will show it eventually.⁵⁰

Franck and Coolhaes both consider it terrible that there are so many sects. As the Jews are dispersed, so are the Christians, in and among all sects and people, like a rose under the thorns. Jerusalem is under the heathen and the flock of Christ among the wolves. Good and bad fish are caught in one net; the wheat and the weeds grow up together.⁵¹ But brothers can be found everywhere:

And so my heart is not separated from anyone, being assured that I also have my brothers among the Turks, Jews, Papists – yes, among all sects and parties. But they are nevertheless not Turks, Jews, Papists, and so forth – or at least they are, only until that time; they shall nevertheless not remain so until the end, but at the sixth, or ninth

47. Franck, *Das verbüthschiert mit siben Sigeln verschlossen Büch*, CCCCXXVII.

48. Franck, *Das verbüthschiert mit siben Sigeln verschlossen Büch*, CCCCXXVIIb.

49. See Carlos Gilly, "Das Sprichwort 'Die Gelehrten die verkehrten' oder der Verrat der Intellektuellen im Zeitalter der Glaubensspaltung," in Rotondo, *Forme e destinazione*, 229- 375.

50. Franck, *Das verbüthschiert mit siben Sigeln verschlossen Büch*, CCCCXXVIII. This is similar to the advice of Gamaliel, the Pharisee who in Acts 5:34-39 recommends to the Sanhedrin that the preaching of Peter and the apostles should not be stopped, since if God is not with them, they will fail, and if God is with them, no one could defeat them.

51. Franck, *Das verbüthschiert mit siben Sigeln verschlossen Büch*, CCCCXXVIIIb.

or eleventh hour will be called, and in the evening will be found to be working in the Vineyard of the Lord, and will receive the same pay with us.⁵²

This is a vital passage, because Coolhaes through Franck is not saying that the brothers will remain “Turks, Jews, Papists, and so forth” until the “end.” Those who are brothers will be “called” and will work in the vineyard at some time – in other words, they will change their opinions.

Similarities between Franck's *Apologia* and Coolhaes' other writings are easy to see. Coolhaes loved metaphors and allegorical language. He admired the impartiality of Franck, the idea that God has his own among all nations, and the emphasis on God's sovereignty and even inscrutability. He agreed with the idea that education does not equal spirituality. He also loved to consider as brothers those with whom he disagreed. Franck says, “I will love and bear all others, even if they are not of my opinion. Oh how many dear brothers I have on earth whose thoughts I cannot reach, not they mine”⁵³ This must be how Coolhaes felt about Franck as well. Despite differences, Coolhaes considered him a “dear brother” and worth defending, regardless of the danger of being tarred with the same brush in the eyes of Marnix and others. This was typical of Coolhaes' eclectic, tolerant, and in some sense reckless approach.

Defending Mennonites and others: the Severe Edict

Coolhaes next turned his attention to disputes dealing with the *Scherpe Plakkaat* (“Severe Edict”), which was enacted by the magistracy of Groningen in 1601 against the free assembly and worship of Mennonites and other non-Reformed groups, including Roman Catholics.⁵⁴ The States had resolved to ban Catholic worship in 1581, but this was not enforced strictly. There was more latitude for non-Reformed churches in Holland and Zeeland. For instance, Catholic worship (in other words, the celebration of the mass) went on in Leiden in homes,

52. “Daerom en is myn hart van niemant afgesondert, versekert zijnde, dat ick noch mijne Broeders heb onder den Turcken, Joden, Papisten: Ja onder allen secten ende partijen: maer die selve en zijn nochtans geen Turcken, Joden, Papisten, etc. of al ist dat sijt noch ter tijt zijn mogen, zoo zullens sy nochtans ten eynde toe alsoo niet blijven, maer ter sester negender ofte elfter ure beroepen zijnde, aen den avont inden Wijnberg des Heeren werckende bevonden werden, ende gelijcke loon met ons ontfangen.” Coolhaes, *Apologia Sebastiani Vranck*, CVIIa.

53. Franck, *Das verbüthschiert mit siben Sigeln verschlossen Büch*, CCCCXXVIIIb.

54. S. Zijlstra, “Het ‘scherpe plakkaat’ van Groningen uit 1601,” *Doopsgezinde bijdragen* 15 (1989): 65-78.

hoffes, and the Elizabeth hospital.⁵⁵ However, in Groningen this latitude was not present. This “Severe Edict,” and the inequities which he saw in it, occupied Coolhaes’ thoughts and pen extensively for a few years.

The first book which Coolhaes wrote on the topic of the “Severe Edict” was a fictional conversation: *Tsamenspreekinghe*, 1601, by Coolhaes together with Amsterdam Mennonite Jan Claessen Kotte (also known as “Rolwaghen”⁵⁶).⁵⁷ How much was written by Coolhaes is debated.⁵⁸ It seems to me that the Author’s Note with which the work starts is not in the style of Coolhaes, but that much of the rest of the work is.⁵⁹ The Author’s Note refers to “freedom of conscience” - *gemoedts vryheyd*, not a typical Coolhaesian expression.⁶⁰ The rhythm of the sentences also does not sound like Coolhaes, whereas much of the rest of work is similar to Coolhaes’ other fictional conversations in style, vocabulary and content. *Tsamenspreekinghe* was popular enough to be reprinted the following year, in 1602.⁶¹ Burger posits that it may have been inspired by the similar *Ratelwachts ende torenwachters waerschouwinge* of a certain Robbert Robbertsz,⁶² which is mentioned in *Tsamenspreekinghe*

55. Kooi, “Popish Impudence,” 81-82.

56. See the satirical print, mentioning Kotte and Robbert Robbertsz: “De Neutralisten Rolwagen,” 1603, <https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/nl/collectie/RP-P-OB-80.657> (accessed January 27, 2016).

57. Caspar Coolhaes and Johann Claussen Kotte, *Tsamenspreekinghe van drie personen, over het regireus placcaet van Groninghen, ghekondicht den 7. September, oude stijl. Anno sestien-honderd ende een. Hollander, Embder, Gherefoormeerde. Door welcke tsamenspreekinghe naecktelijk vertoont wort, dat die van Groninghen doort self de soecken nieuwe conscientijs d’wangh inte voeren, tot berovinghe des dueren gecochten landts, vryheden, ende beroovinghe des landts middelen* (N.p., 1601/1602).

58. Rogge thought that *Tsamenspreekinghe* was written by Rolwaghen, aside from the introductory and concluding verses. Kras thought that the work was by Coolhaes alone, but Coolhaes denied this in *Een noodtwendighe broederlijcke vermaninghe*. Rogge, *Caspar Janszoon Coolhaes*, vol. 2, 92, 97. Burger thinks his authorship is clear and the work belong to “the best which flowed from his pen.” Moes and Burger, *De Amsterdamsche boekdrukkers*, 91-3.

59. Coolhaes, *Tsamenspreekinghe*, Aij–Aiiij.

60. Coolhaes, *Tsamenspreekinghe*, Aij.

61. Moes and Burger, *De Amsterdamsche boekdrukkers*, 91-93.

62. I have not been able to find more information about this book or author; perhaps it is a made-up parody. The author’s name may be a humorous reference to Herman Herbertz.

by the character Hollander. The authors of *Tsamenspreekinghe* used Albada's *Acta* as an important source.⁶³

This story is a fictional dialogue, displaying typically Coolhaesian themes and also defending the idea that *libertatis causa* versus *religionis causa* benefits society. There are three characters: a "Hollander," an "Emder," and a "Reformed man." It is striking that in naming his characters, Coolhaes and Rolwaghen chose two geographical names ("Hollander" and Emder") and one confessional one ("Reformed"). His reasons for this are not clear. The Reformed man demonstrates views consistent with *religionis causa*. The other two characters are both skeptical of this, and question the Reformed man. The Hollander speaks out more than the Emder.

As the story begins, the three characters meet and converse about the recently published "Severe Edict," remarking over the heavy fines which Mennonites and Roman Catholics must now pay for their worship activities.⁶⁴ The Reformed man is enthusiastic about this, because, as he says, the government is ordained by God to uphold both Tables of the Law. He says that the Edict is a good thing. The Hollander, however, objects that the Reformed man would not have "sung the same song" under the papacy, which persecuted all Protestants including the Reformed. The Reformed man says that the difference lies in now having a Christian government. No, says the Hollander, the Scripture teaches that there should be no distinction between a pagan government and a Christian one, and no less obedience to the former than to the latter. The office is ordained by God, whether or not the official himself is Christian. He compares this to the institution of marriage, which is good in God's eyes even if the people are not Christians. Marriage in the Bible is never connected with church or temple, so why do the Reformed insist upon weddings taking place in church? Many good gifts from God – health, and even the sun, moon and stars – are created as good, but can be abused.⁶⁵ It should be noted in passing, that these points which are brought up by the Hollander in the story are all very Coolhaesian themes. He was concerned about marriage

63. Bergsma, *Aggaeus van Albada*, 139-40. Bergsma notes in particular the phrase "They have no visible sword, and do not call magistrates to their defense...." Coolhaes, *Tsamenspreekinghe*, CIII vo.

64. Coolhaes, *Tsamenspreekinghe*, Aiiiijb-B; Moes and Burger, *De Amsterdamsche boekdrukkers*, 94.

65. Coolhaes, *Tsamenspreekinghe*, Biiij-C.

in just this way in *Apologia*,⁶⁶ and he will write against astrology in later works, which we will discuss later in this chapter.

