In het laatste der dagen. Eindtijdverwachting in Nederland op de drempel van de moderne tijd (1790-1880)

Kielman, R.H.

Summary

In the latter days. End-time expectation in the Netherlands on the threshold of modernity (1790-1880)

The turbulent period following the French Revolution (1789) caused a powerful resurgence of eschatological notions in Western Europe and North America: the belief, based on Biblical prophecies, to be living in the last days, on the eve of a cataclysm that would either result in the Last Judgment or in the dawn of the Millennium. The prophets and prophetical movements that manifested themselves in England, Germany and France did not escape the attention of historians, church historians and sociologists. By contrast, the comparable eschatological surge which occurred in the post-revolutionary period in the Northern Netherlands has so far received scant attention. The lacuna in knowledge in this area formed the starting point for this dissertation.

An explanation that is often given by sociologists of culture and religion for the post-revolutionary eschatological surge is the fact that, around 1800, the Bible was still widely considered a holy book, thus forming an important component of the worldview, the domain of tacit notions that underlay explicit representations and behavior patterns. Similarly, the perception of time and the future was still largely inspired by the Biblical doctrine of the Last Things. Going by Biblical prophecies in the Old and New Testament, the majority upheld a finite time perspective that would culminate in the Second Coming of Christ, who would end Evil (the Antichrist and/or the Beast) after which a period of florescence (the New Jerusalem) would ensue for godly Christians. Numerous variations on this basic scenario were possible, however, and around 1800 three distinct perspectives of salvation had become crystallized, classed in this study under apocalypticism, chiliasm, and millennialism. *Apocalypticism* entailed the belief that the anticipated florescence would commence with the Second Coming at the Last Judgment, followed by the foundation of a perfect new heaven and earth. Adherents of *chiliasm*, in turn, believed that Christ would return beforehand in order to found a blissful Millennium prior to the Last Judgment. Adherents of *millennialism* held similar beliefs, but they thought that the foundations for the Millennium would be laid by an Outpouring of the Holy Spirit, after which a blessed state would gradually arise that would only come to completion at the Second Coming of Christ, just before the Last Judgment. The term *alarmism* is used in this study for the expectation that events would unfold soon; *Christian messianism* refers to the expectation of a savior-prophet, acting as a substitute for Christ.

That the French Revolution aroused alarmist sentiments was due tot the far-reaching changes that took place in its wake: over a relatively short period of time not only a new political system, but also a new calendar and new religion were introduced. By many this was associated with the major crisis that, according to Biblical prophecy, would herald a salvation historical breakthrough. What that breakthrough would subsequently entail was a point of contention. In the wave of eschatological publications that saw the light in that period of time, interpretations ranged between pitch black expectations of doom and radiant visions of salvation – a reflection of the fears and expectations that, evidently, existed in each author's inner world. Since not only scholars, but also simple believers and even some women belonged to this group, these future visions provide cultural historians with particularly interesting insights. After all, historians generally have little access to sources with information on the perceptions of those outside the circles of the socio-cultural elite. Moreover, the eschatological boom occurred during a crucial era: that of the transition from ancien régime to modernity. This raises the question of what their effect may have been on the

modernization process that took place in the Netherlands throughout the nineteenth century: did these notions have a propelling or, conversely, an inhibitory effect on that transition?

In research on the impact of eschatological alarmism on people's behaviors three types of effects have been identified. A neutralizing effect is in play when the hopeful perspective works to curtail feelings of unease, offering a sense of hope for the near future. Alternatively, eschatological alarmism may have an activating effect, in that it motivates malcontents to spring into action in anticipation of the inevitably approaching, more promising future. By contrast, the doomsday vision may also have a paralyzing effect, inciting so much fear that an eschatological panic breaks out, with all the disruptive consequences that this entails. Whatever the effect, in view of the varied responses to these visions they in themselves are not so much the cause as is their interaction with the mental habitus of the cultural circle in which they become active. A deeper insight into this interaction became possible with the modernization thesis of Reinhart Koselleck. According to this conceptual historian, a radical change in time perspective took place between 1750 and 1850, whereby the static and finite Biblical future perspective gradually gave way to a development perspective without limits. No longer did one automatically defer to the authority of the Bible or experiences in the past for representations of the future; the horizon of expectation broke away from the space of experience. In this way, the first half of the nineteenth century offered fertile soil for both eschatological notions and utopianism, leading at times to surprising mixtures of ideas. Koselleck coined this watershed the ‘Sattelzeit’, or, the threshold to modernity.

The cultural-historical approach in which eschatology and eschatological movements are interpreted first and foremost in terms of their connection to worldview, contemporary experience and horizon of expectation formed the starting point for this dissertation. At its center was an investigation into the *scope*, *nature* and *meaning* of eschatological ideas and movements in Dutch society on the brink of modernity (1790-1880). To this end, the prophetic hermeneutical writings of theologians, the publications of lay authors aimed at a wider audience, and the currents and organizations driven partially or fully by eschatological motives were studied. Through a content analysis of leading periodicals not only could the reception of eschatological writings but also the cultural acceptance of eschatological notions be delineated, on the basis of public discussions on such matters as the age of the world, the authority of the Bible and the interpretation of the future. In order to fully represent the undulation of alarmism and the shifts in worldview and time perspective a chronological presentation of findings was chosen, excepting the more theoretically based first chapter.

