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## **Thomas Morgan (1671/2-1743): from presbyterian preacher to Christian deist : A contribution to the study of English deism**

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## Chapter Seven: Reactions after Morgan's death and abroad

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### §1: Introduction

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In this chapter, we shall look at the reactions, which arose after Morgan's death in January 1743. These reactions appeared till about ten years after the first publication of *The moral philosopher*. Although Morgan was forgotten in England in the second part of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the ideas of Deism continued to be discussed. Afterwards, we shall look at the reactions abroad, especially in Germany, the Netherlands and in the New World. We will see that these reactions endured much longer in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Especially in Germany, the impact was impressive.

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### §2: Morgan's place in the *Dunciad* of Alexander Pope

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Morgan has been eternalized with a place in the 1743 edition of the *Dunciad* by the poet Alexander Pope. The *Dunciad* is one of the most famous satirical landmarks of the British eighteenth century. For clear reasons of alliteration, Morgan appears together with the philosopher and satirist Bernard Mandeville in Book II, line 414:

Morgan and Mandeville could prate no more.<sup>1</sup>

No doubt it was Pope's friend William Warburton who suggested he include Morgan in the list of dunces. So Warburton took his revenge for Morgan's attack on him in the *Brief examination of the Rev. Mr Warburton's Divine legation of Moses ... by a society of gentlemen*, published in February 1742.<sup>2</sup> But because of his death in January 1743 Morgan did not have the pleasure of knowing about his presence in the *Dunciad*. In 1744, Warburton wrote a commentary on the *Dunciad*, in which he explained his negative feelings about Morgan with a profound hatred.<sup>3</sup> Thus it is understandable that later generations saw in Warburton Morgan's greatest adversary. Later editions of the *Dunciad* sometimes contain other commentaries, speaking about Morgan erroneously as a dissenting minister at Bristol.<sup>4</sup>

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### §3: Reactions after Morgan's death

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In the year of his death a lot of authors took notice of Morgan. Many Independent ministers reacted negatively. In 1743, Philipp Doddridge spoke of 'that unhappy creature that called himself *the moral philosopher*'.<sup>5</sup> Doddridge gave much attention to Morgan in his lectures at Northampton academy, which were published after his death by his pupil, Samuel Clark, minister of the Old Meeting in Birmingham, in 1763. Doddridge speaks of Morgan's 'great many false and absurd things relating to the Jewish history'; his entirely false assertion

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<sup>1</sup> V. Rumbold, ed., *Alexander Pope. The Dunciad in four books*, Harlow, 1999, 211.

<sup>2</sup> See for the details van den Berg, ' "Morgan and Mandeville could prate no more" '.

<sup>3</sup> See above Chapter 3 § 8 and Chapter 4 § 4.

<sup>4</sup> R. Carruthers, ed., *The poetical works of Alexander Pope*, Volume 3, London, 1853, 222.

<sup>5</sup> Ph. Doddridge, *An answer to a late pamphlet, intituled, Christianity not founded on argument*, London, 1743, 45.

about the differences among the Apostles; his objections to the character of the Old Testament saints; the priestcraft, which Morgan finds in the stories of the Old Testament and many other topics.<sup>6</sup> Samuel Chandler continued in 1743 with *A defence of the prime ministry and character of Joseph, in answer to the misrepresentations and calumnies of the late T. Morgan, M.D., and moral philosopher*. It is a continuation of his *Vindication of the Old Testament*, in which he defended Abraham.<sup>7</sup> This work is dedicated to the defence of Joseph, exposing ‘the malice that appears throughout the whole of it’. In the eyes of Chandler, Morgan ‘has truly desecrated himself’.<sup>8</sup> All together, this author wrote more than 640 pages against Morgan.<sup>9</sup> In 1746, the influential dissenting minister of Liverpool, Henry Winder, criticized Morgan occasionally in the second volume of *A critical and chronological history of the rise, progress, declension, and revival of knowledge*.<sup>10</sup> But also among Anglicans we find negative reactions, though these are not as substantial as those by the Independents. The Vicar of Bledwel in Shropshire, William Worthington, spoke incidentally with respect to Morgan, referring to his unjust aspersions and scandalous invectives.<sup>11</sup> In 1744, the theologian Matthew Horbery, Chaplain to the Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, criticized Morgan incidentally in his book written against William Whiston, *An enquiry into the Scripture-doctrine concerning the duration of future punishment*: ‘There is a man indeed who calls himself, or his book, *the Moral Philosopher*, who denies all this’.<sup>12</sup> A year later the Dean and future Bishop of Carlisle, Edmund Law, in his much reprinted work *Considerations on the state of the world with regard to the theory of religion, ..., being the substance of some sermons preach’d before the University of Cambridge*, quoted *The moral philosopher* negatively many times, calling Morgan a profligate and loose modern writer.<sup>13</sup> The famous Hebrew scholar Benjamin Kennicott quoted *The moral philosopher* once in the second of his *Dissertations*, on the oblation of Cain and Abel, calling him one of the great doctors of infidelity.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Ph. Doddridge, *A course of lectures on the principal subjects in pneumatology, ethics, and divinity*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, London, 1776, 276-7, 312, 330, 335, 337-8, 340, 353-4, 359, 362, 368-9, 536.

<sup>7</sup> Cf Chapter 4 § 8.

<sup>8</sup> S. Chandler, *A defence of the prime ministry and character of Joseph*, London, 1743, 599, 556.

<sup>9</sup> Another Independent minister was John Mason of West Street Chapel in Dorking in Surrey, who quoted *The moral philosopher* various times in his pamphlet *A plain and modest plea for Christianity, or, a sober and rational appeal to infidels*, as a formulator of the deist’s creed, London, 1743, 58, 60.

<sup>10</sup> H. Winder, *A critical and chronological history of the rise, progress, declension, and revival of knowledge*, Volume 2, London, 1746, 26, 70.

<sup>11</sup> W. Worthington, *An essay on the scheme and conduct, procedure and extent of man’s redemption*, London, 1743, 106-7.