The fictional Hollander goes on to bring up the example of Amsterdam, which enjoys God's blessings while nevertheless allowing freedom for all. He quotes a song which speaks of the joys of the capital, describing city improvements, six hundred decorative houses, and seven ships from the East Indies laden with spices and one hundred thousand pounds of peppers. This is all because, he says, their magistrates have been wise enough not to give in to firebrands like those in Groningen.⁶⁷ All the subjects can live together peaceably. The Hollander says,

What does it hinder us, if around us live Turks, Tartars and Moscovites, not to mention Catholics, Lutherans, Anabaptists, and so forth, if they do not molest us, and everyone can keep their own view? If we want to bring them from unbelief to true faith, let us do it not with name-calling, slandering, gossiping and persecution, but in friendliness and modesty speak to them out of the Lord's Word.⁶⁸

It is in this way, he adds, that God will be pleased and the land will flower.⁶⁹ Evidently the words of the Hollander have made sense to the others. The Reformed man says that he has been given much to think about. In a typically Coolhaesian sentiment, he says that, according

66. See Coolhaes, *Apologia*, folio 21Fv.

67. The song:

“Int Iaer doe men schreef sestien hondert en een
Is Amsterdam verbeterd int ghemeen
De Stads Toren seer hellende ginckmen weerrechten
De Stadts binnen Mueren afbreken en beslechten
Men boude oock twee stercke nieuwe Sluysen
Daer beneven meer dan ses hondert cierlijke huysen
Van Oost-Indien quamen eens seven Schepen int selvde Iaer
Gheladen met Speceryen, ende andere dierbare waer
Thien hondert duysent pont Pepers sy hadden mee gebrocht
Die waren binnen thien daghen altesamen vercocht.
Ist dat wy d'con d'ander niet verdrucken
God sal geven dat het voorts wel sal gelucken.” Coolhaes, *Tsamenspreekinghe*, Eijv-Eijr.

68. “Wat hindert ons dat neffens ons, by, ende om ons woon, Turcken, Tartaren, Moscoviters, Ich verwighe dan papistens, Martinisten, Doopsghesinden, ende haers ghelijcken, als sy ons niet en molesteren, ende elcken een van ons zijn ghevoelen laten houden? Willen wy haerlyden van het ongheloove totten rechten gheloove brenghen, laet ons sulcks niet met schelden, lasteren, achterklappen ende vervolginghe doen: Maer met aller vriendtlickheyte ende bescheydenheyte, spreekende met hun uyt des Heeren woordt:” Coolhaes, *Tsamenspreekinghe*, Gij.

69. Coolhaes, *Tsamenspreekinghe*, Gij.

to Paul's teaching, he will think further about this; i.e., "test everything and keep the good."⁷⁰
The three part on friendly terms.

We should note in conclusion that Coolhaes in this book expressed many of his signature views in an irenic spirit of dialogue. For instance, he defended the rights of the Mennonites, with whom theologically he had little in common. Interestingly, he also included the rights of the Catholic population in his defense.

In the following year, 1602, Coolhaes wrote an addition to this work, called *Aenhechtsel*.⁷¹ He is, without doubt, the author. He included verses and the letters of his name and cities (*Caspar Coolhaes van Collen Woonende Tot Amsterdam*; "Caspar Coolhaes from Cologne living in Amsterdam") concealed throughout as a puzzle. It is a cheerful little book, in which reason and mutual understanding prevail. Customers in a bookshop, who are reading the *Tsamenspreekinghe*, strike up a conversation with the tolerant and confessionally "impartial" Bookseller. The Bookseller is amused that both are reading *Tsamenspreekinghe* – one with smiles (a Jesuit, sympathetically portrayed), but the other with frowns (a Calvinist).⁷² Eventually the three characters, despite their disagreements, establish a peaceful, respectful dialogue. Coolhaes' own views are expressed by the tolerant and impartial Bookseller. Burger says:

This is clearly Coolhaes himself, and I cannot get away from the impression that this, as well as other books and his prints, would also have lain in the shop for sale, beside the medicinal waters. And I have no doubt that the shopkeeper would always have been completely prepared to discuss and exchange thoughts with his customers.⁷³

As we saw earlier, the genre of conversation, or "pamphlet dialogue," was not new to Coolhaes. He had written his first conversation in *Apologia*, in which he had put his own views in the mouths of both his own character and Theophilus. Other authors had written in

70. Coolhaes, *Tsamenspreekinghe*, G.

71. Caspar Coolhaes, *Aenhechtsel aen t' boecxken of tsamenspreekinghe, ouer het regireus plackaet van Groninghen aldaer ghekondicht den 7. September. ouden stijl, 1601. Ofte antwoordt, op de opspraeck by sommighen ghedaen, teghen het drucken ende verkoopen des selfdes. Vervatet in een t'samenspreekinghe van drie personen, als boeckverkooper, partidich gereformeerde, ende een jesuwijt* (N.p., 1601).

72. Coolhaes, *Aenhechtsel*, Aij.

73. "Dit is duidelijk Coolhaes zelf, en ik kan mij aan den indruk niet onttrekken dat deze, en nog wel andere boekjes even goed als zijne schilderijen, ook in zijn winkel zullen te koop gelegen hebben, naast de geneeskragtige wateren; en ik twijfel niet of de winkelier zal dan steeds ten volle bereid geweest zijn met zijn bezoekers over 't een en ander van gedachten te wisselen." Moes and Burger, *De Amsterdamsche boekdrukkers*, 97.

this conversational genre; one thinks first of Erasmus. Erasmus often used this genre to distance himself from dangerous views which he held, by having them spoken by a third person in a fictional conversation.⁷⁴ Coornhert had also used this genre. Anonymously, he wrote *Schijndeugt der Secten* in 1574. It described a voyage on the Rhine with a Calvinist, a Lutheran, a Mennonite, and an “impartial” Catholic who discuss religious issues. In it Coornhert defends Schwenckfeld, Franck and Castellio, but concludes that varied “ceremonies” are not important enough to make one leave “Mother Church.” Coornhert in 1590 wrote a conversation between a Roman Catholic, a Reformed Protestant and a character called “Pacifijc,” a peaceful advocate of tolerance. The moral of that story was that ecclesiastical differences were inevitable, but concord was vital for a society.⁷⁵ Coolhaes was likely inspired in certain ways by both writers.

It is notable that despite Coolhaes’ earlier fear of the Spanish troops (as well as his own monastic past), he expresses doctrinal disagreement with Catholicism but no hatred or fear of the Catholics. In neither the *Tsamenspreekinghe* or the *Aenhechtsel* does Coolhaes link Catholics negatively with the Spanish. If this had been written slightly later, in 1609 or after, one might have expected this relatively conciliatory attitude, because of the Twelve Years’ Truce. There was new openness on the part of those in the Northern Netherlands then to those from the Southern Netherlands, and even in a way to experiencing something of Catholicism, for the sake of possible “national” unity. However, already in 1600 and just beyond, the States General were writing in hope of a reconciliation of North and South.⁷⁶

Coolhaes’ opposition to the Severe Edict was not only through fiction, however. An argument erupted with the Calvinistic Wijnant Kras, who wrote *Antwoordt op een faemroovend Boeck*⁷⁷ in which he strongly criticized Coolhaes and Rolwaghen for

74. Erika Rummel, “Erasmus and the Art of Communication: Willing to Publish, But Not to Perish,” in M.E.H.N. Mout, H. Smolinsky, and J. Trapman, eds., *Erasmianism: Idea and Reality* (Amsterdam: Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen, 1997), 30.

75. Bonger, *Leven en werk*, 79; Dirck Volckertsz Coornhert, “Wortel der Nederlandsche oorloghen met aenwijsinghe tot inlantsche eendracht,” in II deel van Dieryck Volertsz Coornherrts wercken (1590), chapter 6, www.coornhert.dpc.uba.uva.nl/cgi/t/text-idx?c=coo;idno=coo.0102;view=text;rgn=div1;node=coo.01.02%3A9 (accessed January 27 2016). Mentioned in Van Gelderen, *The Political Thought of the Dutch Revolt*, 255.

76. Judith Pollmann, “No Man’s Land. Reinventing Netherlandish Identities, 1585-1621,” in *Networks, Regions and Nations*, 245-47, 249-50, 256-57.

77. Wijnant Kras, *Antwoordt op een faem-roovend boeck, het welcke ghenaeemt is: Tsamenspreekinghe van drye personen, ouer het regireus placcaet van Groninghen* (Amsterdam: S. J. Gerritsz, 1602).

Tsamenspreekinghe. He printed in the work the page-long decision of the States of Holland from December 4, 1581, in which Coolhaes is said not to be “one in teaching with the Reformed Church.”⁷⁸ Rolwaghen responded by writing *Corte bestraffingh*,⁷⁹ while Coolhaes replied in *Een noodwendighe broederlycke vermaninge* in 1602.⁸⁰ Coolhaes addresses two substantive topics in his book: the assembly of the non-Reformed, and the practice of performing weddings outside of Reformed Churches.

Coolhaes had not intended to write further to Kras.⁸¹ However, a new work appeared defending the Edict, entitled *Apologia*,⁸² by scientist and mathematician Johannes Acronius Frisius, 1602, which derided Coolhaes for his unwillingness to answer further. Coolhaes wrote that this *Apologia* accused him of being a “Goliath - a captain of all godless sects,” and a *libertijnsche rol-waghen drijver*, coming in the place of Coornhert to disturb the peace of the country.⁸³ He responded with *Missive aan den Authoor van die Apologia*. It begins with a poem by Coolhaes about the office of preacher – that a preacher must be pure of heart and taught by God, standing on God’s Word and thinking about it repeatedly, to determine God’s will.⁸⁴ Coolhaes is incensed that this person whom he does not know would criticize his

78. Kras, *Antwoort*, folio Gijjr.

79. Jan Claessen Kotte Rolwaghen, *Corte bestraffingh op d’antwoort van een sorchvuldich held, die hem al te regireus in de wapens stelt. Wijnant Kras, liecht op dit pas, veel leughens groot: Waer dat het stondt, ick noyt en vondt, t’geen hy schrijft bloot*, 1602. H. C. Rogge, *Geschriften betreffende de Nederlandsche Hervormde Kerk* (J. H. Scheltema, Amsterdam, 1864). See also: *NNBW*, vol. 2, 88-89.

80. Caspar Coolhaes, *Een noodwendighe broederlycke vermaninge aen zijnen voor zeeckere jaren bekenden vriendt, ende nu ter tijt door zijn eyghen in druck wt ghegeven schriften zijnde onwetenden broeder, genaempt Wijnant Kras, woonende buyten Jan Rooden poort, opt Lijnbaens Pat* (Amsterdam: P. Ghevaerts, 1602).

