Partakers with the Altar: Church Personnel and the Exploitation of Amsterdam's Public Churches, 1650-1795

Joke Spaans

Abstract

Contrary to prevalent assumptions, city magistracies did not always pay for the upkeep of the churches used by the Dutch Reformed church. Based on the archives of churchwardens for the eleven public churches of Amsterdam, this article shows that for about a century between 1650 and 1750 the churches hardly needed financial support, how this was possible, and why they eventually came to rely on municipal subsidies. After the devastations wrought by the Dutch Revolt and the Reformation, the buildings were refurnished in a luxurious style, befitting the prestige of the city. Burgomasters imposed a seating arrangement that, maintained by a variety of minor officials, reflected the hierarchical order of society. The biographical background and the work of these officials provide a window into the ritual of churchgoing. During the heyday of Amsterdam's prosperity people were happy to pay for the services the churches provided, and for the opportunities it offered for the display of rank and dignity. Economic decline, critique of the established social order, and changing religious sensibilities undercut this source of funding. The report of an auditing committee, analysing the administration of churchwardens in 1795 and 1796, testifies to the difficulties even the staunchest Batavian revolutionaries experienced when rethinking early modern public finances.

Keywords: sextons, church personnel, minor clergy, public finances, civil religion, Amsterdam

DOI 10.51750/emlc.9616 - URL: http://www.emlc-journal.org
Publisher: Stichting EMLC

Partakers with the Altar: Church Personnel and the Exploitation of Amsterdam's Public Churches, 1650-1795

Joke Spaans

The Reformation changed not only doctrine and liturgy, but also the finances of the churches henceforth in use by the Reformed church. Prior to the Reformation, the memorial services for the dead had been an important source of income, both for the upkeep of the church and for the remuneration of clerics and lay functionaries.[1] The new Protestant churches lacked such revenues. Yet in 1656 the burgomasters of Amsterdam decreed that the public churches should manage without subsidies from the municipal treasury, and for about a century they did.[2] Existing churches even contributed towards the costs of the ambitious building programme that raised the number of places for Reformed worship from five to eleven.[3] How was this possible? And why did it not last?

After the depredations of Revolt and Reformation, the medieval parish churches and chapels were rapidly refurnished with generous support from the magistracy. From the middle of the seventeenth to the middle of the eighteenth century, churchgoing served important social and cultural purposes alongside religious worship. People were more than willing to pay for the opportunity to display their rank and wealth, as well as for the services offered by the sextons and their various assistants. The public church buildings were a source of civic pride and repositories of an urban memory culture that appealed to a wider audience than the Reformed congregation alone. Paintings by renowned artists depicted the churches' interiors, and creatively added layers of historical, genealogical, civic, or religious meaning to the architectural compositions.[4] The revolution at the end of the eighteenth century, however, revealed that by then the buildings had lost much of their appeal for a variety of reasons.

1 Van Eeghen, 'De geestelijke en wereldlijke functionarissen'; Post, *Kerkelijke verhoudingen*, 426-432; cf. Laenen, *Introduction*, 100, 184-195, 428-435.

2 Amsterdam, Stadsarchief (hereafter SA), Burgemeesters: Dagelijkse notulen, resoluties, missivenboeken (hereafter Burgemeesters) 2, Resolutions 31 May, fol. 92, and 11 November 1656, fol. 97.

3 SA, Burgemeesters 2, Resolutions 12 November 1659, fol. 126v, 23 January 1660, fol. 128v, 24 March 1661, fol. 138r, 9 March 1662, fol. 142r, and 11 January 1663, fol. 144v. Cf. the historical annotation for the year 1659 on the first pages of SA, Eilandskerk 4.

4 Schwartz and Bok, *Pieter Saenredam*, 66-76; Pollmer, *Kirchenbilder*.

This essay sketches this development. Only scattered fragments of the archives of the churchwardens have been preserved – perhaps intentionally so.[5] Occasionally they can be supplemented from the archives of burgomasters and the minutes of the Reformed consistory. Taken together, these sources suffice to roughly trace the overall development of the finances of the churches. A parallel micro-economy, shaped by the minor church offices, emerges from the anecdotal evidence contained in these bits and scraps, the rise and decline of which also explains the surprising self-sufficiency of churchwardens in their maintenance of the church buildings. One of the innovations in the church interiors in this period was the provision of seats for the congregation. These seats were not free: the right to a place in the pews, on the benches, or the chairs was bestowed, strictly by rank, by burgomasters or churchwardens, and those beneficed with a seat paid an annual rent. What is left of the administration shows that these rents were the most important source of income for the churches.

The value of an assigned place for their sitters was determined to a large extent by the services provided them by the sextons and their assistants, in the terms of the Letter of Paul to the Corinthians: those who 'waited at the altar' and were therefore to be 'partakers with the altar'.[6] My focus will therefore be on these people, whose role is a little-known aspect of Protestant religious culture in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries – and key to the financial success of the Amsterdam churches. Church history usually aims its spotlight at the ministers, while art historians and historians of liturgy focus on the structure and interior design of church buildings.[7] Social historians have used seating arrangements to study social stratification, especially for the nineteenth century, and more recently anthropologists have started to look at what religious buildings 'do'.[8] These studies all ignore the men and women who facilitated religious services and defined the experience of churchgoing. These people provide a lens through which to observe how the church buildings were made profitable, and how this policy failed towards end of the old regime.

This article adds a new dimension to what is known about these minor church officials and their importance for the experience of church-going. There is a growing recognition of the role of sextons, although less so for their assistants. Sextons were often men of substance. The character of the sexton's office, located on the dividing line between the ordained and beneficed clergy on the one hand, and the clerics in minor orders and the laity on the other, shows a remarkable variety: whereas their core responsibility was towards the solemnity of the liturgy and the maintenance and cleaning of the building and liturgical objects, in large urban parishes they could be architects, responsible not only for the construction and renovations of the churches, but also for their finances. In rural

5 Many records were destroyed during the Batavian revolution: SA, Westerkerk 2, Minutes 15 February 1798. See also Bom, *Geschiedkundig overzicht*, unpaginated preface.

6 I Cor. 9:13.

7 Van Swigchem, Brouwer, and Van Os, *Een huis voor het Woord*; Mochizuki, *The Netherlandish image after iconoclasm*; Steensma, *Opdat de ruimten meevieren*; Grosse, 'Places of sanctification'; Yates, *Buildings, Faith and Worship*; Spicer, *Calvinist churches*.