Chapter 1 explores worldview as cultural-historical concept. Leading in this are the insights of sociologists of knowledge and religion Peter Berger and Thomas Lückmann, who described worldview as a symbolic universe from which, consciously or unconsciously, the individual and collective life are drawn. In any culture such a frame of reference irrevocably exists, since man by his limited instincts is insufficiently equipped to hold his own in what is often an unpredictable environment. To face the fears aroused by this a subjective construction is projected unto the reality with associate representations, standards and values, which become sacred in nature largely through the concept of a metaphysical authority (either a monotheistic God or a world of gods). In highly developed cultures the symbolic universe is recorded in holy books, of which the veracity, in view of their sacred origin, is beyond discussion.

In Christian culture the role of holy book was fulfilled by the Bible, which not only prescribed how Christians ought to behave, but also included fundamental statements on the nature of reality, the creation of the world and the descent of man, in addition to pronouncements on the course of history and the future of civilization. Ever since the Reformation, opinions varied increasingly on how Scripture should be interpreted. Contrary to

Catholics, who considered the Bible to be a coded message that could only be unraveled by the clergy, Protestants preferred a literal interpretation, which allowed for the reading of the Bible by laymen as well. In eschatological terms this meant that after the Reformation Medieval apocalypticism, which revolved around the Last Judgment, entered into competition with the anticipation of the Millennium that arose from a more literal reading of Scripture, taken quite literally by the chiliasts and somewhat more metaphorically by the millennialists. Influenced by the Scientific Revolution and the new geological and historical findings that it brought forth, the Biblical creation narrative started to lose its footing at the end of the seventeenth century. A small group of adherents to the Radical Enlightenment no longer considered the Bible a product of Divine revelation, but for the vast majority of supporters of the Enlightenment this went a step too far and a compromise between Revelation and Reason was sought. In Germany this led to the rise of Neology, which was formulated by enlightened theologians who held the conviction that the Bible, due to the hand man had had in its creation, was fallable in parts.

These developments, considered to be a profanation of Scripture, formed an important causal factor for the eighteenth-century Evangelical revival that would become known in the Anglo-Saxon historiography as the Great Awakening and on the European mainland as late Pietism or *Erweckung*. Focusing solely on God's love, one could perhaps be open to interconfessional cooperation, but a critical attitude to Biblical authority would not be tolerated. Proof for the divine origin of Scripture was increasingly sought in the now fulfilled prophecies, that is, the prophetic evidence. By extension, it was believed that all unfulfilled prophecies would sooner or later be fulfilled to the letter. The conviction was particularly strong in Biblicism, advocated by Revival theologians such as J.A. Bengel, J.J. Hess and J.L. Ewald. Due to the fundamentalist emphasis on the literal sense of the Bible, chiliasm was of increasing interest to this Revival movement and the resentment against the more metaphorical interpretation of the Bible evident in millennialism grew. This resentment was even more pronounced against the Christian idea of progress, a salvation perspective originating in the eighteenth century which only distinguished itself from the secular idea of progress of such enlightened philosophers as Turgot and Condorcet by its continued orientation on the Bible and Providence.

Turmoil was furthermore caused by the arrival of Illuminism, the resurgence of the theosophical current of Christianity, to which the animal magnetism of F.A. Mesmer was now added. The Bible still served as the source of inspiration, but it was interpreted in highly subjective ways. This was particularly the case with Swedenborgianism, the teachings of the Swedish mystic Emanuel Swedenborg, who, similar to Mesmer, believed it was possible to communicate with the deceased and even assumed that the New Jerusalem already existed in celestial spheres, since the Last Judgment was thought to have been accomplished there already in 1757.

After the discussion of worldview and the role of the Bible, the focus shifts to the structure of Biblical prophecy. The increasing force and significance of eschatological alarmism in the last quarter of the eighteenth century was furthermore caused by specific Biblical references to the calculation of end time. Characteristic of the Judeo-Christian time perspective was the division into consecutive periods or 'dispensations', which culminated into a blessed state at the end of time. Various periodizations were used to determine its course. Guided by the Biblical text 'With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and thousand years like a day' (2 Petrus 3:8), apocalyptics inferred that the creation week implied six millennia of world duration, followed by a Sabbath, a period of peace and quiet, to commence with the Last Judgment. Chiliasts and millennialists placed this blissful Sabbath within rather than without world history and connected the last period with the Millennium, which was to precede the Last Judgment. Since authoritative theologians had calculated that Christ had

probably been born at the start of the fifth millennium, it could safely be assumed that the 'world week' was coming to an end and the 'Sabbath' was drawing nigh.

Another periodization used was the theory of seven stages based on the Book of Revelation, which was projected, not onto world history, but onto the history of the Christian church. This periodization was particularly popular among the historicists, a group of Protestant salvation historians in the seventeenth and eighteenth century who assumed that they were living in the fifth or sixth stage. Lastly, the theory of four monarchies was of particular influence, which, based on visions from the Book of Daniel, entailed the belief that after the fourth world empire a blessed state, or 'Fifth Monarchy', would ensue. Seeing as the Roman Empire (continuing on as the Holy Roman Empire) was considered to be the fourth and last world empire, around 1800 the inevitable conclusion was that world history had reached its final stage.