81. He states this plainly in Coolhaes, *Een noodtwendighe broederlijcke vermaninghe*, Eijr.

82. Johannes Acronius Frisius, *Apologia, ofte verandtwordinghe des edicts, het welcke van een eerbaren raet der stadt Groeningen, tegen der der Wederdooperen ende andere secten onordeningen, den 7 septemb. des jaers 1601 ghepubliceert is. Ende door eenen onghenoemden libertyn, met allerley valsche ende niet weerdich gheschrey, aengheblast is gheworden. Tot onderrichtinghe der eenvoudighen, wt bevel eenes erberaeds, nu nieulick ghestellet, ende in druck uytghegeven. Ende nae het Sassische exemplaer, in Nederlandsche tale ghedruckt* (Groningen: Gerardt Ketel, 1602). As the title suggests, there was also a German-language edition of this work.

83. Coolhaes, *Cort, waerachtich verhael*, 148.

84. Caspar Coolhaes, *Missive van den authoor van die Apologia, over het placact ofte edict, eenes eersameen wijsen raets der stadt Groningen: in die welcke de voorschreven authoor na t’bevel der godtlijcker schrijftuere, broederlijck met goeder manieren bestraft wordt, van t’ghene hy teghen den aert der christelijcker liefde, openbaerlijck voor alle de werelt, onder t’decksel van d’authoriteit desselven e. w. raedts, met grooter*

Aenhechtsel, which did not in any case speak about the Edict or the situation in Groningen or Friesland directly.

In his next work, Coolhaes went on to summarize some of his research about the views of earlier Frisian Anabaptists, in order to prove that their views were biblical and that their intentions were peaceful. The centerpiece, from which the book gets its title, is the *Summa*, i.e. “Confession of Faith of the preachers of East Friesland.”⁸⁵ In this work, published in Amsterdam on November 20, 1603, he brings together a selection of the writings of several authors. Although an interesting document, we will not review its contents here. The important point is that Coolhaes defended the Frisian Mennonites through his writings as much as he was able.⁸⁶

How close was Coolhaes, in his views, to the Mennonites? On one side, he is seen to be very sympathetic at various points to them. As we have seen, during the Leiden schisms of 1579-1580, he disagreed with colleague Hesperus about the case of Jan Janszoon, a former Mennonite who regardless of his older unbaptized children wanted to have a new baby baptized, and even to train as a preacher in the city’s Reformed Church.⁸⁷ Coolhaes encouraged him in both things. Now, with his positive attention to the Frisian Anabaptists and their *Summa*, one certainly wonders about a possible affinity.

It should be mentioned that although Coolhaes should be identified as a Spiritualist,⁸⁸ this does not automatically put him in the camp of the “Radical Reformation.” He did not become a Mennonite at any point in his life. In the early years of his ministry and throughout his time in Leiden he was at the center of the Reformed conflicts. He did not identify as a Mennonite in his writings, and was never accused of being one by his detractors, who would certainly have done so if there was any evidence.⁸⁹ In fact, when he

onwaerheyt, zijnen naesten onschuldich, van wercken des doots weerdich zijnde, beschuldicht, tot voorder bericht ende na-dencken, desselven e. w. raedts, ende des onpartijdighen lesers (N.p., 1602), Ar.

85. Coolhaes, *Summa*.

86. Coolhaes does not address whether the “apocalyptic” actions of early Anabaptists in Friesland and Amsterdam were good or biblical, or the split of the “quietist” Mennonites from the “revolutionary” Anabaptists. For more information, see Cornelius J. Dyck, William E. Keeney, and Alvin J. Beachy, trans. and eds., *The Writings of Dirk Philips, 1504–1568* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1992), 22-25.

87. See Coolhaes, *Breeder bericht*, folio 2r.

88. We will discuss this extensively in Chapter 6.

was accused by fellow preacher Lucas Hesper from the pulpit, who mentioned his views in connection with those of several others including Menno, he wrote that he never considered any of them to be true teachers.⁹⁰ He also wrote that he had no doubt about infant baptism.⁹¹ In addition, he criticized the Mennonites equally with the Roman Catholics, Lutherans and Reformed as falling short of the ideals which they themselves claimed to exemplify.⁹² He never wrote in his own books about current Mennonite beliefs such as the wrongness of oath-taking or the necessity of adult baptism.⁹³ Unlike most Mennonites, he was always positive and supportive of the secular government. Despite his criticism of the Calvinists, he apparently continued to attend the Reformed Church even after his excommunication and in Amsterdam later in life, since the preacher Petrus Plancius felt it necessary to make a pastoral visit, as we have seen earlier. Also, even in his later works he spoke in favor of the Reformed faith.⁹⁴ Therefore, it seems very clear that Coolhaes was not in any way a Mennonite. As with his translations of Spiritualist Franck, and his support of future Socinian Erasmus Johannes, Coolhaes' defense of the Frisian Mennonites comes not from changes in his views, but out of his desire to promote and protect diversity in the visible church.

Meanwhile, all of this writing brought the critical eyes of the Reformed back to Coolhaes. In 1603, the Synod in Brielle voted to excommunicate Coolhaes again,⁹⁵ but he says in the *Summa* that it was not done because of the intervention of the commissioners in

89. It is true that he was accused once of being a David-Jorist, which he denied vehemently. Coolhaes, *Een noodwendighe broederlijcke vermaninghe*, Ciiijr, Dr.

90. Coolhaes, *Breeder bericht*, folios 4v–r.

91. Coolhaes, *Breeder bericht*, folio 11r.

92. Coolhaes, *Toutzsteen*, folios Jijr–Jiiijv.

93. Coolhaes does not teach about baptism in the way a Mennonite would. For the Anabaptist perspective, see Leonard Verduin, trans., and J. C. Wenger, ed., *The Complete Writings of Menno Simons* (Scottsdale, PA: Mennonite Publishing House, 1956), 120-42, 229-87.

94. One example is in the extended title of his *Remonstrantie aen zijne prinslijcke excellentie*, 1608: "... t'ghene, dat nootlick naer eysch der heyligher godlijcker schriftuere, ende ghereformeerde professie, ter eeren Godes ende stichtinge van veel duyzent menschen behoorde..." title page. Caspar Coolhaes, *Remonstrantie aen zijne prinslijcke excellentie, ende de edele (door Godes genade) zeer vermogende ende gereformeerde heeren staten ende steden der verreenighde ende gereformeerde Neder-landen, indewelcke (onder verbeteringe) aenghewezen wordt t'ghene, dat nootlick naer eysch der heyligher godlijcker schriftuere, ende ghereformeerde professie, ter eeren Godes ende stichtinge van veel duyzent menschen behoorde: ende met kleyne moyte verbeteret zal kunnen werden*. Gouda: J. Migoen, 1608.

95. Coolhaes is mentioned only once in passing, as an example of disunity, in W. C. Visser, *De classis Brielle 1574-1623* (Leiden: University Dissertation, 2013), CCXLI. He is not mentioned in the acts of the classis of Brielle, included as part of the same dissertation.

the name of the States.⁹⁶ This is more evidence that throughout this time he had been a member of the Reformed Church in Amsterdam – presumably receiving the Lord’s Supper occasionally. Coolhaes in this period signed his name openly on his works and also called himself a “legally-called minister of the Word,”⁹⁷ which must have angered many.

Almanacs and superstitions

Coolhaes was also preoccupied, from the first years of the 1600’s onwards, with writing against the growing popularity of almanacs in the Netherlands. Almanacs, known in the ancient world and the Middle Ages, were little books for popular use, which combined a calendar for planting and local events with astronomical and astrological information. In the Middle Ages the illuminated *Books of Hours* (*getijdenboeken*) also included almanac sections. Month by month, they gave people an overview of church holidays and saints’ days, as well as seasonal illustrations and sometimes pictures of astrological signs. Coolhaes believed that almanacs encouraged many superstitious practices derived from popular Catholicism and astrology, and posed an obstacle to a godly life. Several of his publications in this period of his life addressed the concern which he had for the health of churches and society.

After the invention of the hand-printing press, separate almanacs were produced with woodcut illustrations. Printed almanacs were popular in the Netherlands throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.⁹⁸ Despite the religious changes in society, they retained many of the old Catholic elements, such as saints’ days, the dates of Lent, and the appointed Bible texts for each week. They also included practical data which people could use, such as the phases of the moon and schedules of the tides, and also astrology, to help people predict something of the coming year. Predictions were made in almanacs in four general areas: weather, sickness, the economy, and politics.⁹⁹ The almanacs sometimes listed medical

96. Coolhaes, *Summa*, folios F4v-F4r.

97. Coolhaes, *Summa*, folios title page-A2.

98. Jeroen Salman, *Een handdruk van de tijd. De almanak en het dagelijks leven in de Nederlanden 1500–1700* (Delft: Stedelijke Museum Het Prinsenhof, 1997), 9.

99. Salman, *Een handdruk van de tijd*, 50.

information. Bloodletting, surgery and other practices were often tied in peoples' minds to special days, and dependent on astrological factors.¹⁰⁰ Astrology had been a preoccupation of ordinary people and the learned alike for some time. Many were interested in the movements of the heavenly bodies, looking to them for signs of the rise and fall of empires and of the Second Coming.¹⁰¹ The woodcuts accompanying each month often featured the agricultural activities of that month, whether planting, reaping, slaughtering, wine-making, or whatever. They sometimes also had whimsical illustrations of children playing gaily in blooming spring fields or skating in icy December. Some were of a type called *schrijfcalendars*: empty spaces were left after the dates of each month so that people could write in their own information or records.

Early in his Leiden ministry, as we have seen, Coolhaes was seemingly indifferent to the keeping of "Catholic" practices such as funeral sermons and celebrations not held on Sundays. However in this case and by this point in his life, Coolhaes was convinced that almanacs and popular emphasis on saints' days and other Catholic practices were misleading and dangerous to the unlearned. He was not the only one to think so. The references to saints' days was troubling to many Reformed preachers, since at the Synod of Dordrecht in 1574, the decision was made that all celebration of saints' days should be stopped. The publishers of the almanacs, however, wished to attract new Reformed customers to buy the popular almanacs, while not alienating the Catholic sectors of the population.¹⁰² Nevertheless, Coolhaes appears to be one of the first, if not the first, to attack the genre of the almanac directly, and to attempt to "reform" the genre.¹⁰³ Other "Reformed" almanacs began appearing ten to fifteen years later, after 1618. The well-known Reformed preacher and pietist Willem Teellinck also wrote against them in the 1620's.¹⁰⁴

Almanacs, Coolhaes felt, encouraged superstitions and reliance on saints throughout the church year. They also linked these saints, the seasons of the years, agricultural schedules

100. Salman, *Een handdruk van de tijd*, 57-68.

101. For the story of a German astrologer from the early sixteenth century, see Paul Albert Russel, "Astrology as Popular Propaganda. Expectations of the End in the German Pamphlets of Joseph Grünpeck (+1533?)," in Rotondo, *Forme e destinazione*, 165-95.