<sup>12</sup> M. Horbery, *An enquiry into the Scripture-doctrine concerning the duration of future punishment*, London, 1744, 174.

<sup>13</sup> E. Law, *Considerations on the state of the world with regard to the theory of religion*, Cambridge, 1745, 78, 93-4, 96, 102, 109, 115, (91, 94 note).

<sup>14</sup> B. Kennicott, *Two dissertations*, Oxford, 1747, 204; see on Kennicott, W. McKane, ‘Benjamin Kennicott: an eighteenth-century researcher’, *Journal of Theological Studies*, 28 (1977) 445-64.

Thereafter, the sources dried up until the publications of Skelton at the end of the 1740s and Leland in the 1750s with their lists of deists. Skelton says ironically that the '*Moral philosopher* ... made the tour of all opinions relating to religion and physic; and, having found little else than prejudice and nonsense every-where, threw new light in great abundance, on both those branches of knowledge'.<sup>15</sup> Leland concluded that 'there have been few writers who have been more effectually confuted and exposed, than he that was pleased to honour himself with the title of the moral philosopher'. He regarded Morgan as a writer of great vivacity.<sup>16</sup> So there was a long and persistent tradition of criticism in the first ten years after the publication of *The moral philosopher*. Mostly the judgment was negative.<sup>17</sup> Only a few contemporaries dared to defend him publicly. The religious controversialist Peter Annet defended him in 1744 under the pseudonym Mencijs Philalethes in *The history of Joseph consider'd; or, The moral philosopher vindicated against Mr. Samuel Chandler's defence of the prime ministry and character of Joseph*. Another defender was Morgan's friend Thomas Amory in his positive comments in his *Memoirs* published in 1755 on the character of Morgan.<sup>18</sup> 'I know he passes with most people for a father of infidels, and is always mentioned by the faith-men as the vilest of mortals'.<sup>19</sup> Amory refers various times to Christian Deism without declaring himself to be a Christian deist. Only once in the (autobiographical?) *Life of John Bunce* does he call himself a Christian deist.<sup>20</sup> We have to wait for the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to find positive comments about Morgan. But the works of Thomas Morgan are found in many eighteenth- and nineteenth-century libraries and in many catalogues of booksellers in Britain.

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#### §4: Deism did not fade away after the 1740s

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Many authors have argued that Deism faded away after the 1740s.<sup>21</sup> But Deism was not dead in the second part of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. We recognize it in many situations and in many books. In 1776, the Quaker Robert Applegarth wrote *A theological survey of the human understanding. Intended as antidote against modern deism*. Deism was winning ground in England in the second part of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Deism was discussed among the London Debating Societies.<sup>22</sup> Deism entered the world of fiction. Deists appear in various novels by Henry Fielding such as *The history of the adventures of Joseph Andrews* (Book One Chapter

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<sup>15</sup> (Ph. Skelton), *Ophiomaches: or deism revealed*, Volume 2, London, 1749, 365.

<sup>16</sup> Leland, *A view*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Volume 1, 236, 221.

<sup>17</sup> Reventlow, *The authority*, 407, stated that the already mentioned Moses Lowman wrote in 1748 *A rational ritual of the Hebrew worship* against Morgan, but this book has nothing to do with Morgan.

<sup>18</sup> (Amory), *Memoirs*, 416: 'great goodness and strict morality; 516: 'But was Morgan a Christian, after all what the doctors have writ against him? He was'.

<sup>19</sup> (Amory), *Memoirs* 513.

<sup>20</sup> (Amory), *Memoirs*, 9, 61, 267; (Th. Amory), *The life of John Bunce*, Volume 1, London, 1756, 380.

<sup>21</sup> See for the development in later times J. van den Berg, 'The development of modern Deism', *Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte*, forthcoming.

<sup>22</sup> M. Thale, 'Deists, papists and Methodists at London Debating Societies, 1749-1799', *History*, 86 (2001) 328-47 (especially 332-5).

17), *The life of Mr. Jonathan Wild, the great* (Book Four Chapter 14), *The history of Tom Jones, a foundling* (Book Four Chapter 4, Book Five Chapter 8), and *Amelia* (Book One Chapter 4), though he himself was no deist.<sup>23</sup> More people openly declared being deists. The novelist Charlotte Lennox, née Ramsay, marking herself as a deist, has a lady appear in her novel *Henrietta*, published in 1758, who openly says – and also in front of her servants – : ‘I am a deist, ... I believe there is an intelligent cause which governs the world by physical rules’.<sup>24</sup> Many people referred to the deism of their youth like the Methodist missionary Thomas Coke, who wrote from Leeds on April 14<sup>th</sup> 1813 in a letter to the politician William Wilberforce about his youth as deist at Oxford.<sup>25</sup>

On the other hand the number of deists, freethinkers, and infidels was not so great. The devout Anglican Samuel Johnson is reported to have said on April 14<sup>th</sup> 1775: ‘Sir, there is a great cry about infidelity; but there are, in reality, very few infidels. I have heard a person, originally a Quaker, but now, I am afraid, a Deist, say, that he did not believe there were, in all England, above two hundred infidels’.<sup>26</sup> He referred to his friend the physician Richard Brocklesby. Public opinion maintained that Deism was growing. On March 10<sup>th</sup> 1779, the politician John Wilkes stated in the House of Commons: ‘Deism, indeed, Sir, sound pure deism has made a rapid progress, not only in this island, but in every part of the continent. It is almost the religion of Europe ... every year adds to the number of disciples of deism’. Wilkes himself was a deist.<sup>27</sup> Even in Holland there was awareness of the many deists in England, as was written in 1781 (in the midst of the fourth Anglo-Dutch war of 1780-1784) in the anonymous pamphlet published in Amsterdam *Engelsche tieranny, in vier samenspraaken*.<sup>28</sup> At the end of the century, William Hamilton Reid published in London his *Rise and dissolution of the infidel societies in this metropolis*, in which Morgan is mentioned as belonging to ‘the second race of infidels’.<sup>29</sup>