8 Lucassen and Trienekens, 'Om de plaats in de kerk'; Oskar Verkaaik, 'Religious Architecture'.

villages, however, their work for church and parish was largely administrative and menial, and they often also served as public schoolmasters.[9]

In the Dutch Republic, the position and role of lay church officials in the Reformed Church show a remarkable continuity with the medieval character of the urban sexton, and their assistants with that of clerics in minor orders. Gisbertus Voetius, professor of Reformed theology at the university of Utrecht and an expert on church administration, acknowledged this when in his *Politica Ecclesiastica* (1663-1676) he unabashedly designated sextons, *deurwaarders* (doorkeepers), *hondenslagers* (dogslayers), bellringers, and errand bearers, the men who replaced and lit the candles, and the women who cleaned and polished the copper ornaments and who swept the church floors, as members of a 'minor clergy'. Doorkeepers even retained the name of one of the traditional minor orders (*ostiarius*). Dogslayers inherited the title, but not the work, of medieval municipal officers who killed stray dogs. After the Reformation both were sextons' assistants, the dogslayers in rank a little bit below the doorkeepers.[10]

In the larger cities of the later Middle Ages parish functions such as education and poor relief were gradually secularised. After the Reformation the parish structures in the large and expanding city of Amsterdam lapsed altogether. Compared to their medieval and contemporary Catholic counterparts, Dutch urban church officials were civic rather than clerical officials. Their involvement with the liturgy was minimal, and they played no role in catechesis. Instead, they served the people who came to church and who were willing to pay handsomely for their ministrations, until democratic stirrings from the middle of the eighteenth century changed the perception of what decent religion looked like. Eventually, this spelled the end of the micro-economy that had made the exploitation of the churches cost-effective.

Auditing Amsterdam's Public Churches

Inquiries into the decline of church revenues in Amsterdam started in earnest immediately after the Batavian Revolution. On 16 September 1795, the People's Representatives, recently installed as the new revolutionary municipality with the support of French forces, appointed a committee to audit the public churches of the city.[11] The committee consisted of six citizens, five of them members of the new Municipal Council installed earlier that year. Its chairman, Herman Hoogewal (fig. 1), a heavyweight financial expert, would be called to the new national government in the spring of 1796.[12] The audit took the committee almost a year, much longer than they had anticipated. In the summer of 1796, they

9 Publications in this field are, like this article, often local studies, and hard to find. There are no overarching comparative studies yet. See for the differences indicated here: Losserand, 'Un autre son de cloche'; Eibl, *Küster im Fürstbistum Münster*.

10 Voetius, *Politica ecclesiastica*, II, 508-527; Spaans, 'Honden en hondenslagers'. See also Craig, 'Psalms, groans and dog whippers', 113-121. Jan Jansz, the dogslayer of the Noorderkerk, held and slaughtered animals in the portal of the church: SA, Hervormde Kerk, Consistory 7, Minutes 22 April 1638, fol. 248.

11 Poell, 'Het einde van een tijdperk'.

12 Elias and Schölvinck, *Volksrepresentanten en wetgevers*.

Fig. 1 Unknown artist, Profile of Hermanus Hoogewal*, c. 1800, print on paper, 7,1 x 5,5 cm, Amsterdam, Stadsarchief. Hoogewal was a member of the Batavian municipal council and a financial expert who initially chaired the auditing committee.*

finally presented their findings to the Municipal Council: 116 folio sheets covered in small script on both sides, plus two folders with underlying documentation.[13]

The primary objective of the audit, and the reason why financial experts figured so prominently, was to find out how the new municipality could cut the subsidies necessary for the upkeep of the monumental church buildings. Five of these churches were medieval relics, but even the newest were by now more than a hundred years old and in need of

13 SA, Nieuw Stedelijk Bestuur 1040-1042, Report of the auditing committee of the public churches, with annexes, 1795-1796.

continuous, expensive maintenance. Practically every year, each church received several thousands of guilders from the municipal treasury – a small fortune by the standards of the time. The report provides fascinating reading, if only because it shows how the functioning of the old system only very gradually dawned on the members of the committee. They requested documentation and interviewed the churchwardens of each church, but these officials were not very forthcoming, given that they had greatly profited from the old regime.

The auditors discovered that the churches generated surprising amounts of money in the form of rents, fees, and tips. Whereas churchwardens collected pew rents and burial fees towards the upkeep of the church, churchgoers also paid church personnel directly, in cash, for a variety of extra services. The various functionaries exploited their position as a kind of franchise, and its emoluments supplemented their modest salaries. Churchwardens did not know the finer details about the precise disposition of these money flows. They registered the pew rents and burial fees, but did not know exactly what the various functionaries received in direct payments. Moreover, these emoluments varied over the years. Modern historians can only make an educated guess.

In the seventeenth century the burgomasters periodically creamed off the income of the better-paid civic personnel with taxes based on estimates. In 1687, a tax called *ambtgeld* ('office money'), amounting to a quarter of the estimated annual income, was imposed on all newly appointed civil servants, including some church personnel. *Gravenmakers* (undertakers, connected to one specific church or cemetery) paid between 100 and 250 guilders, sextons-cum-*gravenmakers* between 200 and 300, *gravenmakers* for the public cemeteries between 200 and 400, and sextons between 100 and 600 guilders, depending on the church. In 1697 the tax was imposed again, at a somewhat lower rate, but in 1729 the amounts had risen, probably reflecting rising incomes. At that moment *gravenmakers* could expect to earn between 2,000 and 4,000 guilders a year, and sextons between 2,400 and over 10,000, again depending on the church. A list from 1748 gives (conservative) estimates for the income of *gravenmakers* between 350 and 1,970 guilders, and for sextons between 1,000 and 3,800 guilders.[14]

The strength of the discontent with the old regime had been demonstrated, a decade before the auditing committee started its work, in the weekly weapons drills held by the Patriot militias. Significantly, these had been held, in full military uniform, not in the open air, but in the roomy public churches (fig. 2).[15] The choice of venue was a deliberate statement. Patriot militiamen broke the gravestones in the floor of the church with their muskets, urinated against the pillars, and defecated in the pulpit. They performed their grievances emphatically in the hegemonic public church, marching over the graves of those who had been most privileged in life and defiling the building where social exclusion had been performed before the eyes of God and man.[16] The Batavian

14 SA, Burgemeesters 2, Resolutions 4 April 1682, fols. 225r-229r; 30 January 1687, fols. 259r-261r; 24 July 1697, fol. 303v; Burgemeesters 3, Resolution 29 January 1729, fols. 58v-61r; Bussemaker, 'Lijst van ambten en officiën'. See also Van Nierop, 'Het dagboek' (1939).