102. Salman, *Een handdruk van de tijd*, 70-71.

103. Rogge claims he was the first to do so. Rogge, *Caspar Janszoon Coolhaes*, vol. 2, 113. See a reproduction of his portrait and the cover of his *Trouwe waerschouwinghe* in Salman, *Een handdruk van de tijd*, 46-47, 70.

104. Salman, *Een handdruk van de tijd*, 70-74.

and seafaring. They emphasized astrology: the planets, the moon and the sun. Although recognizing that people dealing with the water needed to know the phases of the moon, he deplored the superstitious nature of these topics, which exalted the heavenly bodies rather than giving glory to and depending on God the Creator of that natural world. He complained about the prevalence of fortune-tellers and soothsayers in what should have been a Reformed nation. Coolhaes also criticized the Reformed Church and even the government for forbidding the printing of controversial theological books – books which Coolhaes felt were much less dangerous to the common people – but doing nothing against these almanacs and other books which encouraged superstitions among the simplest of the populace.¹⁰⁵

In 1606, Coolhaes tried to reform this genre by publishing his own *Comptoir-almanach*.¹⁰⁶ It consisted of twelve calendar pages, one for each month, including the appointed Scripture readings for each Sunday and an occasional mention of a holiday. It is a *schrijfcalendar*, with plenty of spaces for individuals to write things in. Various waterways are listed with times of the tides.¹⁰⁷ The second part of the *Comptoir-Almanac*¹⁰⁸ has come down to us in a separate edition called *Christelycke ende stichtelycke vermaningen*.¹⁰⁹ It is a

105. Caspar Coolhaes, *Comptoir Almanach: oft journal, op het jaer nae de geboorte onses Heeren ende salijcmakers Jesu Christi, M.DC.VI. Warin achter aen plaetse van duslange gebruyckten ende mit de warachtighe prognosticatie, ofte practijcken, tot onderwijnsinge ende stichtinge des lesers, het recht gebruyck eens yeghelijcken voornaemsten feestdags angewesen ende het misbruyck derselver, als oock de verscheyden Bachus feesten: vastelavont: vasteldaghen: bededaghen ende vierdaghen uyt des Heeren woort bestraft worden, seer profijtelyck ende stichtelyck te lessen. door C. Crambi-Lagon* (t'Amstelredam: Jan Thennisz., 1606). 20.

106. Coolhaes, *Comptoir Almanach*, title page. Coolhaes uses the unexplained author's name C. Crambi-Lagon, which Burger mentions is a Greek-like version of Coolhaes' own name. Moes and Burger, *De Amsterdamsche boekdrukkers*, 118. Another calendar, *Christelijcke Schrijf-calendar*, 1606? mentioned in Moes and Burger, *De Amsterdamsche boekdrukkers*, 36, is presumed non-extant.

107. Coolhaes, *Comptoir Almanach*, 15, 16. (N.B.: this work has no page numbers marked.)

108. There is a copy in the Erfgoed Leiden en omstreken (formerly Leiden Regional Archive) in the large book which contains *Apologia* and is labeled on the spine *Alle Werken van Caspar Coolhaes*. It comes immediately after *Comptoir-Almanach* and looks at first like part of the same work; however, the quarto numbers start with B in *Christelycke ende stichtelycke vermaningen*. There is also a copy in UBL; however, the title/first sentence is slightly different. Burger also believes that these works belong together. Petit lists a similar work called #23 *Over het rechte gebruyck en misbruyck der feestdagen en Bachusfeesten*, Amsterdam 1606.

109. Caspar Coolhaes, *Christelycke ende stichtelycke vermaningen aen plaetse van dus lang gebruyckten, ende min dan waerachtigen prognosticatie ende practijcken, in de welcken het rechte gebruyck eens yegelijcken voornemsten feestdag aangewesen, ende het misbruyck der selven (als oock der verscheyden Bachus feesten vastelavonden, vasteldaghen, bededaghen ende vierdaghen) wt des Heeren woort aengewesen ende bestraffen worden tot dienst van alle den genen, die Christum Jesum, en in hem de eeuwige salicheyt van herten soecken* (N.p., 1607). Rogge also reprints excerpts from this work, which he discovered after he had written his biography of Coolhaes, in Rogge, *De Roomsche feestdagen*.

long collection of short exhortations (in other words, sermons) for each Sunday and holiday of the year. As such, they are interesting examples of how Coolhaes may actually have preached. Other preachers from Coolhaes' time, including his fellow libertine Herman Herberts, left written sermons, but no real sermons by Coolhaes from his preaching years are extant. Within various of these exhortations are reminiscences about Coolhaes' early life in Cologne; also, criticism of the veneration of saints and the Virgin, and of pagan holiday practices, especially "Bachus festivals" and *Coppelkens* (the Monday after Three Kings Day/Epiphany/Twelfth Night; a day devoted to romance and subsequent excesses).¹¹⁰ It should be noted that although Coolhaes in his other books advocates freedom for Catholics, here he calls many of their folk-practices useless, ugly, and against the commands in Scripture (for instance, dressing up in clothes of the opposite sex as part of festivities on the evening before Ash Wednesday). He condemns Ash Wednesday as coming not from Scripture, but from the devil.¹¹¹ He objects to the excessive holiday eating and drinking, and to laziness and useless games. One wonders if Coolhaes is less tolerant to Catholics, or whether he has just become more conservative in his old age. Regardless of any personal motives, the general rise and spread of a Puritanistic spirit in society may also be an important factor here.

In keeping with the criticism of Catholicism in this book, Coolhaes also mentions Justus Lipsius' return to the Catholic Church, and judges him very negatively. He had been acquainted with Lipsius since at least the early days of the Leiden Schism – Lipsius as rector had signed the *Arbitral Accord*.¹¹² He complains that he had been Lipsius' good friend for twenty years, but had never really known him.¹¹³

110. Coolhaes, *Christelycke ende stichtelycke vermaningen* C-Ciiijb. For a mention of Coolhaes and Twelfth-night customs as written about by Rogge, see Anke A. van Wagenberg-Ter Hoeven, "The Celebration of Twelfth Night in Netherlandish Art," in *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art*, 22 (1993-94), 65-96. See also Wayne E. Franits, *Dutch Seventeenth-century Genre Painting: Its Stylistic and Thematic Evolution* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 47, 267; Franits mentions that he is indebted to Van Wagenberg-Ter Hoeven.

111. Rogge, *De Roomsche feestdagen*, 6-7.

112. Kooi, *Liberty and Religion*, 220.

113. Kist, "J. Lipsius door Caspar Coolhaes beoordeeld," 425-27. For more about Lipsius' early life, time in Leiden and return to the south, see H. T. Oberman, "Van Leiden naar Leuven: de overgang van Justus Lipsius naar een 'Roomse universiteit,'" in *Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis* 5 (1908): 68-111, 191-227, 269-304 (especially 203-206 and 302 in which Coolhaes is mentioned on the basis of Rogge's biography).

In 1607, Coolhaes continued his battle against almanacs and published *Trouwe waerschouwinghe*.¹¹⁴ He praised the Netherlands as a country with knowledge of God, whose magistrates were enlightened enough to rid the formerly Catholic Churches of idols of wood and stone, and where true religion is preached, rather than monks' fables. By God's grace, he continued, the Lord States have forbidden the printing of papist, religious books which might mislead the average citizen.¹¹⁵ It is thus amazing that this Christian government permits the publication of almanacs, which contain unchristian prognostications and practices, as well as Catholic superstitions, and references to the planets and phases of the moon. It is astounding, he commented wryly, that our godly Reformed theologians and preachers have not thought up some better form of calendar.¹¹⁶

Coolhaes continued to enumerate the dangers of the almanacs. They are written in the vernacular and for the average reader, and are cheap, so they are more pernicious than Latin theological treatises. They contain amorous songs.¹¹⁷ They bring astrology into the Dutch context, which is a system of belief unknown to earlier generations in Holland.¹¹⁸ They promote patron saints for various maladies.¹¹⁹ These sorts of things are Satanic lies, from prognosticators and seers. They make the average Dutch person, who believes in the true God but is otherwise blind, worse off than, as he puts it, the Turks and Saracens, the wild people of the East and West Indies, and others in such places in Asia, Africa and America¹²⁰ today. This is because, as Jesus says, the servant who says he will obey the master, but who does not prepare for him or do his will, shall be beaten.¹²¹ In other words, the Dutch are the unfaithful

114. Caspar Coolhaes, *Trouwe waerschouwinge voor den schandelijcken abuysen offte misbruycken der almanacken, de welcke (gelijk alle andere valsche godes-diensten) uyt de schatcamer der verscheyden pausen ghecomen zijn, ende daerom niet minder, reformation van doen hebben als de kerck en staende vol afgodische beelden, outaren ende dergelijcken: doch met minder moyte ende arbeyt vernielt ende in haer gheheel (ghelijck zij tallen tijden bij de kercken Gods gheweest zijn) gestalt zullen connen worden. Allen Godt-vresenden magistraten ende predicanten als oock eenenjegelijcken van herten Godt-vresenden menschen ter prove voor-gesteld door Casparvm Coelhaes* (Gouda: J. Migoen, 1607).