But by the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Morgan has been forgotten. In 1790, the anecdotist William Seward called him, as we saw already in the Introduction, the author of a now-forgotten performance against religion.<sup>30</sup> In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Morgan is mentioned from time to time, sometimes negatively, sometimes positively. The library of the Anglican Archbishop of Dublin, William Magee contained a copy of *The moral philosopher*. Magee had written against Morgan in 1801 in his book about the atonement, referring to his absurd idea of the

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<sup>23</sup> *Eighteenth-Century Fiction online* (retrieved 13.12.2017); cf R. Paulson, ‘Henry Fielding and the problem of deism’, in: R.D. Lund, ed., *The margins of orthodoxy: heterodox writing and cultural response: 1660-1750*, reprint, Cambridge, 2006, 240-70; M.C. Battestin, ‘Fielding and the deists’, *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 13 (2000) 67-76.

<sup>24</sup> Ch. Lennox, *Henrietta*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Volume 2, London, 1761, 110.

<sup>25</sup> R.I. Wilberforce and S. Wilberforce, eds., *The correspondence of William Wilberforce*, Volume 2, London, 1840, 256.

<sup>26</sup> R.W. Chapman, ed., *James Boswell Life of Johnson*, Oxford, 1980, 623.

<sup>27</sup> N.N., *The parliamentary register; or, history of the proceedings and debates of the House of Commons*, Volume 11, London, 1802, 104; J. Sainsbury, *John Wilkes: the lives of a libertine*, Aldershot, 2006, 135.

<sup>28</sup> N.N., *Engelsche Tieranny, in vier samenspraaken*, Amsterdam, 1781, 58: ‘Deïsten, waarvan Engeland vol is’.

<sup>29</sup> W.H. Reid, *The rise and dissolution of the infidel societies in this metropolis*, London, 1800, 89.

<sup>30</sup> (Seward), ‘Drossiana viii’, 332.

origin of sacrifice.<sup>31</sup> But the London deist bookseller and publisher on Fleet Street, Richard Carlile, published in 1819 *The Deist; or, moral philosopher. Being an impartial inquiry after moral and theological truths: selected from the writings of the most celebrated authors in ancient and modern times*, a work in which Thomas Morgan is mentioned three times in a letter to Dr. Samuel Chandler, originally published by Peter Annet.<sup>32</sup>

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### §5: Reactions in the Netherlands

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On the continent, there appeared long and critical reviews of *The moral philosopher* in the *Bibliothèque Britannique, ou Histoire des Ouvrages des Savans de la Grande Bretagne*<sup>33</sup>, and short notices in the *Bibliothèque Raisonnée des Ouvrages des Savans de l'Europe*<sup>34</sup>, published in the Netherlands in The Hague and Amsterdam, respectively. The book made much noise and gave much to discuss.<sup>35</sup> The *Bibliothèque Britannique* gave attention to all the publications of Morgan. Already at the end of 1737, the *Bibliothèque Britannique* knew that Morgan was the author of *The moral philosopher*.<sup>36</sup> The book is accused of being chaotic in structure.<sup>37</sup> It undermines the concept of revelation to set up a natural religion in place of it.<sup>38</sup> Twenty years after Morgan's death, a local preacher in Maassluis near Rotterdam, Johannes Martinus Hoffmann, warned his compatriots in August 1764 against Morgan and other freethinkers.<sup>39</sup>

In the meantime, some of the publications by Morgan's British adversaries, such as Lowman and Leland, had been translated into Dutch. Lowman's by the printer Daniel van Damme in 1747 and reprinted in 1768.<sup>40</sup> Leland's by Engelbert Nooteboom, in three parts, in 1776-78.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> N.N., *Catalogue of books, the property of the late most reverend William Magee, lord archbishop of Dublin*, Wicklow, 1832, 108; *The works of the most reverend William Magee, D.D., Lord Archbishop of Dublin*, Volume 1, London, 1842, 29, 314-5; Volume 2, London, 1842, 524.

<sup>32</sup> R. Carlile, *The deist*, Volume 2, London, 1819, 6-7, 32.

<sup>33</sup> *Bibliothèque Britannique*, 8/2 (1737) 430-1; 9/1 (1737) 216; 10/1 (1737) 1-19; 12/2 (1739) 331-54; 13/2 (1739) 261-324; 16/2, (1741) 326-9.

<sup>34</sup> *Bibliothèque Raisonnée*, 18 (1737) 220; 19 (1737) 230; 22 (1739) 483; 26 (1741) 467; 28 (1742) 478.

<sup>35</sup> *Bibliothèque Britannique*, 10/1 (1737) 4: 'Et en effet ce livre a fait du bruit dès qu'il a paru, & il continue à faire du bruit. Les Déistes décident le vantent comme un ouvrage excellent: les Chrétiens indécis en parlent comme d'un ouvrage redoutable'.

<sup>36</sup> *Bibliothèque Britannique*, 10/1 (1737) 14: 'Mr. Morgan, que la voix publique avait nommé le père de cet ouvrage'.

<sup>37</sup> *Bibliothèque Britannique*, 10/1 (1737) 14: 'qu'il manque de l'ordre ... un chaos à débrouiller'.

<sup>38</sup> *Bibliothèque Britannique*, 17/1 (1741) 225: 'pour saper la révélation par les fondemens, en tâchant de réduire tout à la religion naturelle'.

<sup>39</sup> J.M. Hoffmann, 'Proeve van geschied- en oordeelkundige aanmerkingen over 't ongeloof en de vrygeestery dezer eeuwe', *Maandelyke Uittreksels of Boekzaal der Geleerde Waerelt*, 99 (1764) 157-72, (166): 'In Thomas Morgan vereenigen zich alle de slegte characters zyner medemakkeren in 't ongeloove'.