In addition to these broad periodizations, insight into the course of the eschatological scenario could furthermore be derived from various cryptic numbers. It was stated in the Book of Revelation, for instance, that the reign of the Beast would last 1260 days. Working from the then common day-year principle, protestants projected this onto a Papal Antichrist whose reign would apparently come to an end after 1260 years. Since the moment that the Pope became head of the church was taken to be either 533 A.D. (when he was recognized by Emperor Justinian) or 606 A.D. (the foundation of the Papal State by Emperor Phocas), it seemed reasonable to assume that the downfall of the Pope would occur between 1793 and 1866. Furthermore, the Book of Daniel spoke of the 'abomination of desolation' that would last 1290 days, while the blessed state would commence after 1335 days. Common among historicists around 1800 was so-called Continuationism – the belief that 1260, 1290 and 1335 'days' all had the same starting point, from which one could deduce a salvation scenario of 75 years. At 1260 years an end would first come to the Papacy, then 30 years later to the 'abomination', which would culminate after 45 years into the establishment of the Kingdom of God. This scenario appeared to have sprung into action in 1798 after approximately 1260 years, when the Papal supremacy indeed came to a (temporary) end with the arrest and abduction of the Pope from Rome by French troops, and his subsequent death in prison. This meant that one could expect the blessed state to commence at around 1870, a scenario that corresponded remarkably well with another time span in the Book of Daniel, namely, the prediction that after 2300 days the sanctuary would be restored. Since Daniel was said to have made this prediction at around 450 B.C., one could, on the basis of the day-year principle, safely assume that the blissful breakthrough would take place sometime in the nineteenth century.

Finally, the conviction around 1800 that the end of time was nigh received support from the analysis of the 'signs of the times'. This list of signs in Biblical prophecy that would announce the end of time included such signs as apostasy, false prophets, the revelation of the 'Man of Sin', religious persecution, large-scale wars, famines, earthquakes and signs from heaven, in addition to a revival of religion, world evangelization, and the Christianization of the Jews, possibly combined with their return to the Holy Land. Orthodox and moderate enlightened Christians saw the religious revival movement that started up around 1750 in the light of salvation history, and they associated the Radical Enlightenment, the French Revolution and the European wars that broke out in their wake, as well as the rise of Illuminism with the Great Apostasy and Tribulation that would herald the end of time.

Consensus was lacking, however, on the question of who or what was meant by the Man of Sin, alias the Antichrist, 'the little horn' that would suddenly appear on the head of the fourth animal, as stated in the Book of Daniel, and that was denoted in the Book of Revelation as the Beast. Where moderate enlightened theologians commonly preferred a Preteristic (fulfilled) realization of the Antichrist, that is as a reference to religious persecutors such as

Antioch IV or Nero, and historicists associated the Antichrist with a present reality (the Pope), eighteenth-century Revival theologians such as Bengel, Hess and Ewald preferred a Futuristic (unfulfilled) interpretation of the Antichrist. Since the Pope had never formally denounced Christianity, the prophecy must refer to a future suppressor, whose reign was furthermore thought to span an actual 1260 days – about three and a half years. From the prophetic references it could be assumed that the Man of Sin would entail a world ruler who would come to the stage abruptly and in whose name would also be hidden the number 666 (by using Gematria, the practice of calculating the numeric equivalent of words). At the height of his power he would take Jerusalem as his residence, take over the place of God and persecute the faithful severely, but in the end he would only hold out for three and a half years, as the second coming of Christ would end his reign. Around 1800 Napoleon seemed to meet all the requirements as candidate for the Antichrist: a seemingly invincible leader, who had shot to power, who in 1799 left for an expedition to the Middle East and whose name number, moreover, corresponded with the Number of the Beast.

In chapter 2 the focus shifts to the significance of eschatological notions in the late eighteenth-century Dutch Republic. Here it is stated that, due to the limited influence of Radical Enlightened notions, the Bible had lost little to no authority in the province of worldview and time perspective. The reason for this seems to lie in the relative decline experienced in the Republic in the eighteenth century. For orthodox and moderate enlightened Christians this indicated punishment for a decline of religion, thus offering fertile soil for late-Pietist and Revival theology. The dominant salvation perspective was apocalyticism, delineated in article 37 of the Dutch Confession, which denounced chiliasm. A millennialist salvation perspective was propagated by the Cocceians, a group of theologians who, following on from the seventeenth-century theologian Johannes Coccejus, maintained a typological view of the Bible, in which events in the Old and New Testament were considered to be prefigurations of what would unfold in Christian time. These were adherents of the theory of seven stages, inspired by the Book of Revelation, and they upheld such a blissful expectation of the seventh and last stage, the Glorious State of the Church, that they neared chiliasm in the eyes of their contemporaries.

At critical moments these eschatological notions could spark alarmist outbursts. In 1749, Reverend J.E. Jungius caught the attention with a publication which claimed that a period of persecution by a Papal Antichrist was at hand, after which in 1808 a Glorious State of the Church would arise. This led to a wave of polemical writings in which the year 1866 was posited as the likeliest date for a salvation historical breakthrough. In 1750 a Revival movement took shape around Reverend Gerardus Kuypers in Nijkerk – known as the Nijkerk Revival – which inspired followers in several regions and was by some of its following associated with the great Outpouring of the Holy Spirit that would precede the dawning of the Glorious State of the Church. The Lisbon earthquake (1755) that was felt throughout Europe, and in the Republic too, increased fears that this could well be the major earthquake associated with the end of time. Apart from earthquakes other 'signs from heaven' were considered indicative too, as a result of which the arrival of Halley's Comet, to come into view in the late 1750s, was anxiously anticipated. When the comet appeared in 1759 without any consequences, the alarmist outburst subsided again.