15 Hell, 'Revolt, rust en revolutie', 351-370.

16 SA, Oude Kerk 179, Sexton's notebook, 27 May 1781.

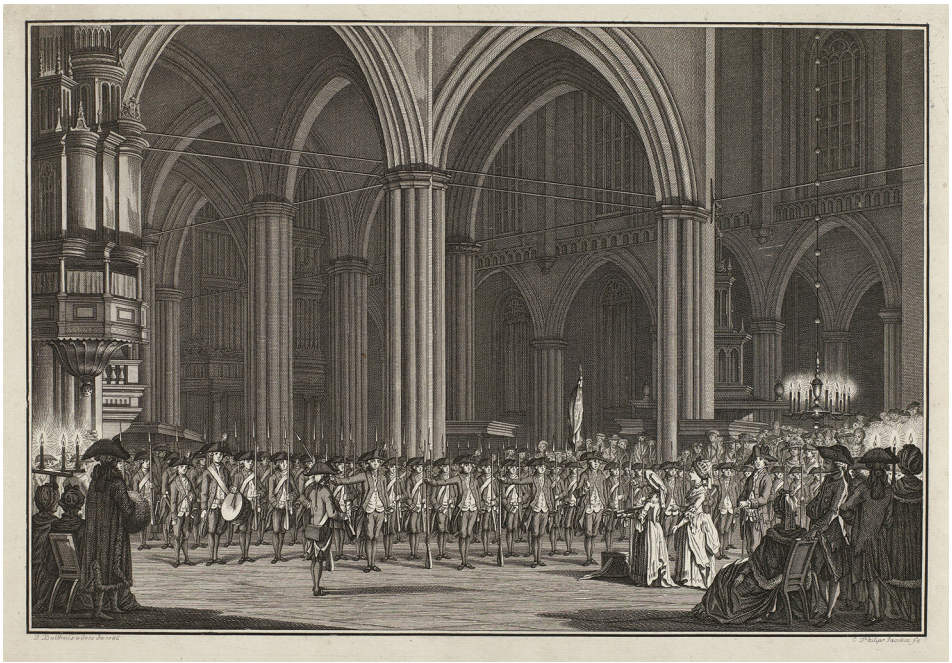

Fig. 2 Caspar Jacobsz. Philips, after Jan Bulthuis, Citizens' militia Pro Patria in the Nieuwe Kerk in Amsterdam, *1786, etching and engraving, 28,3 x 37,1 cm, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum.*

Revolution of 1795 had abolished privilege, patronage, and favours. Yet the members of the auditing committee, Batavian revolutionaries to the core, had a hard time disentangling the complicated web of a management culture that had grown over more than two centuries.

The Impact of Revolt and Reformation

The sexton was originally a cleric. In medieval cathedrals and collegiate churches, he had been a fully ordained priest. Not merely there to assist with the celebration of the Mass, he could be left in charge of the consecrated utensils, vestments, and other valuables, and could substitute for the curate if needed. It was the sexton, rather than the parish priest, who kept the registers of baptisms, marriages, and burials. In smaller city churches the sexton usually also functioned as *gravenmaker*, and/or *voorzanger* (precentor), bell-ringer, and general factotum. In village churches he was also the local schoolmaster.[17] Sextons

17 Nolet and Boeren, *Kerkelijke instellingen in de Middeleeuwen*, 334, 344-346; Post, *Kerkelijke verhoudingen*, 431-432; Post, *Scholen en onderwijs*, 85-92.

were considered clergy, among those who 'waited at the altar', and they held their position and a benefice for life. The Reformation made sextons civic officials. Over time, in the larger city churches the original workload of the sexton became too heavy to be performed by one man and was parcelled out among a larger group of functionaries, male and female. They all enjoyed benefices: a position for life and a fixed annual salary from the church revenues, plus emoluments, as 'partakers with the altar'.

Following the Alteration (1578), the Reformed in Amsterdam were given the use of five church buildings (fig. 3): the Oude and the Nieuwe Kerk, the Oudezijds- or Olofskapel, the Nieuwezijds Kapel, and the Gasthuiskerk in the convent buildings that now housed the central city hospital. Over the course of the seventeenth century three new churches were built, the Zuiderkerk (1611), Noorderkerk (1623), and Westerkerk (1631), while from 1659 wooden 'preaching sheds' began to be placed in the city's expanding periphery.

Fig. 3 Joannes de Ram, Map of Amsterdam, *1683-1684, etching and engraving, 48,5 x 56,6 cm, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum. Sites of the eleven public church buildings: 1. Oude Kerk; 2. Nieuwe Kerk; 3. Oudezijds- or Olofskapel; 4. Nieuwezijds Kapel; 5. Gasthuiskerk; 6. Zuiderkerk; 7. Noorderkerk; 8. Westerkerk; 9. Oosterkerk (1671); 10. Eilandskerk (1737); 11. Amstelkerk. Design by Joris van Dam.*

Two of these, the Oosterkerk (1671) and the Eilandskerk (1737), were eventually rebuilt in stone. The Amstelkerk (1670) remained a wooden structure.[18]

The churches were municipal property, and the burgomasters were high churchwardens. They appointed four churchwardens to each of the churches, charged with the administration of income and expenditure, and the overseeing of maintenance.[19] The consistory of the Reformed church appointed the ministers who were to preach, in rotation, in all these churches. By the middle of the seventeenth century up to fifty Reformed services were held weekly. Sextons and precentors, however, functions that the consistory considered to be 'fully ecclesiastical', were appointed by the burgomasters. In practice they received complementary instructions from both burgomasters and consistory.[20] Substantial and therefore expensive changes in the furnishings and management of the churches had to be approved by the burgomasters, and from the middle of the eighteenth century – when the churches came to require large subsidies – the burgomasters annually examined the churchwardens' accounts.[21]

Waves of iconoclasm, and the requisitioning of valuables in the first stages of the Dutch Revolt to pay for the war effort, must have left the Amsterdam churches pretty much bare. The parish churches still possessed organs, and all had pulpits fixed on one of the pillars on the north side of the nave. After the Alteration the space around the foot of the pulpit was fenced off by a low ornamental railing, the so-called *dooptuin* ('baptismal fence'). Inside this area, the *doophuis* ('baptismal house'), pews were erected for elders, deacons, and the sexton, and a lectern was placed for the precentor.[22] From the beginning of the seventeenth century the churches were fitted out with large brass chandeliers, wall-sconces, and candlesticks on the partitions of the pews, to provide light for the evening services. The great chandeliers were objects of local pride. When in 1645 a fire destroyed the Nieuwe Kerk, only the chandeliers were salvaged from under the burning roof (fig. 4).[23] In the 1640s the Oude and Nieuwe Kerk got new, ornamental pulpits.[24] Initially, most Reformed theologians found organ music too worldly for use in the liturgy, but in 1680 the burgomasters decided the organs should be used during the service, and eventually music came to be considered conducive to a proper devotional mood.[25]

18 Wagenaar, *Amsterdam*, VII, 297-469.

19 Lesser churches originally had three, from 1669 all churches had four: SA, Burgemeesters 2, Resolution 20 July 1669, fol. 173v.