<sup>40</sup> M. Lowman, *Verhandeling over de Burgerlijke of volks regeeringe der Israeliten, waar in de waare oogmerken en de aardt hunner regeeringe worden opengelegt, ... in het Nederduitsch overgezet ... door Daniel van Damme*, Leiden, 1747; reissue, Leiden, 1768.

From time to time, one sees some negative observations about Morgan made by Dutch apologetes like the barrister Hendrik Constantyn Cras, and the theologians Jacob van Nuys Klinkenberg, Ysbrand van Hamelsveld, Wilhelmus Antonius van Vloten en Jan Scharp.<sup>42</sup> The church historian Annaeüs IJpeij gave at the end of the century much critical attention to Morgan.<sup>43</sup> But according to the Dutch reformed minister Gerard Cornelis van Balen Blanken, there have not been many deists in the Netherlands.<sup>44</sup> Much depends on what one defines as Deism. But the reviews and the translations of apologetic literature indicates that the orthodox were worried about the possible influence of English deists.<sup>45</sup>

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## §6: Reactions in Germany

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In Germany, much attention has in general been given to the works of the English deists.<sup>46</sup> Johann Lorenz Schmidt, the translator of the rationalist *Wertheimer Bibel* (1735), also translated Tindal's principal work in 1741.<sup>47</sup> As far as Morgan is concerned, much disapproving attention was paid to *The moral philosopher*, which I have described extensively in an article published in 2008.<sup>48</sup> The church historian Michael Lilienthal in Königsberg in East Prussia already had in 1741 the works of Morgan and many of his British opponents in

<sup>41</sup> J. Leland, *Het godlyk gezag van het Oude en Nieuwe testament verdedigt ... tegen de onrechtmatige betichtingen en valsch reedeneeringen van een boek: getiteld zeedenkundigen filozoof, uit het Engelsch vertaald door Engelbert Nooteboom*, Utrecht, 1776-78.

<sup>42</sup> H.C. Cras, *Verhandeling dat de christelyke zedekunde geen eenen pligt voorschryft ...*, Leiden, 1782, 155; J. van Nuys Klinkenberg, *Onderwys in den godsdienst*, volume 4, Amsterdam, 1782, 260; Volume 7, Amsterdam, 1788, 15, 19, 33-4, 43; Y. van Hamelsveld, *De Bybel verdedigd*, Amsterdam, 1783, passim; W.A. van Vloten, *De Bybel vertaald*, Volume 2, Utrecht/Amsterdam, 1789, 30; J. Scharp, *Godgeleerd-historische verhandeling over de gevoelens ... der hedendaagse zoogenaamde verlichting*, Rotterdam, 1793, 55; see on van Nuys Klinkenberg E.G.E. van der Wall, *Verlicht christendom of verijnd heidendom? Jacob van Nuys Klinkenberg (1744-1817) en de Verlichting*, Leiden, 1994; E.G.E. van der Wall, 'Samenleving onder spanning of de relatie tussen godsdienst en sociale cohesie', in: J.W. Buisman, ed., *Verlichting in Nederland 1650-1850*, Nijmegen, 2013, 129-146; and on Scharp R.A. Bosch, 'Verlichte vriend van duisterlingen: Jan Scharp (1756-1828)', in: Buisman, *Verlichting*, 65-83.

<sup>43</sup> A. IJpeij, *Geschiedenis van de kristelijke kerk in de achttiende eeuw*, eerste deel tweede stuk, Utrecht, 1798, 327-342 (327): he calls *The moral philosopher* 'het hoofdmagazijn ... waaruit de nieuwe ongeloovigen hunne wapenen steeds wechhaalen'.

<sup>44</sup> G.C. van Balen Blanken, 'Redevoering over het godsdienstig gevoel de magtigste stem in den mensch', *De Recensent, ook der Recensenten*, 31-2 (1838) 53-72 (65 note 1): 'Weinige zijn de Deïsten in ons vaderland geweest'.

<sup>45</sup> See about the question whether there existed deism in the Netherlands R.H. Vermij, 'Tolands eerste brief aan Serena. Een episode uit de geschiedenis van het deïsme in Nederland', *Documentatieblad werkgroep achttiende eeuw*, 21/1 (1989) 13-22 (14).

<sup>46</sup> Voigt, *Der Englische Deismus*, passim.

<sup>47</sup> P.S. Spalding, *Seize the book, jail the author: Johann Lorenz Schmidt and censorship in eighteenth-century Germany*, West Lafayette, 1998.

<sup>48</sup> van den Berg, 'English Deism and Germany', 48-61.



his library.<sup>49</sup> Throughout Germany, academic theses were defended against the deistical danger. The famous theologian, historian and biographer, Christian Gottlieb Joecher, dedicated in 1745 in Leipzig a thesis to the Morgan controversy entitled *Historiae controversiarum a Thoma Morgano excitatarum*. His negative judgment of Morgan in plain Latin is typical:

*Quis non stupeat haec legens...in nullo unquam libro a christianae civitatis homine conscripto, tot scomnata, tantas calumnias, tot criminationes, tantasque blasphemias in nostrum religionem eiusque venerandos auctores fuisse coniecta?*<sup>50</sup>

Another thesis was written in 1745 in Halle by Christian Ernst von Windheim: *Disputatio de Paulo gentium apostolo contra Thomam Morganum*. Von Windheim was professor of philosophy and oriental languages in Erlangen from 1755.<sup>51</sup>

Especially at the University in Halle, attention was given to the English deists. The theologian Siegmund Jakob Baumgarten, who was the most important figure in Halle in the transition from Pietism to Rationalism, gave a nearly complete survey of Morgan's work and of his British critics till 1750 in which he is very critical of Morgan.<sup>52</sup> But also a man such as the poet and dramatist Gotthold Ephraim Lessing wrote many reviews for learned journals and in one of them he referred disapprovingly to Morgan.<sup>53</sup> Many more reactions could have been named.