Around 1770 alarmism flared up again, fed among other things by the outbreak of the Russo-Turkish War in 1768. Since the Book of Revelation included manifold references to events in the Euphrates, these developments in the East frequently incited growing alarmism. They gave rise to an outbreak of eschatological panic in May 1774, spreading mostly in Frisia and the Amsterdam region. The immediate cause was a publication claiming that, based on the expected conjunction of four planets with the moon and the fact that six millennia had

already passed since the creation of the world, the end of time must be drawing close. The fact that the publication came from Eelco Alta, a moderate enlightened and socially committed minister, shows how enlightened notions in combination with a Bible-driven worldview could result in an acute expectation of doom, even in such cases where crisis awareness hardly played a role.

An awareness of crisis was more strongly felt in the Evangelical circles which arose in the Republic in the wake of the Great Awakening and late Pietism, and which were characterized by a keen interest in eschatology. One such circle arose in the 1760s around the students Jan Both Hendriksen and Hieronymus van Alphen. Under the supervision of the professors Meinard Tydemand and Gijsbert Bonnet they studied the Bible and took a public stance against the attacks on the authenticity of Biblical prophecy. Of particular influence on this circle was the late-Pietist minister and writer J.K. Lavater, who in his *Aussichten in der Ewigkeit* (*Views on Eternity;* ca. 1770) sang the praises of the coming Kingdom of God and the renewal of heaven and earth, themes which resounded in the apocalyptic poems of Van Alphen. Nonetheless, interest in eschatological themes was far from widespread in Dutch society. After the collapse of the eschatological panic in 1774 only a small number of eschatological publications saw the light; similarly, no further eschatologically inspired movements took shape in the Republic in the years leading up to the French Revolution.

Chapter 3 describes the culture shift that took place in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, and that was characterized by rising alarmism and the widespread feeling that one was standing on the brink of a new age. People no longer put all hope on Reason but shifted their focus to feeling and intuition, to the inner knowledge that was attributed to the influence of a higher, spiritual world. In addition to late-Pietism and Revivalism, this shift in culture also encouraged the rise of Illuminism, resulting in the founding of various secret orders alongside the regular Freemasonry, of which the Order of Strict Observance in Germany was the best known and most influential. Within these orders Rosicrucians, Swedenborgians and Mesmerists experimented passionately with alchemy and the evocation of spirits in the full expectation that the blessed state was at hand. In 1787 the so-called *Illuminés* (Illuminates), led by the Polish count Tadeusz Grabianka, headed to Avignon upon receiving a message from the other side that the New Jerusalem would descend on earth in that location. In the Dutch Republic this esoteric revival initially had limited impact: not until 1780 would a daughter lodge of the Order of Strict Observance be founded in The Hague, which moreover showed itself little inclined to action. Where in Berlin the court of king Frederick William II – a fervent Rosicrucian – was exposed to various esoteric hypes, little of this reached the stadholder's court of William V and Wilhelmina of Prussia (the sister of the Prussian king). A circle of Swedenborgians did emerge in The Hague in the 1780s around the secretary of the English embassy William Gomm, a Swedenborgian who was able to introduce the new creed among Orangists such as the publisher P.F. Gosse, the former professor R.M. van Goens, and the poet and lawyer Willem Bilderdijk. Of these three only Gosse, as publisher and contact person, would play any meaningful role in the Swedenborgian movement – Van Goens and Bilderdijk eventually shied away from the liberal view of the Bible common within this circle.

If the influence of Illuminism in the Republic was limited, the late-Pietist Revival reached a wider audience, as the movement – starting from around 1780 – gained momentum in the 1790s, fed by feelings of crisis in the aftermath of the French Revolution. Although in a narrow sense it was a corollary of the late Enlightenment culture shift, the Revival movement in a broader sense belonged to the re-Christianization offensive which early in the seventeenth century, upon first being confronted with Radical Enlightened notions, was launched to parry the ongoing process of secularization. This offensive would now enter a new, militant phase with the foundation of societies for the defense and spread of beleaguered Christianity, such

as the '(Haagsch) Genootschap tot verdediging van den Christelyken Godsdienst' (the Society for the Defence of Christianity at the Hague; 1785) and various affiliated societies of the 'Deutsche Christentumgesellschaft' (German Christianity Society) founded in the Republic. Particularly telling signs of the culture shift were some striking conversions to a more orthodox faith by enlightened spirits, including R.M. Goens and Willem Bilderdijk. Both men became enthralled with the Revival Movement and in particular with its alarmist end-time expectation.

An important theme in the Revival movement was the defense of the Bible against attacks of unbelief, a role played with vigor by Ysbrand van Hamelsveld, professor of theology in Utrecht and author of the multi-volume publication *De Byble verdeedigd* (*In defence of the Bible*). An adherent of the Cocceian theory of seven stages from his student years onwards, he was convinced that the fifth stage was now in its aftermath, as could be seen by the religious indifference and apostasy all around. He considered it his task to warn the faithful about the major crisis that would usher in the sixth stage, but at the same time lifted their spirits by painting a radiant picture of the Glorious State of the Church that would ensue. He joined the Patriot Movement, devoted himself to the 'Maatschappij tot Nut van 't Algemeen' (Society for Public Welfare), and reached a wide audience through his books, articles and translations. His best known work was *De zedelijke toestand der Nederlandsche natie, op het einde der achttiende eeuw* (*The moral condition of the Dutch nation, at the end of the eighteenth century,* 1791), in which he, driven by crisis awareness, could scarcely conceal his millennialist beliefs. Polemicists such as the liberal ringleaders Paulus van Hemert and Gerrit Paape, resolved to curtail his influence, were sure to speak out.