20 The minutes of the consistory show many instances of wrangling between the burgomasters and the consistory over appointments, and of the presentation of complementary instructions.

21 SA, Zuiderkerk 86, Burgomasters' resolution, 2 December 1749.

22 Van Swigchem, Brouwer, and Van Os, *Een huis voor het Woord*, 194-201.

23 Dapper, *Historische Beschryving*, 382. See also Van Biemen, Linskens, and De Groot, *Koper in kerken.*

24 Van Swigchem, Brouwer, and Van Os, *Een huis voor het Woord*; Evenhuis, *Ook dat was Amsterdam*, II, 12-17.

25 SA, Burgemeesters 2, Resolution 10 October 1680, fol. 215r; SA, Vroedschap 33, Resolution 25 January 1681, fol. 273; Vroedschap 34, Resolution 12 November 1682, fols. 327-328; Luth, *"Daer wert om 't seerste uytgekreten…"*, esp. I, 182-229; Rasch, *Muziek in de Republiek*, 75-101. On the function of music, see *Reglement voor de Voorzangers en Orgelisten* (preserved in SA, Nieuwezijds Kapel 23, and SA, Hervormde Kerk, Kerkvoogdij 1760, doc. 3).

Fig. 4 Emanuel de Witte, Interior of a Protestant Gothic church with elements of the Oude and Nieuwe Kerk in Amsterdam*, c. 1660-1680, oil on canvas, 122 x 104 cm, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum. Note the row of chandeliers and the many epitaphs commemorating the well-heeled dead buried in the church.*

Before the Reformation municipal dignitaries had been granted *gestoelten* (honorary pews) in the parish churches.[26] These seats, which literally elevated the occupants above the common man, allowed the sitters an unobstructed view of the pulpit over the heads of a standing congregation. With their high wooden backs, closed sides, and decorated canopies, these pews emphasised the status of the sitters and also kept out the draught. The burgomasters had possessed a pew in the Oude Kerk in front of the choir screen, inscribed with the adage *Daar en is geen macht dan van Gode* ('There are no powers but

26 Post, *Kerkelijke verhoudingen*, 435-436.

those ordained by God') in gold lettering. When the Reformation shifted the focus from the main altar to the pulpit, this placed the burgomasters at a disadvantage, as they were now further from the minister than the pews of lesser city officials. At the end of the 1670s the choir of the Oude Kerk was badly in need of repairs, but rather than see their traditional pew renovated, the burgomasters had a new one made for them, directly opposite the pulpit. The subsequent redistribution of seats in the various honorary pews raised howls of outrage from officeholders who found the new seating arrangement prejudicial to their honour.[27] The churches served the public religion, but also a variety of secular needs, among them the honour of the city and its officials.

Throughout the *ancien régime* the number of honorary pews grew ever larger, as each group of officeholders demanded its own pew, one befitting its rank and dignity. In 1679 the inspectors of the college of medical doctors were demoted to a lesser pew than the one they had been awarded in 1657, one they had to share with others. They complained that too often they found the pew already full when they came to church, so that they came in vain. Apparently, it was unthinkable for them to sit elsewhere, even further below their station.[28] Distance from the pulpit, elevation above the common churchgoers, acoustics, and decoration all had to be carefully calibrated. As the medieval churches were not built with such seating arrangements in mind, considerable creativity was needed to fit the pews into the available space and give every group its due. When later in the seventeenth century new churches were custom-made for Reformed worship, the placement of pews for magistrates and subaltern officers appears to have been considered from the outset.

A feature that may have been unique for the Amsterdam churches was the provision of complimentary women's chairs in the *doophuis*. These chairs were the counterparts of the honorary pews for officeholders, and accommodated the wives and daughters of resident nobility, magistrates, and high officers. The chairs faced the pulpit sideways, and about half of them stood behind it.[29] While the burgomasters granted the privilege of sitting in honorary pews by office, the women's chairs were granted to individuals. As with the honorary pews, the space for women's chairs in the *doophuizen* occasionally had to be expanded. Benches were placed behind the *doophuis*, against the outer wall of the church, for parents who brought their infants to be baptised (fig. 4).

Keeping Order

Seating arrangements for the congregation, and especially those for women, underwent important changes around the middle of the seventeenth century. Traditionally, women had brought folding chairs into the church to hear the sermon. Young men stood and

27 SA, Oude Kerk 72, Request by the cashiers of the Amsterdam Exchange, with advice from the committee of churchwardens, 24 June 1678; Undated memoir for posterity; Resolution of the wardens of the poor, 23 March 1720.

28 SA, Gasthuizen 1059, Ordinance to prevent disorders, 16 January 1679; SA, Burgemeesters 2, Resolution 24 July 1681, fols. 220v-221r. See also Evenhuis, *Ook dat was Amsterdam*, IV, 285.

29 Van Eeghen, 'Amsterdamse doophuizen'.

older men used *mannenbanken* (freestanding men's benches) behind the seated women. Well-to-do women hired so-called *stoelbewaarsters* ('female keepers of chairs'), women from the ranks of the working poor, to place their folding chairs in an advantageous spot before the beginning of the service. The consistory took offence at the bustling, shouting, and shoving of these women when trying to comply with their employers' wishes for the best places. In 1629 it forbade the *stoelbewaarsters* from plying their trade, but soon their role was taken over by housemaids. After the service the maids would come forward once more, pushing and elbowing their way in against the flow of churchgoers leaving the church, this time to retrieve their mistresses' chairs. The burgomasters thereupon decreed that the women should take away the chairs themselves, and hand them over to their maids outside the church.[30]

In 1654 and 1655 the churchwardens and consistory again discussed what measures might be taken to prevent the 'disorder' that took place in and around the churches. In 1655, the burgomasters had new rules read aloud in the churches. People should enter the church with due reverence. They could send their maids and children ahead to keep a seat for them. Seeing that some people paid church officials, who could be just as quarrelsome as maids in contestations over chairs they were paid to keep, were not allowed to do so 'for money or favours', or to let people sneak in before the doors were opened. If anyone was discovered trying to jump the queue in this manner, they were to be evicted from their seats or fined twelve *stuivers*.[31]

