

importance; it suggests both the scope of Lebeuf's hagiographic learning and his critical spirit. Original thinking is evident in many of these documents: Du Sollier notes that the bodies of some saints, popular but obscure, were revered in many locations — something which perhaps made it easier to forge multiple "Lives" to match (document 9, 99). In his turn, Lebeuf remarks to Du Sollier on the relative neglect of many local saints (document 13B).

A collection of documents such as this must necessarily suffer from a certain lack of unity, except in so far as the documents reflect the concerns of their authors and their characteristic modes of thought. And it is not always possible for the editor of such a collection to bring out, in a rounded way, all the themes which the documents suggest, or to demonstrate clearly how those themes structure the work of the authors. Joassart deserves credit, nonetheless, for bringing back to our attention the work of outstanding scholars such as Lebeuf and his correspondents. It is to be hoped that Lebeuf's hagiographic scholarship — and his larger contributions to the political and intellectual life of his time — will continue to receive the attention which they deserve. In any case the work of Joassart will be indispensable to that project.

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MICHEL WIELEMA: *The March of the Libertines. Spinozists and the Dutch Reformed Church (1660–1750)*. ReLiC: Studies in Dutch Religious History. Hilversum: Uitgeverij Verloren, 2004; pp. 221.

The Dutch Republic of the seventeenth century is famous for having cultivated an extraordinary climate of toleration and religious pluralism — the Union of Utrecht supported religious freedom, or "freedom of conscience", and expressly forbade religious inquisition. However, despite membership in the state sponsored Calvinist Dutch Reformed Church not being compulsory, the freedom to gather and worship, or "to air anti-Christian or atheistic opinions" was little tolerated "*within*" the organized structure of the church, which functioned more as "an exclusive organisation for those willing to submit freely to certain confessional canons and to the disciplinary authority of the church's governing bodies" (10): the consistories, classes, and synods. Those not prepared to submit to Reformed doctrine were free to leave the church without fear of any legal or political repercussions. However, for those not prepared to leave for reasons of personal belief, matters turned out to be quite different. Because the Reformed Church enjoyed full State protection, matters of doctrinal conflict could well evolve into political affairs. And, contrary to the Union of Utrecht, religious inquisition was in some cases actually applied with political approval for "heretics" within the Reformed Church. The main focus of *The March of the Libertines* is an investigation of this obvious tension.

One of the central claims of the book is that Spinoza's ideas had widely infiltrated Dutch intellectual life, but that as these ideas spread, opposition to them increased. This is demonstrated through a close analysis of information recorded in the minutes of local ecclesiastical archives. Despite being sporadic, and indirect sources, Wielema formulates some interesting hypotheses regarding the reception of Spinoza at the time. He uses these archives to investigate the reception of dissident ideas by the ordinary members of the church, beyond the polemics of the intellectual elite. These archives also offer an account of how the Reformed Church actually reacted to dissidents and their supporters within the church.

The two main rivals to Reformed Church doctrine were the Voetians and the Cocceians. The latter advocated the interpretation of scripture on hermeneutic principles and were supporters of Cartesian science, whereas the former were committed to a “fossilized” interpretation of scripture and to the old Aristotelian philosophy. In the interests of defending and even of extending their local sphere of influence, occasionally Cocceian ministers would face false accusations, from their Voetian rivals, of heresy in the guise of Spinozism. At the time, Spinozism was considered a term of abuse, and such an accusation was intended to attract the attention of the church authorities in order to have the accused blacklisted. It was also not unheard of for such accusations to emerge from within a faction, for example the Cocceians considered Van Leenhof’s views to threaten the good reputation the new movement had only then recently acquired.

Wielema treats a number of dissidents within the Reformed Church that he refers to as “Reformed Spinozists”: Bekker, Van Dalen, Deurhoff, and Van Hattem to name a few. The accusation of Spinozism was carried in many instances where there was an enormous difference between the views of the accused and those of Spinoza. Some of the dissidents were accused of covertly propagating Spinozism by disguising it in the language of Reformed Religion, of spreading “Spinoza’s atheism under an Evangelical cloak” (177).

In addition to the factional rivalry, there was also growing tension between the claims of Reformed Church doctrine and the more enlightened views of some of the dissenting believers. The Hebrews, founded by Verschoor, advocated the study of the bible in the original Hebrew, rather than in its official State translation, to better appreciate the nuances of scripture. Some dissidents considered themselves to be representatives of a truly reformed church, the “reformed” Reformed Church, which was based on religious freedom rather than corrupted by abuse of clerical power.

In some instances, the church authorities efforts to suppress the various movements, or at least restrict their influence, had the opposite effect, leading to the publication of a number of books and pamphlets dealing with dissident opinions in great detail. Although most dissidents were reluctant to leave the church of their own accord, many ended up being barred from the Lord’s Supper and some were even formally expelled. When admonitions and censure didn’t stop the spread of these heresies, at the church’s request, dissidents were subjected to political harassment. Bans were enforced on both the meetings and writings of various dissidents, and some were even excluded from towns by magistrates.

Wielema presents a thorough investigation of historical resources that had yet to be examined in any great detail, and provides material that will prove useful to Scholars working in the field of Spinoza studies in the further determination of the early reception, transmission, and influence of the work of Spinoza in the Dutch Republic.

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WILLIAM GIBSON: *Enlightenment Prelate: Benjamin Hoadly, 1676–1761*. Cambridge: James Clarke & Co, 2004; pp. 384.

Benjamin Hoadly has been for the two and half centuries since his death the most notorious and despised of the latitudinarian bishops who were thought to have had far too great an influence on the early Hanoverian Church of England. The reason that his character and opinions have been so generally blackened is that the writing of Anglican history has been largely the preserve of high churchmen for whom the latitudinarian