Another aspect of the influence in Germany is contained in the many translations of English apologetical literature in the German language. The books of the apologists Lowman, Chapman and Hallett were translated by Johann Friedrich Esaias Steffens, pastor in Stade near Hamburg, and published in Hamburg in 1755 and in 1759-61, respectively. Johann Heinrich Meyenberg from Uelzen in Lower Saxony translated Lowman's *dissertation* also as *Abhandlung von der bürgerlichen Regimentsverfassung der Hebräer*, published in Celle in Lower Saxony in 1756 with a preface about Jewish theocracy by Lorenz Hagemann, court chaplain in Hanover.<sup>54</sup> Leland's *Divine authority* was translated by Andreas Gottlob Masch, court chaplain in Neustrelitz (Mecklenburg-Strelitz), and published in Rostock and Wismar in 1756, with a preface of more than twenty pages by Siegmund Baumgarten. Masch speaks of

<sup>49</sup> M. Lilienthal, *Theologische Bibliothec, das ist richtiges Verzeichniss, zulängliche Beschreibung, und bescheidene Beurtheilung der dahin gehörigen vornehmsten Schriften welche in M. Michael Lilienthals ... Bücher-Vorrat befindlich sind*, Königsberg, 1741.

<sup>50</sup> Chr.G. Joecher, *Historiae controversiarum a Thoma Morgano excitatarum*, Lipsiae, 1745, 6-7; (English translation: 'Who is not stupified, to read in any book written by a member of the Christian community, so many scandalous expressions, calumnies, criminations and blasphemies, thrown at our religion and its honourable authors?').

<sup>51</sup> Cl. Wachter, *Die Professoren und Dozenten der Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen 1743-1960*, Volume 3, (Erlanger Forschungen 13), Erlangen, 2009, 244.

<sup>52</sup> (S.J. Baumgarten), *Fünfter Band der Nachrichten einer Hallischen Bibliothek*, Halle, 1750, 330-62 (341): 'dass der Verfasser unter die Gegner gehöre, die eben so frech lügen, als dreiste lästern'.

<sup>53</sup> In the *Berlinische Privilegierte Zeitung* 27<sup>th</sup> November 1751, quoted by K.S. Guthke, ed., *Gotthold Ephraim Lessing Werke*, Volume 3, Munich, 1972, 79: 'man weiss wie verwegen Morgan den Joseph angegriffen hat'.

<sup>54</sup> M.B. Price and L.M. Price, *The publication of English humaniora in Germany in the eighteenth century*, Berkeley, 1955, 115, 45.

the malicious unbelief of Morgan. It was reprinted in Schwerin in 1786.<sup>55</sup> Chandler's book was also translated.<sup>56</sup>

Translations of Morgan's work in German, however, do not exist.<sup>57</sup> In his *Freydencker-Lexicon* the German pastor Johann Anton Trinius in the county of Mansfeld dedicated eighteen pages to Morgan.<sup>58</sup> So Morgan's ideas were disseminated by his German opponents all over Germany.

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### §7: Hermann Samuel Reimarus

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One man especially received attention in this process. The German deist, Hermann Samuel Reimarus, was the greatest systematician of Deism.<sup>59</sup> He has been mentioned as one of those who used the Biblical criticism of the deists and specifically of Thomas Morgan in his own work.<sup>60</sup> Already the famous theologian David Friedrich Strauss referred many times to Morgan as a predecessor of Reimarus. Strauss mentions as comparable topics the priest fraud, the extermination of the peoples of Canaan, the criticism of the patriarchs, the Egyptian plagues, the miracles of Moses, and the absence of the doctrine of immortality in the Old Testament.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> J. Leland, *Abhandlung von den göttlichen Ansehen des Alten und Neuen Testaments, zur Widerlegung der Einwürfe des moralischen Philosophen, aus dem Englischen übersetzt von Andreas Gottlieb Masch*, Rostock und Wismar, 1756, Vorrede des Übersetzers 26-35 (28): 'boshafter Unglaube'; Price and Price, *The publication*, 111.

<sup>56</sup> According to J.A. Trinius, *Freydencker=Lexicon oder Einleitung in den Schriften der neuern Freygeister*, Leipzig-Bernburg, 1759, 386-7.

<sup>57</sup> Gerdmar, *Roots of theological anti-Semitism*, 31, overstates his case when he says: 'Halle was also influenced by Thomas Morgan's translated and published writings'.

<sup>58</sup> Trinius, *Freydencker=Lexicon*, 369-87, in which he also attributes some pamphlets wrongly to Morgan.

<sup>59</sup> G. Gawlick, 'Der Deismus' (38): 'Reimarus... der grösste Systematiker des Deismus'.

<sup>60</sup> R. Schettler, *Die Stellung des Philosophen Hermann Samuel Reimarus zur Religion*, Dissertation, Leipzig, 1904, 44; Most outspoken by A.Chr. Lundsteen, *Hermann Samuel Reimarus. Die Anfänge der Leben-Jesu Forschung*, Kopenhagen, 1939, 138: 'An manchen Stellen können wir nicht den Gedanken – ja wir haben sogar die Gewissheit, - eines Plagiates von englischen deistischen Verfassern bis zur wörtlichen Wiedergabe, vermeiden'; M. Loeser, *Die Kritik des Hermann Samuel Reimarus am Alten Testament. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Rationalismus in Deutschland* (maschinenschriftliche Dissertation), Berlin 1941, 112: 'genau so – oft bis zu in Einzelheiten übereinstimmend ... Man könnte fast Satz für Satz auf Morgan verweisen'; H. Graf Reventlow, 'Das Arsenal der Bibelkritik des Reimarus, insbesondere des Alten Testaments, bei den englischen Deisten', in: W. Walter and others, *Hermann Samuel Reimarus (1694- 1768), ein 'bekannter Unbekannter' der Aufklärung in Hamburg* (Veröffentlichungen der Joachim Jungius-Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften), Göttingen, 1973, 44-65 (59 note 12): 'Reimarus benutzte ... Morgan'; J.A. Steiger, 'Zu Gott gegen Gott. Oder: die Kunst, gegen Gott zu glauben. Isaaks Opferung (Gen 22) bei Luther, im Luthertum der Barockzeit, in der Epoche der Aufklärung und im 19. Jahrhundert', in: J.A. Steiger and U. Heinen, eds., *Isaaks Opferung (Gen 22) in den Konfessionen und Medien der frühen Neuzeit*, (Arbeiten zur Kirchengeschichte 101), Berlin, 2006, 185-238 (231): 'Reimarus - vergleichbar mit und offenbar im Anschluss an den Deisten Thomas Morgan'.