The sextons were responsible for the maintenance of proper order, and regulations prescribed that they should set the example. Scolding, cursing, and swearing, and above all drunkenness in office were strictly prohibited. They should keep everything clean and tidy, be punctual in having the bells rung and the doors opened in time, and make sure that everything that was needed was in place: candles, cushions, bibles, and *stoven* (foot warmers, wooden boxes with a perforated top, containing a smouldering chunk of peat in a clay holder) in the reserved seats, the water for baptism, and the bread and wine for communion. In a remarkable remnant of their erstwhile clerical status, they were to fill the bowl for baptisms with their own hands, and were not allowed to let women clean and arrange the pulpit. Yet sextons were forbidden to pour the wine in the celebration of the Lord's Supper. They were to make sure that only ladies of quality took seats in the *doophuis*, and as soon as the minister ascended the pulpit it was incumbent on them to eject any servant still occupying a seat in the reserved pews to keep it for his master.[32]

30 SA, Hervormde Kerk, Consistory 6, Minutes May-November 1629, fols. 180, 182, 186, 197, 213, 216; Consistory 7, Minutes 28 September 1640, fol. 366, and 20 February 1642, fol. 429; Evenhuis, *Ook dat was Amsterdam*, II, 45-48; SA, Nieuwezijds Kapel 23, Undated entry.

31 SA, Hervormde Kerk, Consistory 8, Minutes 11 and 18 April 1652, fols. 408-411; Consistory 9, Minutes 2 April 1654-4 February 1655, fols. 46-73; SA, Consistory 736, Proclamation against disorders during public worship 31 January 1655; in abbreviated form also in SA, Nieuwe Kerk 251, 30 January 1655, and SA, Noorderkerk 92, 30 January 1655.

32 On the pulpit, see: SA, Noorderkerk 92, Accounts and records, doc.10, Instruction and regulation for the sextons, 30 January 1655; and SA, Nieuwe Kerk 1, Resolution 7 November 1664, fol. 7. The synod of Laodicea (AD 371) had allowed only clergy in the pulpits (*ambo*). I thank Elisabeth Shishlakova for this reference. On pouring wine for communion, see: SA, Hervormde Kerk, Consistory 28, Minutes 28 March 1782, fol. 32.

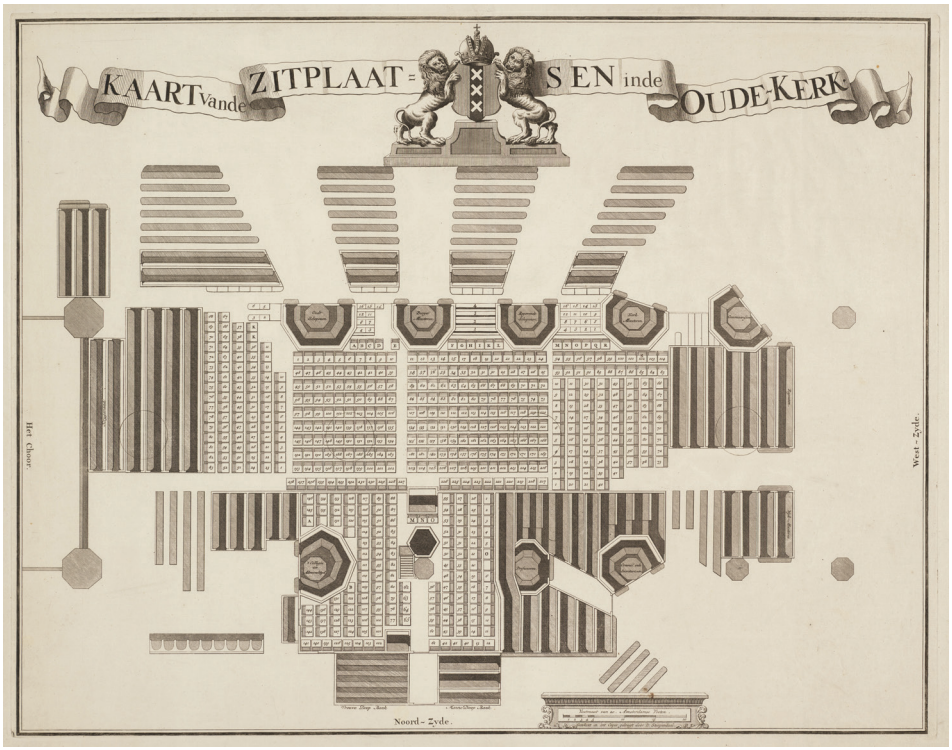

Fig. 5 Daniel Stopendaal, Floor plan of the seats in the Oude Kerk*, c. 1700, etching and engraving, 59,2 x 76,1 cm, Amsterdam, Stadsarchief. Note the seats in the* dooptuin*, the division of women's chairs into four (unequal) perks, one for each* stoelbewaarster*, and the difference between pews (shown in perspective) and backless benches for the poor, behind the enclosed pews for municipal officers. The inscribed letters and numbers served for the administration of the churchwardens.*

These and similar regulations set the tone for the century and a half to come. Orderliness and godliness were conflated, and the setting of public worship should reflect the social hierarchy. Church officials became guardians of proper protocol, and the furniture was adjusted to serve as a proper frame for well-regulated religious exercise. In 1655 the churchwardens of the Oude Kerk placed 250 identical and numbered wooden women's chairs in the 'belly' of their church (the central part of the nave, in front of the *dooptuin*), putting an end to the traditional but chaotic to and fro with folding chairs (fig. 5). Other churches followed suit.[33] However, the practice of place-keeping, with the unavoidable altercations when more than one individual claimed the same seat, proved hard to eradicate.[34] Churchwardens, again first in the Oude Kerk, introduced seat-rents that gave

33 SA, Oude Kerk 11, Memorial, 1655, Instruction for sextons, fols. 29-35; SA, Oude Kerk 29, Expenses, August 1655; SA, Noorderkerk 4, Expenses, 1673-1674.

34 SA, Hervormde Kerk, Consistory 9, Minutes 12 April-31 May 1657, fols. 201v-206r, 21 March-23 May 1658, fols. 250-255; Consistory 10, Minutes 26 January 1662, fol. 236.

churchgoers exclusive rights to 'their' places, and provided the churchwardens a welcome new source of income. They also cut out the independent *plaatsbewaarsters*. Henceforth a limited number of beneficed *stoelbewaarsters* would usher the women in, each in her own rented chair, in an orderly fashion, and without people clogging the accesses or claiming seats above their station.[35] A similar regime was introduced for the places for men in the pews and on benches, and here the male church attendants did the ushering. Again other churches followed suit. In 1672 we find the first mention of women's chairs and beneficed *stoelbewaarsters* in the accounts of the Eilandskerk, in 1673 in the Noorderkerk, and in 1679 in the Nieuwezijds Kapel.[36] First of all the rented seats proved a useful instrument for imposing 'order'. This in turn made the seats so attractive that the rents came to provide a major source of income for the churchwardens.