Chapter 4 examines the connection between politics and salvation expectation, and the extent to which eschatological notions played a role in the Dutch Patriot Movement (1780-1795). In particular, the influence of the political ideas of English dissenters Richard Price and Joseph Priestly is investigated, who saw the American Revolution in the light of salvation history and were convinced that with the instigation of popular sovereignty the blessed state would commence, as was predicted in Biblical prophecy. Their brochures were translated and distributed in the Netherlands by Patriot leader J.D. van der Capellen, of which their viewpoints on democratization and citizen armament found the greatest appeal, while their political millennialism was largely ignored. Up until the Prussian invasion and the Orange Restoration of 1787, the Patriotic expectation of the future was aimed more at recovery of past florescence than at the dawn of a new era. This changed after the outbreak of the French Revolution, when not only Van Hamelsveld but also the Patriotic ministers Bernardus Bosch and Willem Goede switched to a political form of millennialism, which closely resembled the ideas of Price and Priestly. Around the 1795 Batavian Revolution this political salvation expectation acquired alarmist characteristics, which was expressed in speech and writing above all by Goede and Van Hamelsveld, and, moreover, was propagated by the latter in the first National Assemblyof 1796. There, several of his co-parlamentarians proved susceptible to the expectation of a future blessed state in which religious and political strife would be a thing of the past. Due to growing differences of opinion between the brand-new parlementarians in drawing up the constitution for the Batavian Republic, the euphoria was short-lived, and since the political climate was more and more dominated by the French empire, Patriotic political millennialism soon fizzled out.

Eschatological notions found more fertile soil with the Orangists, alarmed as they were by the, deemed to be, sacrilegious attacks on the Stadholder coming from the Patriotic camp. This clashed with the messianic capabilities ascribed of old to the Prince of Orange in Orangist circles. Their vision belonged to the Dutch Israel myth, the belief that the Dutch Protestants had acquired the status of chosen people (a second Israel) through the sixteenth-

century Dutch Revolt led by William of Orange. Since then, the Republic had experienced great success, and it was thought that it would continue to do so as long as a Prince of Orange remained at the helm and one was loyal to the doctrine of our ancestors. The role of Orange as redeemer, as instigator of a Golden Age – inspired by the Virgilian motif of the ruler as a bringer of peace – was expanded passionately by Orangist poets such as O.Z. van Haren, Johannes le Francq van Berkhey and Bilderdijk, who did not shy away from portraying Patriots (and, later on, French revolutionaries) as confederates of the Antichrist who would persecute the faithful and make an end to the privileged position of the public church. Similar notions were expressed in the writings of Orangists such as Johannes Mecima and the Reformed minister C.S. Duijtsch, as well as in pamphlets and folk songs by anonymous Orangist authors. It was in the poems of Bilderdijk, however, that the 'Goud-Eeuw' (Golden Age) of Orange would receive an explicitly eschatological hue, as he depicted this stage as a blessed state that would coincide with the foundation of the Kingdom of God on earth, following the destruction of the Antichrist and his following. Bilderdijk would further develop this expectation during his exile in London and Brunswick (1795-1806) and would around 1820 pass on his ideas to students of Leiden University Isaac da Costa and Abraham Capadose, the future leaders of the Dutch Réveil .

Chapter 5 examines the impact of the French Revolution on the Dutch Republic and how it caused a wave of eschatological publications, including not only reprints of earlier work by domestic and foreign authors but also more recent work from Dutch end-time writers. In addition, the belief that one had reached the end of time encouraged the willingness to spring into action, in anticipation of salvation glimmering on the horizon. This played a role in the proposal for interconfessional cooperation that was launched by moderate Calvinists (Remonstrants) in 1796 (subsequently blocked by orthodox resistance), and the foundation of the 'Nederlandsch Zendeling Genootschap' (Missionary Society in the Netherlands) in 1797. On the other hand, the French and Batavian Revolutions boosted cultural pessimism and gloom-and-doom thought in Evangelical and Orangist circles. As a result, there was a growing susceptibility to literal hermeneutics and the Futuristic Antichrist interpretation of Revival theologians such as Hess and Ewald, further popularized by Lavater and J.H. Jung-Stilling and picked up and propagated by Orangist ministers such as Gijsbert Bonnet, Gerardus de Haas and Jan Scharp. End-time publications advocated chiliasm ever more emphatically, mostly anonymously, but openly as well by revenue official Daniel Pigeaud and ministers J.J. le Roy and Albert Goedkoop. The millennialist Van Hamelsveld, too, turned out to have converted to chiliasm around 1810. These publications were denounced fiercely by liberals such as Paulus van Hemert and Johannes Kinker, who as adherents of the Enlightenment philosopher Kant considered the Bible merely a moral example, but were faced with the growing aversion to Radical Enlightened notions that was characteristic of the conservative culture shift in the first decade of the nineteenth century.