<sup>61</sup> D.F. Strauss, *Hermann Samuel Reimarus und seine Schutzschrift für die vernünftigen Verehrer Gottes*, reprint of the Leipzig 1862 edition, Hildesheim, 1991, 42-3, 81, 89, 102, 160.

But especially for Reimarus this use of Morgan cannot be proven beyond doubt. Reimarus usually quotes his English sources, of which I counted more than twenty-five in the *Apologie*.<sup>62</sup> He quotes people like Spencer and Selden, Whiston and Middleton, but also Toland and Lardner. He is sometimes very specific. So, for example, he quotes John Toland and admits the use of his *Tetradymus*.<sup>63</sup> He refers various times to Anthony Collins.<sup>64</sup> But he refers also to the apologists, such as William Warburton.<sup>65</sup>

But he never refers to Morgan. One has to observe that the first drafts of the *Apologie* were already drawn up in the early 1730s, years before the publication of *The moral philosopher*.<sup>66</sup> Another question is the possibility that Reimarus may have known the work of Thomas Morgan. There is reason to believe this, if we review the auction catalogue of the library of Reimarus. There we indeed find the three volumes of *The moral philosopher*.<sup>67</sup> But the simple fact of the presence of some book in a library catalogue does in itself not prove that it was read by or used in the extant work of the owner of the library. Reimarus never quoted Thomas Morgan's work in his *Apologie*. It can only be said that Reimarus had more English deist works in his library than he quoted in his published works.<sup>68</sup> And that it is surprising that no references can be found to Morgan.<sup>69</sup> The same may be said for other works of Reimarus. Among references to, for example, the deists Collins, Woolston and Tindal, there are none to Morgan.<sup>70</sup> It has been argued that Reimarus encountered the works of the English deists including Morgan during his research trip in England in 1720-1721.<sup>71</sup> But as far as Morgan is

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<sup>62</sup> G. Alexander, ed., *Hermann Samuel Reimarus, Apologie oder Schutzschrift für die vernünftigen Verehrer Gottes*, Frankfurt am Main, 1972, Volume 1: 136, 152, 327, 434, 728, 742, 771, 789, 806, 830, 859, 905, 909; volume 2: 271, 281, 315, 377, 385, 387, 528, 569, 658, 667, 685.

<sup>63</sup> Alexander, *Reimarus*, Volume 1, 434: 'Der berüchtigte Toland, welche alle andere Gegner der Offenbarung an Belesenheit und Scharfsinnigkeit übertrifft'; 434 note f: 'Ich habe mich derselben mit Nutzen bedient'.

<sup>64</sup> Alexander, *Reimarus*, Volume 1, 728: 'Die Engländer haben sich durch der Collins genötiget gesehen, die buchstäbliche Weissagungen von Christo beynehe aufzugeben, und bloss eine accomodationem darin zu erkennen'.

<sup>65</sup> Alexander, *Reimarus*, Volume 1, 771: 'Der berühmte Bischoff Warburton hat in seiner Divine legation of Moses eine wunderbare Meynung zu behaupten gesucht'.

<sup>66</sup> Alexander, *Reimarus*, Volume 1, 22-3; W. Schmidt-Biggemann, *Hermann Samuel Reimarus, Handschriftenverzeichniss und Bibliographie*, (Veröffentlichung der Joachim Jungius-Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften 37), Göttingen, 1979, 19.

<sup>67</sup> J.A.G. Schetelig, *Auktionskatalog der Bibliothek von Hermann Samuel Reimarus 1769-1770*, reprint, (Joachim Jungius-Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften), Hamburg, 1978, nrs. I. 927-929.

<sup>68</sup> So the prudent commentary by G. Gawlick, 'Reimarus und der englische Deismus', in: K. Gründer ed., *Religionskritik und Religiosität in der deutschen Aufklärung* (Wolfenbütteler Studien zur Aufklärung 11), Heidelberg, 1989, 43-54 (47).

<sup>69</sup> Loeser, *Die Kritik*, 112.

<sup>70</sup> See W. Schmidt-Biggemann, ed., *Hermann Samuel Reimarus, Kleine gelehrte Schriften: Vorstufen zur Apologie oder Schutzschrift für die vernünftigen Verehrer Gottes* (Veröffentlichung der Joachim Jungius-Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften 79), Göttingen, 1994, 302.

concerned, that is quite impossible because at that time Morgan had not written his deist works.<sup>72</sup> Another authority emphasized that the frequent stress on English influence in older historiography about Reimarus is both groundless and highly misleading.<sup>73</sup> We may conclude with the cautious formulation that many of Reimarus' results were fruit of English Bible criticism, which he radicalized and systematized.<sup>74</sup> The *Apologie* of Reimarus is indeed more systematically constructed as criticism of the Old and the New Testament, but it was never published during his lifetime. In all these respects, it is a totally different work from *The moral philosopher*.