It appears that the right to a seat was considered a valuable asset, especially for women. There were still confrontations, however, such as the argument between a woman and an official *stoelbewaarster* that escalated to the point of the antagonists hurling foot warmers at one another.[37] Chairs were treated as property. Someone had their rental chair upholstered in black while in mourning, over the protests of churchwardens.[38] People went to church to hear the Word of God, but the services were also a social event, with ample opportunities for displaying one's position in society. The charges were accepted without demur.

Acquiring a seat, even a rental one, was a privilege in itself. Burgomasters had the right to bestow free places in the officers' pews and in the women's chairs in the *doophuis*. The paid places in the ordinary men's benches and pews and in the women's chairs were in the gift of churchwardens. Beneficiaries paid a fee in recognition of the privilege plus rent and received a ticket with the identification number of their seat. The tickets had to be renewed annually, so that unclaimed seats could be bestowed upon another candidate.[39] The deserving poor were fitted within this ordered arrangement. Some were given places at a reduced rate or for free. In the Eilandskerk a bench was reserved for the poor women who lived in the so-called Besjeshuis, the old women's home, founded in 1681 and run by the deacons.[40] Galleries seated the orphans from the various municipal orphanages in the Nieuwe Kerk, the Nieuwezijds Kapel, the Zuiderkerk, and the Westerkerk.[41]

35 For a historical overview of the church's assets, see SA, Oude Kerk 14, Accounts.

36 SA, Eilandskerk, Accounts 4, 1672, fol. 26r; SA, Noorderkerk 4, Expenses, 1673; SA, Nieuwezijds Kapel 23, Request, 4 January 1679.

37 Evenhuis, *Ook dat was Amsterdam*, III, 35; SA, Nieuw Stedelijk Bestuur 1041, Report of the auditing committee, 1795-1796.

38 SA, Amstelkerk 4, Minutes 20 March 1725, fols. 90-91.

39 Van Eeghen, 'Amsterdamse doophuizen', 223; SA, Eilandskerk 5, Accounts, 2 January 1681, fol. 5r; SA, Eilandskerk 4, Accounts, 22 December 1683, fol. 7r-v, 1 January 1691, fol. 7v; SA, Hervormde Kerk, Kerkvoogdij 1760, docs. 11-12, Notifications about the renewal of seatrents, 1682 and 1 January 1688; SA, Gasthuizen 1019, Minutes 17 March 1779, fol. 145.

40 Evenhuis, *Ook dat was Amsterdam*, III, 45-49. The first mention of a *bewaarster* for the *besjesstoelen* appears in SA, Eilandskerk 4, Accounts, 1684. See also SA, Nieuw Stedelijk Bestuur 1041, Report of the auditing committee, letter H, 1796.

41 Wagenaar, *Amsterdam*, VII, 377, 415 (*burgerwezen*), 445 (*diaconiewezen*), 451 (*aalmoezenierswezen*). See for the collapse in 1704: Evenhuis, *Ook dat was Amsterdam*, IV, 135. See also SA, Hervormde Kerk, Consistory 9, Minutes 8 and 10 January 1658, fols. 237r-238r, 10 and 24 October 1658, fols. 14, 19.

In 1682 the consistory complained that the many privileged pews and rented places left too little space for the working poor, who now stayed away or began to frequent the services of other denominations. On their recommendation, the burgomasters decreed that the blocks of enclosed pews should be moved further away from the pulpit, and unrented chairs removed, to create space for non-paying churchgoers, presumably for standing. Reserved seats on the men's benches should be open for all comers when the regular tenants did not show up in time for the service, but not those in the women's chairs inside and outside the *doophuizen*, nor those in the enclosed pews. Church officials, from sextons down to *stoelbewaarsters*, were specifically barred from placing chairs in the newly cleared spaces and renting them out for their own profit.[42] These regulations sparked immediate protests. Apparently, people resented the removal of the free chairs, which compelled them to attend the service standing. The burgomasters responded by ordering that low benches be placed along the outer edges of the *doophuis* and in front of the enclosed pews. These were to accommodate the elderly poor, living in the immediate neighbourhood of their church, free of charge, while for the able-bodied poor, similar benches were to be placed on elevated platforms against the church walls. A proposal from the consistory to build galleries for free seats was rejected.[43]

Pickings from the Altar

Historians have largely treated church officials as if they were menial hired help, but they were not recruited from the labouring poor. Their functions had markedly ceremonial aspects, and required literacy, familiarity with bookkeeping, but above all practical insight and communication skills. Sextons had to deal with city officials and with the members of the Reformed consistory who often were their social superiors, but also with a host of day labourers and tradesmen and -women. The position therefore also demanded prudence and discretion. Doorkeepers, dogslayers, and *stoelbewaarsters* had to be decisive in ushering people into seats befitting their ranks, yet also to show due deference to their betters.

Burgomasters appointed churchwardens, sextons, *gravenmakers*, organ-players and precentors. The latter were professional musicians who also performed outside the churches. By bestowing such offices, the burgomasters further enlarged their social capital and lined their pockets: at the end of the eighteenth century the sexton of the Westerkerk declared that he had paid 2,100 guilders for his office. Rumour had it that earlier in the century the *gravenmaker* in the Westerkerk had paid 8,000 guilders.[44] Churchwardens

42 SA, Hervormde Kerk, Consistory 14, Minutes 19 November 1682, fols. 338-340; also in SA, Hervormde Kerk, Kerkvoogdij 1760, doc. 1.

43 SA, Hervormde Kerk, Consistory 14, Minutes 17 December 1682, fols. 338-341; Consistory 15, Minutes 13 November 1687-1 January 1688, fols. 206-215; SA, Noorderkerk 92, doc. 24, Supplementary resolution on seats, 19 December 1682; also in SA, Zuiderkerk 86 and SA, Oude Kerk 72 (with the approval of the churchwardens), and as a printed notification in SA, Eilandskerk 3, folder 1476.