Around 1810 the Futuristic Antichrist interpretation, which aimed no longer at the Pope but at a political suppressor like Napoleon, had gained broad reception in the Netherlands. During the annexation of the country by the French (1810-1813) books and sermons were censured to prevent such notions from being propagated openly, and religious gatherings (conventicles) were closely monitored. The Pietist gathering of Gerrit van der Plaat of Rotterdam, suspected of studying Biblical prophecy to predict the duration of Napoleon's reign, was prohibited for that reason. Bilderdijk too, who upon his return from exile and as librarian to the recently appointed King Louis Napoleon had depicted the emperor in his *Ode aan Napoleon (Ode to Napoleon*; 1806) as paving the way for the coming Kingdom of God (which would irreparably damage his reputation) changed his mind during the annexation. He

became convinced that the Antichrist must be of French origin, and he considered Napoleon's son, who at birth had received the ominous title of King of Rome, a likely candidate.

At the center of chapter 6 is the Restoration of 1815 to 1830. The conservative culture shift, which became manifest around 1800, pushed on forcefully in the Kingdom of the Netherlands. New scientific insights , such as the Higher Criticism of the Bible that became a trend in Germany, were kept successfully at bay in the Netherlands, while the Réveil, the neo-orthodox revival movement that reared its head around 1820, strongly gained in influence and significance in subsequent years. The political and ideological reforms of the French Revolution were opposed here, and a fundamentalist perspective on the Bible as a product of Divine revelation was dominant. A pioneering role in the rise of the Réveil was played by Isaac da Costa (1798-1860), a poet who, as a student of the now Leiden-based Bilderdijk, became enthralled with his political conservatism and alarmist salvation expectation. Convinced that a showdown with the Antichrist was imminent, and that the Prince of Orange would come out a hero, in 1823 Da Costa published his *Bezwaren tegen den geest der eeuw (Objections to the spirit of the age)*, in which he wiped the floor with the sacred cows of the moderate Enlightened establishment. In this he was supported by Abraham Capadose who, like Da Costa, converted from Judaism to Christianity in 1822 under the influence of Bilderdijk and went on to fight the vaccination policy commended by the 'Maatschappij tot Nut van 't Algemeen'.

In Dutch society as a whole people had become more open to alarmist eschatological notions. Between 1816 and 1821 the antipapal minister J.W.H. Deussen published several writings predicting a bloodcurdling war against the Turks, followed by the foundation of the Kingdom of God. The footman Hendrik Hentzepeter – janitor at the Mauritshuis Museum in The Hague since 1824 – authored a total of twenty end-time publications, in which the impending Euro-Turkish war and the coming of the Millennium again took center stage, a future scenario that was furthermore proclaimed by Hendrik Nüse, a Roman Catholic from Rotterdam, who in his turn envisioned a Kingdom of God under Papal dominion. Several prophets came to the fore as well: in The Hague the repentance preacher J.C. Khek paraded the streets since the early 1820s, thereby announcing, as self-proclaimed envoy of God, the nearness of a spiritual blessed state wherein materialism and sexual desires would be banned. Something similar was preached from 1822 onwards by Jan Masereeuw, a farmer from North-Holland who as trailblazer for the coming spiritual Kingdom of God claimed, moreover, to have become insusceptible to death. A striking materialist version of the Millennium, by contrast, was propagated by Christian messianist Claas Siegers van de Würde, who proclaimed himself 'Grondlegger van de Gelukstaat'(Founder of the Blessed State), a Kingdom of God which could be created by the founding of organizations for the advancement of economic prosperity and social justice.

In addition to prophets, one serious prophetical movement profited from the alarmist mentality of the Restoration as well: the 'Christelijke Broedergemeente' (Christian Brotherhood) founded in 1817 in North-Waddinxveen by bailiff Dirk Valk, peat shipper Stoffel Muller and his life partner Maria Leer, who became known as the 'Zwijndrechtse Nieuwlichters' (Zwijndrecht New Lighters or Innovators). This movement had close ties with a network of antinomian and theosophical circles to which not only the Rotterdam gathering of Gerrit van der Plaat but also the Amsterdam circle of potato salesman Jan Schep belonged. The 'Nieuwlichters' considered themselves forerunners of a new worldly Kingdom of God in which social inequality would disappear, in anticipation of which they lived in community of goods. At the height of their alarmism, in 1818, they experimented briefly with holy nudity and free love, but when the coming of the New Jerusalem held off, they concentrated on the

construction of two communes in Puttershoek (Zwijndrecht as per 1829) and at Woerdense Verlaat (Mijdrecht as per 1828).

Chapter 7 investigates the period between 1830 and 1848, an anxious and troubled time due to revolutions, a cholera epidemic and the orthodox Protestant 'Afscheiding' (Secession) of 1834, which accordingly became a period of rampant alarmism. The feeling that time was accelerating and that major changes were afoot resonated widely, but optimism about the future was in short supply. An analysis of articles and book reviews of leading periodicals did reveal that, around the year 1840, cracks started to show in the Biblical worldview: in particular the liberal periodical *De Gids* proved sympathetic towards scientific discoveries that did not square with the Biblical creation narrative and had been rejected on those grounds in the past. In more orthodox circles, though, these notions found no support and current events mostly fed alarmist cultural pessimism. Because of this, the interest in the Utopian socialism of the Saint-Simonians was limited, although Hentzepeter and the end-time writer H.J. Esser expressed their enthusiasm about modern developments such as the steam engine and the railways, which would come to good use in the Millennium. In addition to lay authors, various eschatological writings were also published in the 1830s by respectable theologians such as P.J. Laan and J.L. Overdorp, who took a moderate stand between millennialism and chiliasm. Explicit chiliasm, on the other hand, was vented by minister J.J. le Roy, who had hardly changed tack since his first eschatological publication (1806). He still warned against an approaching war, from which the victor would emerge as the Antichrist, but whose reign would be curtailed by the coming of the Millennium.