115. Coolhaes, *Trouwe waerschouwinge*, Aij.

116. Coolhaes, *Trouwe waerschouwinge*, Aijr.

117. Coolhaes, *Trouwe waerschouwinge*, Dr.

118. Coolhaes, *Trouwe waerschouwinge*, Aiiij–Aiiij.

119. Coolhaes, *Trouwe waerschouwinge*, BB.

120. This is Coolhaes' only mention of America in his works.

121. Coolhaes, *Trouwe waerschouwinge*, Bijr.

servants of Jesus' parable. Also, the almanacs are full of various "practices." Thieves can practice how to steal, but good people can and should practice goodness.¹²² People are hungry and thirsty for righteousness, but instead are fed these useless fables.¹²³ In conclusion, Coolhaes fears that he will get criticism from booksellers and astrologers for his views, and that the preachers, whose job it should be to defend the truth, will not thank him either.¹²⁴

In 1608 Coolhaes published another model, or specimen, for a Reformed almanac or calendar. This is a very short booklet, similar to the *Comptoir-Almanac* but with the addition of little poems for each month, which emphasize God's creation, provision and blessings throughout the year. No author for the little poems is given; perhaps it is Coolhaes himself.¹²⁵

Theology and academia: Arminius and Gomarus

In Coolhaes' later years, he also looked on with disapproval as the conflict between professors Gomarus and Arminius was brewing in the "ivory tower"¹²⁶ of Leiden University. He weighed in on the theological disputes for which they are known, as well as on the question of learning versus spirituality. Coolhaes in these writings showed himself to be closer to Arminius than to Gomarus about predestination (his view has been called "conditional predestination"¹²⁷), but did not hesitate to rebuke both theologians for what he felt was a concentration on non-essential doctrines at the expense of Christlikeness.

By way of background, we will survey Coolhaes' views on predestination and free will as they developed, since in these writings to the Leiden theologians, he also looked back on his defrocking and excommunication as a result of the Synods in Middelburg and The

122. Coolhaes, *Trouwe waerschouwinge*, Ciiijr.

123. Coolhaes, *Trouwe waerschouwinge*, Dd.

124. Coolhaes, *Trouwe waerschouwinge*, Diiij–Diiijr.

125. As one example, here is the poem for April: *De boomen beginnen nu te bloyen/ Het velt vangt aen overall te groyen/ Geeft Heer dat wij in deugden bloyen schoon/ Om in weinich te kome u voor uwen troon* ("The trees begin now to bloom, the field everywhere is growing. Lord, may we also beautifully bloom in virtue, that we may soon come to You before Your throne."). Coolhaes, *Specimen ofte Monster Eens Christelijcken Calendars ofte Almanac*, Aij.

126. Coolhaes did not use this expression, but this was his attitude.

127. This term used of Coolhaes' views in Stanglin and McCall, *Jacob Arminius*, 44.

Hague in 1581-1582, especially on the theological points which he had debated there. Earlier, in Essen in 1571, Coolhaes had appeared close to the Melanchthonian synergist position of justification – that man cooperates with God by having contrition and repenting. Also, as we have mentioned, Coolhaes was quoted as saying, at The Hague in 1581, that all people were given the ability to accept the grace offered by Christ.¹²⁸ This all was at odds with the developing Calvinist doctrines of total depravity, unconditional election and limited atonement, and was disturbing to the Reformed preachers at the Synod. In his *Sendtbrief*, Coolhaes clarified:

From the other of the first four articles, one speaks of free will, of which I hold that the same fell away in Adam, that we by nature, are unable and unfit to think of the good as well as to accomplish it. However, God gave all people grace (note: grace) in the Word: in the Word I say, and not from nature, so that all people without exception are offered grace, and this allows that they may accept [the offer of] sonship. This is because it is separated far from God's goodness to condemn a person; for him not to be able to do what he wanted to do would be impossible. The Impartial Reader, reading my words, will reasonably wonder where I am to have contradicted myself, since the unity is so clear. I also do not mean that someone would have accused me of false teaching in this, unless he had gone so far with predestination that he would have all err in a deadly way, and rather confess God the Lord to be a cause of evil – that is, that he is not to be trusted; that he would have created someone for condemnation.¹²⁹

It is important to note that here Coolhaes affirms his belief in original sin. Also important is that here Coolhaes says that he would not want God to be considered to be a cause of evil. He would say that God in his Word says that God extends grace to all. God both states it in his Word, and offers it through his Word, Coolhaes implied. He also spoke about “good works.” Can people do the good they need to do, to be able to turn to God? Coolhaes emphasized that God's judgments are unsearchable and beyond human understanding.¹³⁰ The fourth

128. See Chapter 3.

129. “Van de anderen vier articulen deses eersten stucx, is een vande vrije wille sprekende, waer van ick houde, dat die selve in Adam also vervallen is, dat wy van naturen tot goedts te dencken, also wel als om te volbrenghe, onnut ende onbequam zijn: Maer wederom, dat God alle menschen die ghenade (mercet die ghenade) int woord, int woord segghe ick, ende niet van natueren ghegheven heeft, om die alle man sonder wtneminghe van persoon aengebodene genade, ende desen geeft der kintschap aen te nemen. Ende dat daeromme, wantet verre van Godts goetheyt verscheyden is, den mensche te verwijten, dat hy niet doen wilde tgunt, dat hem te doen soude onmogelijck zijn. De onpertidighe Leser, sal lesende mijn eyghen woorden, hem billicks te verwonderen hebben, waer in ick my soude moghen teghensproken hebben, daer de eenicheyt soo claer is. Ick en meen oock niet dat my yemant hier in valsscher leer soude te beschuldighen hebben, ten waer dat hy hem so verre mette predestinatie verlopen hadde, dat hy soude meynen alle de ghene dootlick te feylen, de welcke God den Heer liever hebben, als dat sy hem voor eenen oorsaeck des quaets souden bekennen connen: Dat is, dat sy hem niet toe vertrouwen moghen, dat hy yemant totter onsalicheyt gheschapen heeft.” Coolhaes, *Sendtbrief*, Diiiijr.

proposition at the Middelburg Synod, he said, was, in essence, that God in Adam gave all mankind the grace to be inheritors of God as Adam had first received it. But Adam's fall and sin has killed any ability in man to choose good; the only hope is that God, because of Christ, will extend his grace and enlighten one by the Spirit.¹³¹ Election to salvation or condemnation does not contradict his ideas, Coolhaes believed. Faith is a gift of God. The godless cannot say that God has not extended grace to them. They despised it and did not take it or use it. The guilt is their own. There are many places in the Old and New Testaments in which God offers grace to people, and they do not take it. This means that God is offering all people his grace, and also the grace or power to accept the offered grace.¹³² Otherwise, he would be asking people to do what they were not able to do. Coolhaes said that he agreed with the Synod - that natural man is unfit without God's spirit to take the gifts which are necessary for salvation. Natural man is dead to morality and as such not virtuous enough to "do the good."¹³³

But in regard to the five theses of the first group in Middelburg, Coolhaes says that all the "good" – wisdom, virtue, with which men are gifted – is from God, wherever it appears. Good works are valued, even when they are misused. God did not rob his creatures of all righteousness and truth, but the unrighteous annex the good gifts of God and take possession of them.¹³⁴ People who are not Christians, he seems to be saying, can also do "good." In this he seems to foreshadow a denial of what would be called total depravity. The Synod thought his views were self-contradictory.

Coolhaes' wording here gives us a clue to some of the differences between his formulations and what the Synod might have wanted. They use the term "good work" to mean different things. For him, "doing the good" is not the initial turning to God which the

130. The whole discussion can be found in *Conciliatio*, Fijj–Gijr.

131. Coolhaes, *Conciliatio*, Fiiijr and G.

132. His words are: "... waerwt onwedersprekelick volgen moet/ dat hy (gebenedijt in der eewicheyt) henluyden/ wie ooc allen menchen aenbiedende zijne genade/ mede die genade ofte crachten geeft/ om die aengeboden ghenade te aenveerden: want anders soude hy/ tonrecht hen verwijten dat sy niet doen en willen het gene/ dat sy niet doen en connen." Coolhaes, *Conciliatio*, Gr.

133. "So veel sy dan nu (segghe ick) natuerlick menschen zyn, dat is/ sonder Godes geest ende ghenade/ so bekenne ick vry rondt met den Synodo/ dat sy onbequaem zyn, om die gaven tot der salicheyt van nooden, aen te nemen, ja dat sy gheheel na der zeden gestorven, ende dat sy over sulcx nu ondeuchdich zijn gheworden om goets te doen &c." Coolhaes, *Conciliatio*, Gr.

134. Coolhaes, *Sendtbrief*, E.

preachers meant, but living the Christian life - being “moral” and “virtuous” - words which in addition may have sounded too humanistic for the preachers’ liking. His emphasis on moral living as the good may also have seemed like agreement with Coornhertian human perfectibility. But from a Calvinist standpoint, a person is totally helpless to do the first “good work” of all – turn to God – unless he is predestined and elect, and it seemed heretical and Pelagian to suggest it.

Coolhaes spoke to what would become the discussion between limited and unlimited atonement. The good work of turning to God can, “with or through God’s spirit, grace and help,” be done.¹³⁵ For him this is a difference between fleshly, natural man, and man with or through God’s grace. But one who despises God does not want to accept the offered grace, though it was a gift of God which he should have applied and made his own.¹³⁶ If this were not true, Coolhaes says, it would be as though God were like a rich man giving alms to a poor man without hands, on the condition that the poor man reached out his hands to take it. In other words, God would be demanding of humankind something which it had no ability to do. It would be a cruel trick on the part of God to require this. This is why, Coolhaes summarizes, it was so terrible for him to hear the formulation of the Middelburg Synod which, as he puts it, dared to say that God offers all people his grace, but will not give it to all.¹³⁷

“Hard food” served at Leiden University

Coolhaes became concerned that the debate on predestination and related issues was heating up at Leiden University, because it was a distraction to the students and the churches. Also, the lack of peace in itself was troubling to him. His *Naedencken*, published in 1609, is addressed to Arminius and Gomarus.¹³⁸ It will be noted that 1609 is the year in which

135. Coolhaes, *Conciliatio*, Gr.

136. “Nu is mijn seggen dat die ghene, denwelcken Godt verwijt, dat syluyden syne aengheboden ghenade niet en hebben aennemen willen, die gave te voren van Godt ontvanghen hebben, ofte ymmers, int aenbieden te ghelijck van Godt ontvanghen, dat syt ghene dat hem Godt aenbietet, ende van herten willich ende bereyt is te geven, souden aennemen, hen selfs appliceren, ende te eyghen maken moghen.” Coolhaes, *Conciliatio*, Gijr.

137. Coolhaes, *Conciliatio*, Gijr.

Arminius died. Perhaps, therefore, Arminius did not see this book. Coolhaes addressed both professors formally and without references to any earlier acquaintanceship.