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### §8: France

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In France, there is nearly no response to be found. In contrast to Germany, Morgan had no traceable influence in France. Voltaire, for example, criticized the Old Testament very harshly, but there is no influence of Morgan to be found.<sup>75</sup> It is with some caution that these English influences have to be studied.<sup>76</sup> Others maintain that Voltaire was heavily influenced by the deists.<sup>77</sup> Although Edward Bouverie Pusey, Regius Professor of Hebrew at Oxford, argued in 1828 that Voltaire derived his critical objections from, among others, Morgan, this is not correct. None of Morgan's deist books are to be found in the catalogue of the library of Voltaire in Ferney, nor in Saint Petersburg. Voltaire never refers to a single work by Thomas Morgan and they probably never met each other. Voltaire depended more on other deists.<sup>78</sup> The same can be said of Denis Diderot.<sup>79</sup>

<sup>71</sup> A. Schilson, sub voce 'Reimarus', in: H.J. Hillerbrand, ed., *The encyclopedia of Protestantism*, Volume 3, New York/London, 2004, 1602-03.

<sup>72</sup> See for the details J. van den Berg, 'Did Reimarus use (implicitly) the work of the English deist Thomas Morgan? Some methodological questions', *Notes and Queries* 56 (2009) 243-5.

<sup>73</sup> J. Israel, 'The philosophical context of Hermann Samuel Reimarus' radical bible criticism', in: M. Mulsow, ed., *Between philology and radical enlightenment, Hermann Samuel Reimarus (1694-1768)*, (Brill's Studies in Intellectual History 203), Leiden, 2011, 183-200 (188).

<sup>74</sup> Schmidt-Biggemann, *Hermann Samuel Reimarus, Handschriftenverzeichnis*, 14: 'Reimarus übernahm einen Grossteil seiner Ergebnisse aus den englischen Bibelkritik (deren Werke er zum grossen Teil besessen hat), aber er radikalisierte diese kritischen Impulse, indem er sie systematisierte'.

<sup>75</sup> N. Torrey, *Voltaire and the English deists*, New Haven, 1930; B.E. Schwarzbach, *Voltaire's Old Testament criticism*, (Études de Philosophie et d' Histoire 20), Geneva, 1971; D. Levy, *Voltaire et son exégèse du Pentateuque: critique et polémique*, (Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century, 130), Banbury, 1975.

<sup>76</sup> Levy, *Voltaire*, 123: 'C'est avec prudence que l'on doit aborder l'étude d'éventuelles influences anglaises sur la pensée exégétiques de Voltaire'.

<sup>77</sup> A. Sutcliffe, 'The Enlightenment, French revolution, Napoleon', in: A. Lindemann and R.S. Levy, eds., *Antisemitism: a history*, Oxford, 2010, 107-120 (110): 'Voltaire's frequent and highly polemical assaults on Judaism and the Jews were heavily influenced by the British Deists and by the clandestine manuscripts of the French philosophical underground'.

<sup>78</sup> E.B. Pusey, *An historical enquiry into the probable causes of the rationalist character lately predominant in the theology of Germany*, London, 1828, 126 note 3; *Voltaire's catalogue of his library at Ferney*, ed. by G.R. Havens and N.L. Torrey (Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century ix) Geneva, 1959; *Bibliothèque de*

There is evidence that Paul Baron D'Holbach sought more information about Morgan, asking for it in a letter from Paris to his friend John Wilkes, dated 10 December 1767, but the Editor of the letter already observed that no trace of Morgan is to be found in the works of d'Holbach.<sup>80</sup> There were others in France interested in Morgan, like the Roman Catholic apologetic theologian Nicolas Sylvestre Bergier. Bergier, who quotes Morgan many times, describes him as an English deist who argued against the miracles of Moses.<sup>81</sup> Morgan's name appeared once in the article on *Physiologie* in the supplement of the *Encyclopédie*.<sup>82</sup> All in all, it is clear that Morgan was more known in Germany than in France.

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### §9: Reactions in America

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In New England, *The moral philosopher* was also disseminated early.<sup>83</sup> Thus Jeremiah Condry, the pastor of the First Baptist Church in Boston, wrote on February 8<sup>th</sup> 1738 from London to his friend the Reverend John Sparhawk, pastor of the first church in Salem: 'According to you wish I send you Morgans Moral Philosopher'.<sup>84</sup> He sent also Hallett's pamphlet and Morgan's rejoinder.

James Logan of Philadelphia, friend and counselor of William Penn, wrote on August 16<sup>th</sup> 1738 to the physician and naturalist John Fothergill: 'I have been told of a late piece call'd (I think) the Moral Philosopher being ye Result of Several conferences on ye Subject of Morals ... Pray buy or direct L. Williams to buy these for me'. A year later he wrote to Fothergill on April 6<sup>th</sup> 1739 that he 'was misled by the title of the Moral Philosopher and the information of a parson who, having seen it, had read little more in it than the preface or otherwise should not have sent for so vile a Piece. I had seen something of Morgan's before & join with thee in thy Sentiments of him'.<sup>85</sup>

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*Voltaire: catalogue des livres*, ed. by M.P. Alekseev and T.N. Kopreeva, Moscow-Leningrad, 1961; van den Berg, 'Did Voltaire meet the deist Thomas Morgan'; cf Torrey, *Voltaire*, passim.

<sup>79</sup> Cf H. Sängier, *Juden und Altes Testament bei Diderot*, Wertheim am Main, 1933.

<sup>80</sup> P. Vernière, 'Deux lettres inédites de D'Holbach à Wilkes', *Revue de Littérature Comparée*, 28 (1954) 482-6 (486): 'I am told the works of one Morgan have been esteemed in your country, but I don't know the titles'; 486 note: '*Aucune trace de Morgan ne demeure dans l'oeuvre ultérieure de baron*'.

<sup>81</sup> Fr. Laplanche, *La Bible en France entre mythe et critique xvi-xix siècle*, Paris, 1994, 95: 'Il (Bergier) cite expressément Tindal et Morgan'; N.S. Bergier, *Traité historique et dogmatique de la vraie religion*, volume 6, Paris, 1780, 18: '*Un déiste Anglois qui s'est élevé de toutes ses forces contre les miracles de Moïse*'.

<sup>82</sup> N.N., *Supplément à l'Encyclopédie ou dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers*, volume 4, Amsterdam, 1777, 356: '*jatro-mathématicien, esprit fort d'ailleurs, porta dans le médecine le même esprit d'incrédulité, qui le séduisit par rapport à la religion*'.