44 SA, Nieuw Stedelijk Bestuur 1041, Report of the auditing committee, letter F, 1796; Evenhuis, *Ook dat was Amsterdam*, IV, 281-282.

belonged to the same social group as burgomasters. They bestowed beneficed positions below the level of the sexton, and granted contracts with workmen and suppliers. Which of the churchwardens was to be granted any upcoming opportunity to fill a vacancy or award a contract (and thus take advantage of the profits on offer) was determined by drawing lots or by rotation.[45]

Candidates for the positions of church officials must have had patrons as well as money, and the more of each the more lucrative the position. The Nieuwe Kerk offered the richest pickings. The Oude Kerk, Westerkerk, and Zuiderkerk also numbered among the city's *hoofdkerken* (main churches). The Gasthuiskerk was the least prestigious. Occasionally officials moved up from a lesser to a more prestigious church.[46] Church officials had legitimate expectations of financial comfort from their benefice for life. They were rarely ousted from office.[47] Should a decision made further up the chain threaten their revenue, they would lodge a protest immediately, and some form of compensation would always be provided. In practice the result could be that officials would continue to be paid for services they no longer rendered. As a result, determining who made how much for what became increasingly difficult. Churchwardens did not consider it their business to know, and the minor officials themselves preferred to keep silent – as the auditing committee of 1795 found to its extreme annoyance and frustration.

The sextons were recruited from the ranks of skilled craftsmen, merchants, and intellectuals. Herman Doeckes (1670-1732) of the Nieuwe Kerk was the son of a wine merchant's assistant, and he himself was originally a hatter.[48] Adriaan van Gent (†1753) in the Eilandskerk had been a shoemaker.[49] Nicolaas Titsingh of the Nieuwezijds Kapel was the son and grandson of barber-surgeons.[50] David Calkoen (1676-1740), of the same church, was the son of a merchant, whose large family also produced magistrates of Amsterdam, among

45 SA, Eilandskerk 4, Accounts, 2 January 1679, fol. 4r; SA, Amstelkerk 3, Minutes August 1676 and passim, fol. 3v; SA, Nieuwezijds Kapel 49, Minutes 6 September 1729, 7 February 1753. See also Bussemaker, 'Lijst van ambten en officiën'.

46 SA, Eilandskerk 4, Accounts, 1 May 1681, fol. 55.

47 Examples of ousted attendants: SA, Hervormde Kerk, Consistory 9, Minutes 17 June-8 July 1655, fols. 85r-88r (Philips and Adrian Francen, dogslayers in the Oude Kerk, for fornicating and allowing *klopjes* to practice superstition in the church); SA, Nieuwe Kerk 1, Resolution 3 January 1666, fol. 9 (dogslayer Abraham, for selling three church brooms); SA, Amstelkerk 3, Minutes 12 January 1690 (Geertruyt Borstels, *stoelbewaarster*, for drunkenness and fraud); SA, Amstelkerk 4, Minutes 14 November 1702, fols. 33-35 (Barend de la Folie, doorkeeper, for insubordination and arguing the equality of all).

48 Registration of banns for Gerrit Doeckes and Catrina van Kerem, 3 September 1666; baptism of Harmanus Doeckes, 4 April 1670; registration of banns for Herman Doeckes and Johanna Wallier, 27 February 1693. All biographical information in this article is taken from the electronic indices on the registers of baptisms, marriages, and burials, available at the website of the Stadsarchief Amsterdam: https://archief.amsterdam/indexen/persons (Accessed on 13 February 2021).

49 Registration of banns for Adriaan van Gent and Helena Kuypers, 14 April 1690.

50 Registration of banns for Nicolaas Titsingh and Johanna van der Port, 20 December 1764; for his father Abraham and Maria Koningh, 9 January 1711; for his grandfather Isaac and Elsie Swart, 18 March 1681; and for his son Jacob and Johanna Jacoba Buijn, 11 March 1796. Nicolaas's son Jacob Titsingh was appointed a bookkeeper in the same church: SA, Nieuw Stedelijk Bestuur 1041, Report of the auditing committee, letter D, appendix 6-7, 1795.

them six churchwardens of five Amsterdam churches as well as a minister.[51] Nicolaas Abeleven (†1740) of the Oude Kerk was originally a merchant. His son Jan Arents Abeleven (1715-1781) succeeded him in office.[52] Hendrik Aeneae (1743-1810), of the Eilandskerk, the son of a Frisian minister, was a Doctor of Philosophy, a prominent mathematician, and as such member of the prestigious society Felix Meritis. After the Batavian revolution he would be elected Provisional Representative of the People of Holland and sit on several government committees on naval and scientific matters.[53]

A rare impression of the profitability of the sextons' office comes from the Noorderkerk, an average church in terms of prestige. In 1774 sexton Daniel Gerard Römer was confined in a house of correction at the request of his wife and with the consent of the city aldermen.[54] Families could have relatives who had become unmanageable because of violent alcoholism, philandering, or other misbehaviour thus confined.[55] Römer had incurred heavy debts. The burgomasters appointed an adjutant in his stead, and made provision for the livelihood of Römer, his wife, and their child. It was decided that during Römer's confinement, Johannes Jacobus van der Weyden, a young man from Nijmegen, was to enjoy all the revenues of the office, on the condition that he provided Römer's family an income of 1,300 guilders a year, and also paid the salaries of two maids and two manservants working for the church. Van der Weyden gladly agreed to these conditions, which suggests that plenty of revenue was left for him.[56] Römer remained under legal restraint at least until 1789, while curators paid off his debts.[57] All this accords well with the estimates of sextons' incomes for the *ambtgeld* in 1729.

Sextons made money from each one of their manifold duties. In the Nieuwezijds Kapel and the Eilandskerk they doubled as *gravenmakers*, an office that brought considerable rewards in itself. By custom, at the New Year all sextons received tips from the ladies in the *doophuizen*. They were also allowed a guilder for the registration of each new occupant of 'their' chairs and could ask money from women who had the required

51 Registration of banns for Willem Kalckoen and Maria du Toict, 25 November 1672; baptism of their son David, 26 August 1676. See also Van Bree, Nijkamp, and Spijkerman, *Inventaris familiearchief Calkoen*, introduction and § 2.1.2.

52 Registration of banns for Nicolaas Abeleven and Anna Catharina Margenius, 22 March 1708; baptism of their son Jan Arent, 8 Feburary 1715; and his burial, 20 February 1781. See for lists of churchwardens' names Wagenaar, *Amsterdam*, VII, following the chapters for each church.

53 SA, Hervormde Kerk, Consistory 28, Minutes 3-17 January 1782, fols. 10-15; Wumkes, 'Aeneae, Hendrikus'. See also Albrecht, 'The Extraordinary Life', 185.