Naedencken makes Coolhaes' main point about the predestination/free will controversy clear. According to him, it is a matter so far above the understanding of the natural man that it is not an edifying subject. Other "hard" teachings are equally unprofitable. He names baptism, communion, the divinity and incarnation of Christ, original sin, and the role of the government all in this category of "difficult." The New Testament's metaphor for difficult teachings is that they are "hard food;" in other words, meat, which is difficult to digest, versus "soft food" or milk, which nourishes the young and spiritually immature.¹³⁹

Coolhaes interprets this to mean that difficult doctrines, while they might be discussed occasionally by scholars, are detrimental to the young in age or faith. Jesus and the Apostles preached repentance and the new birth, whereas sixteenth-century reformers spent much of their attention on the dispute of contentious issues.¹⁴⁰ He says that Luther and Zwingli disputed about the Lord's Supper before a church had gathered that was, as he puts it, worthy of receiving it. They argued about baptism before people had learned enough to mourn their sins. These disputes made simple people doubt and err.¹⁴¹ Salvation does not depend on knowledge of these theological points.¹⁴² Disputes do not eliminate opposing viewpoints, but instead they strengthen them and keep them alive.¹⁴³ Disputes between Luther, Zwingli and Karlstadt, for instance, were sown by the Devil and kept the Reformation from realizing its potential.¹⁴⁴

138. Caspar Coolhaes, *Naedencken of de disputatien vande Godtlijcke predestinatie, ende derghelijcken meer, des natuerlijcken menschen verstant verre te boven gaende, oorbaerlijck ende stichtelijck ghetracteert, ofte verhandelt kunnen worden: Ende of Christus onse salichmaker: sijne h. apostelen ende propheten, op eene sodanighe manier van doen, de kercke des Heeren (dewelcke sy tot haren tijden geheel vervallen te zijn ghevonden) ghereformeert hebben, so men huyden-daechs, ende omtrent in de hondert jaren herwaerts te doen, onderstaen heeft. Den eerwaerdighen ende welgheleerden heeren Francisco Gomaro, ende Jacobo Arminio, beyde doctores ende professores theologiae, in de universiteyt tot Leyden in Hollandt: mitsgaders oock der gantscher kercken des Heeren Christi Iesu, ter proeve voorgesteld* (Gouda: Jasper Tournay, 1609).

139. 1 Cor. 3:2; Heb. 5:12; 1 Pet. 2:2.

140. Coolhaes, *Naedencken*, Aijb/4.

141. Coolhaes, *Naedencken*, BB/10.

142. Coolhaes, *Naedencken*, Eb/34.

143. Coolhaes, *Naedencken*, E/33.

144. Coolhaes, *Naedencken*, Bij/11.

In that sense, all of the theological disputes, including those in Leiden, were seen by Coolhaes as primarily spiritual in nature rather than academic. They were the result of good, learned teachers succumbing to Satanically-inspired division; allowing themselves to be preoccupied with fine points of theology or *adiaphora*, rather than concentrating on the nourishing of the young minds with which they have been entrusted. In this, he notes, the four faculties at Leiden University have different tasks. Doctors, lawyers, and humanists can dispute as long as they like, since no one's salvation is dependent upon what they do. But the office of the theologians is not to dispute, but to teach and exhort young and old, learned and unlearned, government and subject to repentance and the virtues of godliness – and not just with words, but with their own repentant life and godly walk.¹⁴⁵ Otherwise, the universities are just as damaging to the state of the church as are divisive synods and councils.¹⁴⁶

Those professors who are truly baptized, both with the baptism of John the Baptist (by which he means repentance), and then with the fiery baptism of Jesus (by which he means with the Holy Spirit), will not dispute, be party-spirited, divisive or violent.¹⁴⁷ Leiden University (which he loves, he said, mentioning that he was able at the beginning of its history to lay the first stone, so to speak¹⁴⁸) was founded by the Prince and the States not to be party-spirited, but to be a greenhouse for young plants – to nurture young men spiritually, as gardeners nurture trees, herbs and flowers. This is an apt Leiden analogy which he employed, by the way, since the famous *Hortus Botanicus* of Leiden University had been planted and nurtured since the arrival of Carolus Clusius in 1593.

The Leiden University *Staten College* wanted to prepare preachers for the Republic. Head of theology Johannes Kuchlinus, colleague of Arminius and Gomarus, would use another metaphor for this process – that of a beehive, from which learned and virtuous bees would fly into all parts of the Republic and sweeten it with the honey they would produce.¹⁴⁹ Coolhaes would agree that the students should be prepared for their future ministries in the

145. Coolhaes, *Naedencken*, Cijj/20–Cijj/21.

146. Coolhaes, *Naedencken*, Eiiijb/40.

147. Coolhaes, *Naedencken*, Eijj/38.

148. Coolhaes, *Naedencken*, Gijj/53.

149. Keith D. Stanglin, *Arminius on the Assurance of Salvation: The Context, Roots, and Shape of the Leiden Debate, 1603-1609* (Leiden: Boston: Brill, 2007), 21.

best possible ways. However, these idle disputations which are going on now, he said, are not in line with the original goal.¹⁵⁰

Coolhaes did not speak much here about the specific questions of predestination and free will.¹⁵¹ He said that the knowledge we have in this life about divine and heavenly things is like nothing more than pieces of broken bottles, or like looking into a dark mirror.¹⁵²

However, he does make one very clear statement:

... the good God and merciful heavenly Father is not the cause of anyone's damnation; on the other hand, no person born and bred from the seed of Adam is the cause of his own salvation. For the one who is saved, is saved by grace, and the one who is damned is damned because of his own sins. Because of unbelief, obstinacy, and stubbornness, he is condemned and cast away from God. This is the way it is, even though we, with our spirit, cannot comprehend or understand it.¹⁵³

Coolhaes, therefore, says that God's grace saves, but God does not condemn. People are the cause of their own condemnation. So, although *Naedencken* is primarily an exhortation to Arminius and Gomarus to nourish more and dispute less, Coolhaes does express, albeit briefly, the paradox he holds in tension on the predestination/free will question.

Coolhaes may be indebted for this way of looking at the question to Caspar Schwenckfeld, who held a view between that of Luther and Erasmus: "in the old man the will is enslaved, but in the new it is free." The new man *had* to choose, and then he *could* choose.¹⁵⁴ After the initial saving grace, obedience and continued growth is needed to

150. Coolhaes, *Naedencken*, Fijr/44.

151. As we have seen, he addresses these issues in his earlier works; the clearest statements are Coolhaes, *Sendtbrief*, Diiijb, and Coolhaes, *Conciliatio*, Gij.

152. Coolhaes, *Naedencken*, Cij/20. The "dark mirror" is, of course, an allusion to 1 Cor. 13:12.

153. "... de goede God ende barmhertighe Hemelsche Vader/ gheen oorsake en is/ van eens eenighen Menschen verdoemenisse/ ende dat daerenteghen oock/ niet een eenich Mensche uyt het zaed Adams vvorgebracht ende gheteelt zijnde/ selfs oorsake soude zijn van sijner eyghener salicheyt. Waerom dan de gene/ die salich worden/ uyt ghenaden salich worden/ ende die/ welke verdoemt worden/ om haerder eyghen sonden/ onghelooove/ obstinaetheyt ende hardneckicheyt willen van Godt verstooten ende verdoempt worden: Al ist soo/ dat wy t'selve met onser vernuft niet en kunnen begrijpen noch verstaen." Coolhaes, *Naedencken*, C/17–Cb/18.

154. Paul L. Maier, *Caspar Schwenckfeld on the Person and Work of Christ. A Study of Schwenckfeldian Theology as its Core* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1959/2004), 12. Peter C. Erb, "The Beginning and End: Caspar Schwenckfeld on the Person of Christ," in *Schwenckfeld in his Reformation Setting* (Pennsburg, PA: Judson Press, 1978), 77. Also see: Christopher Schultz, *A Vindication of Caspar Schwenckfeld von Ossig. An Elucidation of his Doctrine and the Vicissitudes of his Followers* (1769), trans. Elmer Schultz Gerhard (Allentown, PA: Edward Schlechter, 1942). Also see: H. H. Drake Williams III, trans. and ed., *Caspar Schwenckfeld: Eight Writings on Christian Beliefs* (Ontario: Pandora Press, 2006).

continue in salvation. Coolhaes did not mention Schwenckfeld in this connection, but the similarity is there.

But, one could ask, what about original sin? Although Coolhaes said, at the Synod of Middelburg, that he had never denied the doctrine, it does not appear as a factor in his formulations. It could be that this is an area in which his views changed over time. In works written throughout his life, however, he emphasized the need for repentance and change. It would be hard to make a case from his writings for a “total depravity” which would mean that an individual did not have the freedom to “choose the good.”¹⁵⁵

After the death of Arminius, Coolhaes still felt uneasy about the situation at the university. He wrote again to Gomarus: the letter is Coolhaes’ book, *De basuyne ofte trompette Godes*, 1610.¹⁵⁶ The instruments in the title refer to verses from the prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah and Hezekiah, which compare the brass instruments to calls of warning for impending judgment. Coolhaes understands, he said, that Arminius in his last days was unable to respond to his last writing. That Gomarus has still not responded, Coolhaes attributed to his current status as a false teacher, or as a tradesman, neither of which merits a response.¹⁵⁷ He repeated the themes of *Naedencken* – spirituality should not be only in learning, but seen in one’s life in servanthood. The university should teach this reality, and be like a garden for young plants, rather than teaching the student to dispute and argue.¹⁵⁸ Christ is the example: Christ is the one Rector of Leiden University; he is a true theologian in the truth.¹⁵⁹

Coolhaes wrote briefly again against the doctrine of predestination:

How many thousands of people are converted by the disputation about predestination – inspired to salaciousness, to idleness and godlessness, who otherwise would repent and improve their lives? How many are brought to desperation, and hindered, that they could not call out to God or believe, and because of that their prayer is not heard by the Lord?

155. See the discussions about the Synod of Middelburg in Chapter 3, and about his book *Sendtbrief* in Chapter 4 for more details.