Due to Bilderdijk's dwindling influence and death in 1831, the end-time expectation of the Réveil evolved into several directions after 1830. While the Amsterdam Réveil circle around Da Costa became enthralled with the English chiliast Edward Irving, the The Hague Réveil circle, in which Guillaume Groen van Prinsterer played a principal part, rejected an all too literal interpretation of Biblical prophecy. But even they assumed that one was living in the last days and that a major power struggle with unbelief and superstition was imminent. In the late 1830s Da Costa dropped the conservatism he had displayed in *Bezwaren* and switched instead to more future-oriented thinking. His efforts were no longer aimed at restoration of the Church, but at the entirely new age that would commence with the coming of the Millennium. Along the same line, he was positive towards reforms which increased the political influence of orthodox believers. Even though this was too radical for many kindred spirits within the Réveil, his position as leader of the movement remained as yet untouched and his lectures throughout the country were widely attended.

The Réveil was ambivalent towards the 'Afscheiding' of 1834, called for by orthodox ministers who were inspired by the ideas of Bilderdijk and Da Costa. The Réveil welcomed any resistance against the liberal course now taken by the reformed church, but felt that a secession was at odds with the Dutch Israel view, considering the church that had arisen from the Revolt an indispensable part of it. Alarmist notions again played a role in the decision to secede, invoking either the coming of the Last Judgment or of the Glorious State of the Church. Occasionally, this led to outbreaks of eschatological panic: in Uithuizermeeden (1835), Stellendam (1836) and Bunschoten-Spakenburg (1840). Chiliasm – denounced in the Dutch Confession – scarcely played a role for separatists, except for minister H.P. Scholte, a protégé of Da Costa's who would emigrate to North-America in 1847 in the conviction that Europe, being the fourth world empire, was doomed. This conviction was shared by other separatists, and it was one of the reasons why many of them, like Scholte, sought refuge in the New World. The followers of Jan Masereeuw, furthermore, were consumed by acute eschatological panic around 1831, causing some of them to renounce their possessions or to paint black silver or golden objects, so as to face the Last Judgment with a clear conscience (a

behavior pattern that could also be seen in the eschatological panic in Bunschoten-Spakenburg). Moreover, the Frisian peat shipper P.J. de Blaauw traveled the country in the 1830s, causing outbreaks of eschatological panic in Westmaas (1833-1834) and Dwingeloo (1836).

Less influenced by gloom-and-doom thought was the Christian messianist Enoch van Ammers (abbrev.: EVA), also known as the 'Wijf des Lams' (Lamb's Wife), Elia, and 'Vorst' (Prince) Michael. This farmer from Beets proclaimed himself King of the Jews in 1834, who had been summoned together with the prince of Orange to bring back the Jews to the Promised Land, after which the Millennium would commence. He subsequently propagated his message to the small group of followers he had been able to collect and in letters to the king. His messianic colleague Siegers van de Würde, as 'Grondlegger van de Gelukstaat', tried for the second (and last) time to attract investors for economic projects, aimed at building a Kingdom of God on the ruins of the doomed world. Christian messianism resurfaced in the middle of the 1830s among the 'Nieuwlichters', who since the outbreak of the Belgian Revolution (1830) had been confronted with persecution for their refusal, as pacifists, to serve in the army. In Zwijndrecht in 1834, upon the death of Stoffel Muller, the 'Nieuwlichter' Abraham Bosch was proclaimed to be the reincarnation of Christ, a claim that was refuted by the Mijdrecht commune, led by Dirk Valk, who had an aversion to the theosophical notions circulated, among others, by Maria Leer. The two settlements decided to go their separate ways in 1835, and subsequently went asunder around the year 1850 due to financial problems and a dwindling number of adherents. Some adherents, including Maria Leer, floated to the freethinking movement, the remainder of Abraham Bosch' following would join the Mormons after his death and emigrate to Utah in 1864.

Chapter 8 focuses on the period between 1850 and 1880, which was characterized by growing polarization between, on the one hand, progressive liberals, modernists and freethinkers, who were held back by Biblical authority less and less and, on the other hand, orthodox Christians, who on the basis of their eschatological alarmism maintained an unwavering faith in the coming of the Kingdom of God. Following on from this, a re-Christianization offensive was launched by the 'Christelijke Vrienden' (Christian Friends, an offshoot of the Réveil), who tried to parry ongoing modernization with young men's, missionary and evangelization societies. During the anti-Catholic 'Aprilbeweging' (April Movement) – a widespread though fruitless resistance movement against the restoration of the episcopal hierarchy in the Netherlands (1854) – Secession circles unreservedly called up the traditional enemy image of a Papal Antichrist. The conviction was felt less strongly by the Réveil, who considered the Pope as the forerunner of the Antichrist but mostly associated the dark tyrant with rising socialism.