<sup>83</sup> See for more details J. van den Berg, 'Traces of impact of the work of the English deist Thomas Morgan in early America', *Notes and Queries*, 64 (2017) 499-503.

<sup>84</sup> Quoted by (Hoyt, A.H.), 'Letters of Cotton Mather ... and others', *The New England Historical and Genealogical Register and Antiquarian Journal*, 24 (1870) 107-23 (115).

<sup>85</sup> E. Wolf, *The library of James Logan of Philadelphia 1674-1751*, Philadelphia, 1974, 328 nr.1386.

As another sign of early knowledge in America, Morgan is also mentioned in the fourth of the Maryland eclogues of the poet and minister Thomas Cradock, who emigrated to Maryland in 1744, line 34-5:

Now Tindal's system's ev'ry where received,  
And Collins, Morgan, Whoolstan all believ'd.<sup>86</sup>

In America, Deism was the religion of the educated class by the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>87</sup> The Quaker Sophia Wigington Hume complained in the middle of the century to her fellow inhabitants of South Carolina about the daily growth of infidelity and Deism.<sup>88</sup> Various of the founding fathers such as Benjamin Franklin, George Washington and Thomas Jefferson were deists.<sup>89</sup> In the autobiography of Franklin we find a remembrance of his youth:

But I was scarce fifteen, when, after doubting by turns of several points, as I found them disputed in the different books I read, I began to doubt of Revelation itself. Some books against Deism fell into my hands; they were said to be the substance of sermons preached at Boyle's Lectures. It happened that they wrought an effect on me quite contrary to what was intended by them; for the arguments of the Deists, which were quoted to be refuted, appeared to me much stronger than the refutations; in short, I soon became a thorough Deist.<sup>90</sup>

It is a typical description of the way along which many founding fathers were to become deists. Franklin was involved in the Deism trial against the Presbyterian minister Samuel Hemphill in Philadelphia in 1735.<sup>91</sup> Philadelphia was the capital of American Deism. Many members of the American Philosophical Society in Philadelphia were deists, but we have to remember the observation: 'Deists are difficult to identify because at times they differ from Christians only in emphasis'.<sup>92</sup> Another made a similar observation when he stated that a satisfactory definition of American Deism in a few sentences is almost as difficult as describing an American.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> D.C. Skaggs, ed., *The poetic writings of Thomas Cradock (1718-1770)*, East Brunswick, 1983, 167.

<sup>87</sup> G. Wills, *Head and hearth. American Christianities*, New York, 2007, 153.

<sup>88</sup> S. Hume, *An exhortation to the inhabitants of the province of South Carolina*, London, 1752, 133.

<sup>89</sup> Fr. Lambert, *The founding fathers and the place of religion in America*, Princeton, 2003, 159-79: 'Deists enter the religious marketplace'.

<sup>90</sup> J. Bigelow, ed., *Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin*, Philadelphia, 1868, 164; see further on Franklin's deism D. Walden, 'Benjamin Franklin's deism: a phase', *The Historian*, 26 (1964) 350-61; J. Waligore, 'The Christian Deist writings of Benjamin Franklin', *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, 140 (January 2016) 7-29.

<sup>91</sup> M.A. Christensen, 'Franklin and the Hemphill trial: deism versus Presbyterian orthodoxy', *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 10 (1953) 422-40.

<sup>92</sup> H.F. May, *The Enlightenment in America*, reprint, Oxford, 1978, 197; H.E. Taussig, 'Deism in Philadelphia during the age of Franklin', *Pennsylvania History*, 37 (1970) 217-36 (223).

<sup>93</sup> D.A. Jurden, 'A historiography of American deism', *The American Benedictine Review*, 25 (1974) 108-222 (108).

Twelve years after Morgan's death, John Adams, who was to become the second President of the United States, related about his stay in 1755 in Worcester, New England: 'Here I found Morgan's Moral Philosopher, which I was informed had circulated with some freedom in that town, and that the principles of Deism had made considerable progress among persons in that and other towns in the country'. A copy of *The moral philosopher* was found in his library when it was donated to the town of Quincy in the county of Norfolk, in 1823.<sup>94</sup> At the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, we find another person who, just like Morgan, called himself a Christian deist: John Hargrove, a Swedenborgian, minister of the New Jerusalem Church in Baltimore, who wrote in 1801 *The temple of truth*, in which he said of himself: 'I am a deist it is true, but take notice I am not a mere deist – I am more – I am a Christian deist'.<sup>95</sup> We have no indication that Hargrove knew the work of Morgan, but his struggle against Deism supposes his probable antipathy against the Christian Deism of Morgan.<sup>96</sup>

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### §10: Summary

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*The moral philosopher* received much critical attention in other countries, especially in Germany, the Netherlands, and also America. In England, the discussions ran until ten years after the first publication of *The moral philosopher*. Afterwards, the fire extinguished. Towards the close of the century, Morgan was forgotten. Only the booksellers of London knew his name.

But on the continent and in America the discussion continued for a longer time. At least five of the apologetic works published in English against Morgan were translated into German, two into Dutch. Many critical comments appeared in journals in the German and French languages. Especially in Germany, the reaction was impressive.

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<sup>94</sup> C.F. Adams, ed., *The works of John Adams, second president of the United States*, Volume 2, Boston, 1853, 3; see for other deists in Worcester during that time, K.J. Moynihan, *A history of Worcester, 1674-1848*, Charleston, SC, 2007, 59, 66; N.N., *Deeds and other documents relating to the several pieces of land, and to the library presented to the town of Quincy, by president Adams, together with a catalogue of the books*, Cambridge, 1823, 37.

<sup>95</sup> J. Hargrove, *The temple of truth*, Baltimore, 1801, 36.

<sup>96</sup> See about Hargrove T.D. Bilharz, *Urban religion and the second Great Awakening: church and society in early national Baltimore*, Cranford, NJ, 1986, 118-119.