156. Caspar Coolhaes, *De basuyne ofte trompette Godes. De welcke sijn goddelijcke majesteyt, den propheet Esaia, ende allen sijnen h. profeten, apostelen, getrouwen herders ende leereren, sonder ophouden te blasen bevolen heft, om sijn volck voor haren erfvyandt, den duyvel, te verwaerschouwen, ten eynde dat sy van hem niet verrascht, ende met den eewighen doot geslaghen mogen worden, tot hunlieden eewich verderffnisse ende onderganck* (Gouda: Jasper Tournay, 1610).

157. Coolhaes, *De basuyne ofte trompette Godes*, Aiiiijr–B.

158. Coolhaes, *De basuyne ofte trompette Godes*, Fij.

159. Coolhaes, *De basuyne ofte trompette Godes*, Hiiiij.

For the person in his prayer (which he makes to the Lord) doubts, and does not think that he will ever be received by the Lord, as James says in 1:6.¹⁶⁰

This is very much like Arminius' concern for the dangers of excessive *securitas*.¹⁶¹ Arminius had considered *securitas* to mean that, because of a person's election, he "persuades himself that, however inattentive he may be to the worship of God, he will not be damned but saved." The other extreme, *desperatio*, is when he "persuades himself that, whatever degree of reverence he may evince towards God, he will not receive any remuneration." Both, said Arminius, are "contrary to faith."¹⁶² In writing this to Gomarus, Coolhaes may be trying to raise one of Arminius' fallen banners.

Reflections on a long life

Coolhaes' final works did not deal with any of the preoccupations of his later years. Instead, once more he set about defending himself and his ideas. Perhaps this defensiveness related to the continued questions about him which came up in the Amsterdam church, as we saw earlier. In 1610, he addressed *Een cort, waerachtich verhael* to the States of Holland. This is his most autobiographical work, an "ego document," and is his second-longest book (after *Apologia*). Coolhaes told the story of how he came to preach in Leiden, and commemorated the events of his life and ministry.¹⁶³ He appealed to the government to be the guardians and foster-parents of the church.¹⁶⁴ The historical reflections in this work, however, have a usefulness beyond Coolhaes' own story. His personal memories were recalled at a time of increasing political tension, already leading to turbulent events. Theological disagreements between Remonstrants and Contra-Remonstrants would result in political conflict and near-

160. "Hoe veel duysent menschen worden door het disputeren van de Predestinatie verkeert: tot wulpsheyt, tot ydelheyt ende tot godloosheyt verweckt, die anders wel boete gedaen, ende haer leven ghebetert souden hebben, ende noch daghelijcx hun beteren soude. Hoe veel menschen worden door de selve in wanhopinghe ghebrocht, ende verhindert, dat sy Godt niet aenroepen noch ghelooven connen, ende dat daeromme oock haer gebedt niet verhoort en wort van den Heere? want de mensche die in sijn ghebedt (t'welck hy tot den Heere doet) twijfelt/ die en denckt niet/ dat hy yet ontfangen sal van den Heere/ soo de H. Jacobus seyt 1.6." Coolhaes, *De basuyne ofte trompette Godes*, Ir.

161. Stanglin and McCall, *Jacob Arminius*, 179-82.

162. Stanglin, *Arminius on the Assurance of Salvation*, 174.

163. Coolhaes, *Cort, waerachtich verhael*, 190.

164. Coolhaes, *Cort, waerachtich verhael*, 194.

civil war. By this book, he intended to warn the members of the States, and indeed all civil government, to rule the church as he believed that they should. His story incorporated the events in Leiden and beyond, and contributed to the collective memory of a time of great political and religious change in the Netherlands.¹⁶⁵

In the next year, 1611, Coolhaes' translations of Gwalther, *Van de Christelijcke Discipline ende excommunicatie* were reprinted in a third edition with Coolhaes' new foreword. This new foreword,¹⁶⁶ dedicated to the Leiden magistracy, gives him a last chance to defend himself, his views and his choices. Coolhaes says that he was re-publishing because, due to his enemies, his works as well as those of the magistracy had been "thrown behind the couch" and suspicious to some in the States.¹⁶⁷ Coolhaes, in addressing the Leiden magistracy, calls himself "very old," and says that "no one to my knowledge has suffered from false brothers as much as poor me."¹⁶⁸ This complaint is anything but new, although here he sounds tired and disillusioned.¹⁶⁹ The people, meanwhile, "take their cues from the Hoeks and Kabeljauws"¹⁷⁰ and go outside the city to satisfy their itching ears with preachers they prefer, which happened earlier in Leiden and Voorschoten, but was now happening also in Alkmaar and Utrecht.¹⁷¹ So Coolhaes, in conclusion, dedicates his work to the magistracy, exhorting them to maintain their rule.¹⁷²

On the personal level, Coolhaes had said earlier of his family "I have lived together honestly with my wife for forty-one years, and have had seventeen children, whom we, as

165. For more discussion of cultures of memory and commemoration in the Netherlands of Coolhaes' time, see "Tales of the Revolt," <https://www.vre.leidenuniv.nl/vre/tales/emm/Pages/Home.aspx> (accessed January 27, 2016).

166. Coolhaes, in this foreword, mentions his later work, *Een cort waerachtich verhael*, which was published in 1610. So this foreword must have been written in 1610 or later. The foreword is thus Coolhaes' last writing. This is Rogge's opinion: Rogge, *Caspar Janszoon Coolhaes*, vol. 2, 150-51.

167. Coolhaes, *Van de christelijcke discipline ende excommunicatie*, 1611 edition, folio Av.

168. "Maer mijns wetens en isser niemant die also vanden valschen Broederen ghequelt is worden als ick arme ..." Coolhaes, *Van de christelijcke discipline ende excommunicatie*, 1611 edition, folios 2b - 3v.

169. See Coolhaes, *Apologia*, folios Bv, Biiv.

170. The well-known feud between the Hoeks and Kabeljauws, two noble families, took place in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. See S. ter Braake, "Parties and Factions in the Late Middle Ages: The Case of the Hoeken and Kabeljauwen in The Hague (1483-1515)," *Journal of Medieval History* 35 (2009): 97-111.

171. Coolhaes, *Van de christelijcke discipline ende excommunicatie*, 1611 edition, folio A2r.

172. Coolhaes, *Van de christelijcke discipline ende excommunicatie*, 1611 edition, folio A3r.

much as we were able, raise in the fear of God; of which twelve fell asleep in the Lord and only five are left, three sons and two daughters, all now adults.”¹⁷³ As for Coolhaes’ wife, Grietje, in 1610 he mentions her again: “my wife (with whom I have been blessed through the Lord to live for fifty years, and with whom I am still living in the married state).”¹⁷⁴ Despite the weaknesses to which she had been subject throughout her life, she lived along with him to a ripe old age.¹⁷⁵ As for the children who had been mentioned in the 1581 census, Sara, Rebeke, Caspar, Adolf, and Judith, some records remain. Sara was married in Leiden on September 6, 1591, to Lambert Jheronimusz of Leiden, an apothecary.¹⁷⁶ Judith is recorded as having been buried in Amsterdam in 1598.¹⁷⁷ Coolhaes’ oldest son, Caspar Casparszoon, was married in Amsterdam in June, 1601, to Jannecken Claesdochter.¹⁷⁸ He later became a full citizen in Gouda in 1616.¹⁷⁹ This Gouda connection is also seen in Coolhaes’ writings - in 1608, Coolhaes brought out a new edition of his *Water-boecxken*, published in Gouda. His *Een basuyne ofte trompette Godes*, 1610, was also published there. Son Adolf Casparszoon was married in Amsterdam in December, 1602, to a woman whose name was Hillether [sic] Claesdochter, and a child of theirs was baptized, also in Amsterdam, in 1604.¹⁸⁰ Adolf took over management of his father’s distillery in Amsterdam in 1607.¹⁸¹ Although Moes and Burger mention that Coolhaes’ business still existed in Amsterdam 1622, which is seen by a

173. Coolhaes, *Een noodtwendinghe broederlijke vermaninge*, folio Dr.

174. Coolhaes, *Cort, waerachtich verhael*, 130.

175. Van Dooren, *De nationale synode te Middelburg*, 174.

176. Marriage record of Sara Caspersd. Coolhaes, 6 Sep. 1591, Nederlands Hervormd Ondertrouw (1575-1795), archiefnr. 1004, inventarisnr. 2, folio B-160v, ELO.

177. Burial record of Judith Casparsdochter Coolhaes, Begrafenisregister, 1598, 216, SAA.

178. Marriage registration and signature of Caspar Casparszoon Coolhaes, Trouwboek 1601, OT 1601,150, SAA.

179. I was able to verify this with the kind help of Cathelijne Timmermann of Streekarchief Midden-Holland [SAMH], who scanned the Poorterboek entry for me. The entry lists Caspar Casparszoon Coolhaes, earlier resident in Deventer, was made a citizen by Ghijsbert Loebertzs. burgemeester, May 7, 1616. Poorterboek Gouda, folio 71v, SAMH.

180. Marriage registration and signature of Adolph Casparszoon Coolhaes, 174, Trouwboek 1602, OT 1602, SAA; Doopregister, 1604, 82, SAA. “Hillether” is an unusual name, but the handwriting is fairly clear.

181. Sale of shop, Notaris 1607, 87-88, SAA. Inventory and prices are listed, and the document shows both men’s signatures. For further information about the shop, see also Notaris 1626, 38-43, SAA.

later re-publication of *Water-boecxken* in that year after Coolhaes' death in which Adolf was mentioned as still operating the business at the same shop in Amsterdam,¹⁸² records show that an Adalphijs Coolhaes died and was buried in Amsterdam in 1617. Adolf's wife is also recorded as having been buried in the same year.¹⁸³ Incidentally, citizenship in Amsterdam had been mentioned as a possibility in 1601.¹⁸⁴ Nevertheless, none of the Coolhaes men appear in the Amsterdam records as having become citizens.¹⁸⁵

In any event, in 1614, Coolhaes may have travelled to Leiden for the engraving of his portrait, in which he is pictured as a professor of the University. The portrait exists and the engraving is anonymous. In this portrait, Coolhaes' head and shoulders are framed in an oval, surrounded by a simple rectangular frame. Below is written: "Casparus Coolhaesius S.S., Theologiae Professor." He wears a fur collar, and a ruff,¹⁸⁶ "einen Mann mit vollem Bart und freundlichen Augen," as Van Dooren puts it.¹⁸⁷

On January 15, 1615, Coolhaes died in Amsterdam, as it is thought.¹⁸⁸

Contra-Remonstrants were soon linking his name with the Remonstrant cause. He was not mentioned in the list by the Remonstrant Wtenbogaert in his *Copie van seker Vertoogh*

182. Moes and Burger, *De Amsterdamsche boekdrukkers*, 58-59.

183. Burial register, Begrafenisregister, 1617, 21, 30, SAA.

184. Notaris 1601, 82 r, SAA.

185. Marloes Clarenburg of the SAA writes, "In die [akte] van 1601 zou er sprake zijn van poorterschap, maar in de Poorterboeken komt Koolhaes of één van zijn zonen niet voor." E-mail to author, May 27, 2015.