Many 'Christelijke Vrienden' were, however, troubled by the explicit chiliasm propagated by Da Costa and Capadose in books and lectures and taught, moreover, at the Scottish Seminary, the Amsterdam training school for evangelists founded by Da Costa and minister C.A.F. Schwartz under the auspices of the Free Church of Scotland. Through the periodical *De Heraut (The Herald)*, edited by Da Costa and Schwartz, these notions nonetheless had a relatively wide reach. Other advocates of chiliasm were, among others, the well-known pulpit preacher (and later on professor in Utrecht) J.J. van Oosterzee, and non-denominational ministers such as Jan de Liefde and W.H. Witteveen, founders of the evangelization society 'Tot Heil des Volks' (For the Salvation of the People) in Amsterdam and the 'Zendingskerk' (Mission Church) in Ermelo respectively. Capitalizing on the trend, publishers such as Henricus Höveker, W.H. Kirberger and Hermanus de Hoogh printed work by end-time writers like Louis Gaussen, C.A. Auberlen and David Pae. At the center of such work was the approaching Antichrist, who with the support of the socialists was to take

command of the fourth world empire: the European countries which had once belonged to the Roman Empire. De Hoogh even published translations of a large number of writings of the famous English eschatological theologian John Cumming, who had predicted that the blessed state would commence around 1866-1867 upon a conflagration of the world, from which the Elect would be spared by the Rapture (a temporary stay in heaven) – an eschatological perspective known as Pretribulationism.

Chapter 9 – again devoted to the period between 1850 and 1880 – detailes the resurgence of new chiliastic groups including the Darbistic 'Vergadering van Gelovigen' (Gathering of Believers), the 'Vrije Evangelische Gemeente' (Free Evangelical Congregation) of Jan de Liefde, the 'Hersteld Apostolische Zendingkerk' (Restored Apostolic Mission Church) and the 'Katholieke Apostolische Gemeente' (Catholic Apostolic Congegration), both inspired on Edward Irving, and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Similar to the growing charismatic Holiness Movement in North-America, these groups focused their attention on baptism by the Holy Spirit (Spirit Baptism), which would bring them supernatural gifts of the Spirit (charismata) and enable them to undercut the salvation monopoly of the established churches. Apart from the Mormons – who expected Utah to be spared from the conflagration – these groups awaited the Rapture anxiously. Alarmism was, furthermore, heightened in the 1860s due to a publication wave of eschatological writings, and the actions of commentators like Isaac Esser and A.M.C. van Asch van Wijck, who in their editorials in *De Heraut* and *De Morgenster* emphasized that the end was nigh. A similar message was advocated fervently by end-time evangelists who had been trained either by De Liefde (Eduard Gerdes and Jacob Witmond), by Witteveen (Arend Mooij and J.H. van Paddenburg), or at the 'Schots Seminarie' (G.F. Lankamp and W.A. Groenewoud). This led to outbreaks of acute alarmism on the island of Walcheren (1863-1864) and in Enkhuizen (1869), as well as the emergence of a prophetic movement headed by Groenewoud, going by the name of 'Wederdoopers' (Anabaptists), who emigrated to Wellington, South-Africa in the late 1860s, where they believed the New Jerusalem would arise. Among these converts was the military officer C.F. Schoch, part of a well-known Réveil family and member of the board of an evangelization society in Breda. Because of dwindling faith in the success of the re-Christianization offensive, members of other evangelization societies, too, switched to chiliastic groups preaching Pretribulationism and Spirit baptism, of which Isaac Capadose's joining the 'Katholieke Apostolische Gemeente' in The Hague caused quite a stir.

After 1870, acute eschatological alarmism evaporated quickly. As the prophecied cataclysm failed to occur, interest in alarmist publications plunged and end-time evangelists had an increasingly hard time getting their alarmist message across. Jacob Witmond found refuge with the Christian labor movement as editor of *De Werkmansvriend* (*The Workingman's Friend)*, which initially still propagated an alarmist salvation expectation but let this recede into the background after 1880. Other evangelists sought connection with the Brighton Movement (1875) which had evolved from the Anglo-Saxon Holiness Movement, and which was characterized by a spiritual rather than a worldly salvation expectation. The former 'Wederdooper' C.F. Schoch made the same transition and would ten years later become one of the leaders of the 'Leger des Heils', the Dutch branch of the Salvation Army, an organization with a millennialistic orientation. Chiliasm, on the other hand, quickly lost its relevance after 1900.

In the concluding chapter, it is established that the post-revolutionary eschatological upsurge (1790-1880) in the Netherlands was broad in scope, and that it had an inhibitory effect on the modernization process taking place in the Netherlands in the nineteenth century. Due to the moderate nature of the Dutch Enlightenment, which offered fertile soil for late-

Pietism and the Bible apologetic Revival, the upsurge was strongly influenced by culturally pessimistic notions, whereby growing secularization and modernization were associated with the Apostasy and the emergence of the Antichrist that were to herald the end of time. Decidedly less thought went into the subsequent blessed state, which was generally assumed to be unworldly in nature. On the basis of these notions the Réveil movement launched a broad re-Christianization offensive in the 1850s, which in addition to the upper and lower middle class also found an audience in young people. The alarmist end-time expectation of those years did little to improve faith in parliamentary politics as lever of reform, and was partly responsible for the fact that the resistance against, what was thought to be anti-Christian, socialism had a longer life in the Netherlands than in neighboring countries. This would only come to an end after 1880, when the Biblical future expectation had been replaced widely by an open development perspective and the unlimited horizon of expectation of modern society.