186. Meursius, *Illustrium Hollandiae et Westfrisiae Ordinum Alma Academia Leidensis*, folio A1v, UBL: 116 B 16; also Deventer, Historisch Museum De Waag (inv. nr. P490); also reproduced in Bostoen, *Hart voor Leiden*, 52. It is also to be seen in Salman, *Een handdruk van de tijd*, 47. Another engraving exists by J. Buys and Reinier Vinkeles (1785). It portrays an older-looking and heavier man, with a white beard. This second portrait is reproduced in Revius, *Licht op Deventer*, 97.

187. Van Dooren, "Kaspar Kohlhaas," 86.

188. I rely here on Willen Nijenhuis' article on Coolhaes from 1998, which lists Coolhaes' death place as Amsterdam: Nijenhuis, "Coolhaes," *BLGNP*, vol. 4, 102. Earlier scholars had been divided: Burger lists some evidence for a move of Coolhaes to Leiden. Moes and Burger, *De Amsterdamsche boekdrukkers*, 134. He also spent some time in Gouda; we have seen above that he wrote *Een basuyne ofte trompette Godes*, 1610, there. However, Revius recorded of him, "*obiit Amstelodami*." *BWPGN*, vol. 5, 200. I am also indebted to Marloes Clarenburg of the SAA, for verifying that his death is not recorded there. She writes, "Zijn overlijden is inderdaad niet aangetroffen in Amsterdam." E-mail to author, May 27, 2015. I am indeed grateful also to mv. Clarenburg for pointing me to all of the above-mentioned documents in the SAA.

onlanghs by eenighe Predicanten der Ghereformeerde Kerck ghedaen, 1617. However, he is listed in *Klaer ende grondich Teghen-vertooch* published by the staunch Calvinist Trigland in the same year.¹⁸⁹ Trigland was the first to call Coolhaes the Remonstrants' "forerunner."¹⁹⁰ Since Coolhaes had continued to be controversial all his life, this association may well have been a tactic by Trigland to discredit the Remonstrants. Coolhaes was then labeled as a key forerunner of Arminius at the National Synod of Dort, 1618-1619, in the foreword of the *Acta* of the Synod,¹⁹¹ as the first in a list of three, along with Herman Herbertsz of Dordrecht and Gouda, and Cornelis Wiggers of Hoorn. What Arminius himself thought of him is unknown. Considering that Arminius had died earlier, in 1609, and that in his last years he had been preoccupied with his own battles, he may not spared any thought for Coolhaes.¹⁹²

Before we end this general section of biography, it would be good to address the question, in general, about the development or the evolution of his views. Did Coolhaes' basic views change radically as a result of his life circumstances? Perhaps surprisingly, the answer is: not very much. Still, some development can be seen. We will talk about his views on Spiritualism, the church and state question, preachers and synods, and tolerance and

189. "Onder alle de Predicanten die in deselve Kercke [he means in Leiden] ghestaen ende gheleert hebben van den aanvangh der Reformatie voor de comste in de Vniversiteit aldaer, en souden sy niet een connen voort brenghen, die in haer ghevoelen ghestaen heft, als alleen Casparum Coolhaes..." quote from Trigland, *Klaer ende grondich Tegen-vertooch*, 1617, 36-37, as quoted by Burger. Moes and Burger, *De Amsterdamsche boekdrukkers*, 136.

190. Trigland, *Kerckelycke geschiedenissen*, 188-90.

191. "Deze lieflijke, Gode en allen vromen zeer aangename vrede en eenstemmigheid, hebben sommigen, die, het Pausdom verlatende, maar den zuurdeesem des Pausdoms niet ten volle uitgezuiverd hebbende, tot onze Kerken waren overgekomen, en tot dienst derzelve in die eerste schaarschheid van Predikanten toegelaten werden, gezocht te verstoren: Caspar Coolhaas te Leiden; Hermannus Herbertsz te Dordrecht en te Gouda; en Cornelis Wiggers te Hoorn; met eene zeer ongebreidelde stoutheid, doch niet met zeer grooten voortgang. Want hoewel dezelve in de voornoemde plaatsen sommigen, die den Gereformeerden Godsdienst niet al te gunstig waren, gekregen hadden, op dewelken zij steunden, nochtans desnietteenstaande is deze hunne booze stoutheid, zoo door autoriteit der Hooge Overheid, als door de zorgvuldige voorzichtigheid der Predikanten en billijke censuren der Kerken, bij tijds bedwongen geweest; Coolhaas in de Nationale Synode van Middelburg; Herbertsz in de Synoden van ZuidHolland, en Wiggers in de Synoden van NoordHolland. Daarna heeft Jacobus Arminius, Predikant in de beroemde Kerk van Amsterdam, datzelve met een dapper opzet gepoogd te doen, een man wel van een kloek verstand, maar die nergens behagen in had, dan in hetgeen door eenen schijn van nieuwhed zichzelf recommandeerde; alzoo dat hij van het meestedeel der leerstukken, in de Gereformeerde Kerken aangenomen, een walg scheen te hebben, nergens anders om, dan omdat ze van de Kerken aangenomen waren." "Acta of handelingen der Nationale synode... te Dordrecht." *Kerkrecht*, <http://www.kerkrecht.nl/sites/default/files/Nationale%20Synode%20te%20Dordrecht%20201618-1619.pdf> (accessed January 27 2016), vi.

192. On the other hand, David J. Sturdy claims in his *Fractured Europe, 1600-1721* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2002), 186, that Arminius became convinced of the truth in Coolhaes' views when he was asked to rebut them by the Amsterdam consistory in 1588. We have not found this assertion elsewhere, or any proof for it.

diversity in the second part of this dissertation. The details properly belong there. But we can say here that his fundamental beliefs are all present in the Essen statement of faith of 1571, and in his first two books, *Apologia* and *Breeder bericht* of 1580.

It seems that all the big changes – from Carthusian monk to Protestant preacher, and perhaps a wavering back and forth between Melancthonian-Lutheran and Zwinglian-Reformed – happened before any of his written works. The Essen statement of faith, as we have seen, included an emphasis on the visible and invisible church, and addressed inclusion and exclusion in both. It condemned harsh Christian discipline and reliance on ceremonies rather than inner faith. It demonstrated his sacramental ideas, which do not fall clearly into any category. It also showed that he was unwilling to be precise about predestination and free will. In Deventer, he rejoiced in the broad, inter-confessional cooperation. In *Apologia* and *Breeder bericht*, he continued to defend himself and the way he was running the Leiden church, and to condemn Calvinist discipline and the church–state relationship.

It is true that after his excommunication and defrocking, he was critical of the Reformed Church. However, all evidence shows that he remained in its orbit. Perhaps it can be said, however, that he was actually less critical than before of the Reformed, but more critical, after his excommunication, of all denominations and confessions in his later *Seeckere punten* and *Toutzsteen*. The excommunication and defrocking surely brought all aspects of ecclesiology to the forefront of his attention, although now he exhorted the whole visible church, rather than just the Reformed.

It could be that he relied less on the physical sacrament of communion personally – after all, he had been banned and for a greater or lesser time had to live without it. However, he did not deny its usefulness to others. He continued to be critical of clergy, and associated instead with all kinds of “heretics.” However, even back in *Apologia* he had recorded that people had been saying that his congregation, full of “sinners,” was as bad as a pigpen. So he was only continuing with the kinds of friends he had always had.

It could be said that, in his maturity, what he changed were not his views but his tactics. If he had ever been “intellectual,” he now was “popular.” Unable to preach, he turned to his woodcut *emblemata* prints, to Christianizing almanacs, and to objections to astrology and Catholic “superstitions” in order to influence people for what he thought was good for them and society. He continued to defend himself and his reputation fiercely, and also began to defend other underdogs – the Frisian Mennonites, the departed Franck. For the crucial

debates at Leiden University, which would change the face of theology forever, he had only rebuke. His desire for diversity, though, did not abate. Despite his condemnation of Catholic saints' days and practices later in life, he made a fictional Jesuit one of the heroes of *Tsamenspreekinghe*. So we see that the title of the bibliography compiled by Jacob Jetzes Kalma - "from monk to tolerant preacher to libertine"¹⁹³ – is not accurate. Coolhaes always wanted and preached broad freedom – in Essen, in Deventer, in Leiden. Advocating religious liberty was not just something which he ran to after his excommunication.

In conclusion, these chapters have given a biographical sketch of Coolhaes, building on information from Rogge and Burger, but also incorporating much new information from various sources. We have seen his early life in Germany as a Roman Catholic and then as a Protestant preacher. We have followed him to the Northern Netherlands and traced his disagreements in Leiden with the stricter Calvinist preachers around him. We have looked in detail at his defrocking and excommunication, and seen how he took up the trade of distilling but continued to write about the topics of diversity, Christian freedom, and the church. We have taken an in-depth look at some of the preoccupations of his pen in the years of his maturity. In the next section, we will first look at Coolhaes the Spiritualist, and then examine his specific views on the church-state question, on what makes good preachers, elders and deacons, and on diversity in the visible church. Throughout, we will focus on Coolhaes, and on what sort of church he would have wanted to build in the Netherlands if he could have done so.

193. Jacob Jetzes Kalma, *Caspar Jansz. Coolhaes (1536-1615): van monnik tot tolerant predikant tot libertijn: bibliographische aantekeningen* (Leeuwarden: Eigen beheer, 1984).