54 He succeeded his father Francois Römer Daniels, appointed in 1741: SA, Hervormde Kerk, Consistory 21, Minutes 13 July 1741, fol. 380. Cf. Van Nierop, 'Het Dagboek' (1936), 228; Registration of banns for Francois Daniels and Maria de Lange, 6 April 1742; baptism of Daniel Gerard, 6 October 1743; and his banns with Grietje van der Helm, 26 October 1764.

55 Spierenburg, *Zwarte schapen*.

56 SA, Noorderkerk 92, Accounts and records, docs. 82-84, Decisions of the burgomasters, 28 January 1774; Registration of banns for Van der Weyden and Jannetje Rouw, 20 March 1761. No occupation is recorded, but Van der Weyden lived in the Berestraat, in the Jordaan, and his bride on Kattenburg, both industrial/artisanal neighbourhoods; both also signed their names.

57 SA, Noorderkerk 147, Documents concerning sexton Daniel Gerard Römer, folder 1, November 1777-February 1789. See also SA, Hervormde Kerk, Consistory 736, Resolutions 30 January 1783, fol. 93, 16 and 23 February 1768, fols. 301-302.

'quality' to sit in a *doophuis* for the use of a chair not occupied by its formal owner. They also received fees for seats they set for the weekly catechism classes in the church. Sextons kept the registers of baptisms and marriages in their church. The administration of the former was important, as for a variety of purposes people needed to prove their birthplace with copies from the sexton's books. Sextons were allowed to ask six *stuivers* for every registration, the same amount for copies, and an extra fee when people could not reproduce the exact date.[58] The sexton of the Amstelkerk collected the seat rents on behalf of the churchwardens and was given a percentage of the yield.[59] Sextons were allowed to sell the surplus of the rainwater that was collected in basins adjoining their churches to be used for cleaning. The sexton of the Oosterkerk made about a hundred guilders each year this way.[60]

The Oude and the Nieuwe Kerk were much more profitable for their sextons than the other churches. Marriage ceremonies were conducted in the choirs. Couples paid the sexton for the registration of their banns, and the precentor for reading them in church. In 1668 the tariff in all of the four main churches was twelve *stuivers* for the sexton and six for the precentor. By the end of the eighteenth century precentors might expect to receive a hundred guilders per annum over and above their salary of two hundred in such reading fees alone.[61] An undated memo mentions sexton's fees ranging from fifteen to forty-two guilders for wedding ceremonies, of which between two and five guilders were passed on to the doorkeeper and dogslayer.[62] Wealthy couples who might expect a certain ambiance, would pay for extras such as the use of a carpet and cushions to kneel on while they received the minister's blessing, and for musical accompaniment from the organ. In 1753, the sexton of the Oude Kerk felt the impact of the organist's refusal to perform at weddings on his income, presumably because the better-off couples subsequently chose to hold the ceremony at the Nieuwe Kerk instead.[63]

The sexton of the Nieuwe Kerk also assisted the Reformed consistory, the classis of Amsterdam, and the synod of Noord-Holland when these bodies convened in the consistory room adjoining 'his' church or in the choir (fig. 6). For these highly ceremonial meetings he provided fitting furniture, tablecloths, heating in winter, pens, paper, and candles; he ran errands and carried message – or had his underlings do so; and of course provided refreshments. For all these services the classis paid and tipped him. In 1766 churchwardens saw fit to split the sexton's office in this church and appointed Lodewijk Schreuder (†1785), widower of the *stoelbewaarster* Maria Christina van Essen (†1772), to support and cater for the classis at a salary of 300 guilders a year, raised to 350 in 1779. This division of labour must have taken a considerable cut out of the sexton's emoluments.[64]

58 SA, Westerkerk 1, Resolutions, c. 1782, fol. 60.

59 SA, Amstelkerk 4, Minutes 27 February 1702, fols. 29-30; Amstelkerk 5, Minutes 25 February 1702, fols. 29-30 (6%) and 4 March 1718, fol. 74 (4%).

60 SA, Nieuw Stedelijk Bestuur 1041, Report of the auditing committee, letter I, 1796.

61 SA, Burgemeesters 2, Resolutions, 1 November 1668, fol. 170r; SA, Westerkerk 1, Resolutions 22 September 1795, fol. 72.

62 SA, Oude Kerk 179, Specification of the sexton's emoluments, undated.

63 SA, Oude Kerk 1, Journal, 14 December 1753, fol. 22.

64 SA, Nieuwe Kerk 1, Resolutions 4 March 1766 and 1779.

Fig. 6 Jan Caspar Philips, The synod of Noord-Holland in session in the choir of the Nieuwe Kerk, *1738, etching and engraving, size unknown, Amsterdam, Stadsarchief. Note the distinction in the height of the tables for the* commissarissen politiek *(government representatives), the presiding board, and the scribes.*

Every church had a *gravenmaker*, except the Gasthuiskerk and the Amstelkerk, where no burials took place. *Gravenmakers* were the only church officials besides the sextons who were assessed for *ambtgeld*. In 1753 they were given the more dignified designation *ontvanger van de begraafgelden* (collector of the burial expenses). The actual digging of the graves had long ago been delegated to manservants, but the *gravenmakers* did the elaborate administration.[65] The protocols for burials and the tariffs for every type of burial – adults or children, in a privately owned or rented grave, the depth, in the church or in the churchyard – were precisely circumscribed in the *gravenmakers*' instructions.[66] About half of what families paid for the burial went to the church, the other half was for the *gravenmaker* and his

65 SA, Burgemeesters 3, Resolution 25 September 1753, fol. 207.
66 SA, Noorderkerk 92, doc. 10, Instructions for the *gravenmakers*, 30 January and October 1655; SA, Burgemeesters 2, Resolution 1 July 1661, fol. 139r-v.

assistant.[67] A critical memorandum seems to indicate that churchwardens felt that their own cut was too small.[68]

The sale and letting of graves and the burials themselves were important sources of income for the churches. The replacement of the wooden preaching sheds by stone buildings was partly financed from this source.[69] Like reserved seats, graves within the churches were highly prized. To nudge people towards burying their dead on the new cemeteries in the new extension of the city, in 1663 the tariffs for church burials were substantially raised. The importance of solemnities at funerals was underlined by the widespread rioting of 1696, which resulted from the imposition of new regulations and taxes on burials, and the resulting rumours that the poor who could not pay would be put into the ground without ceremony.[70]

Each church had doorkeepers and dogslayers who opened and closed the doors before and after services, and who periodically set barred fences in the door openings to air the churches. They put up the chairs and benches and stacked them again between services, to create space for the *gravenmakers* and workmen, for stepladders to clean the sockets and drip pans of the great chandeliers and replace spent candles, and to allow sweeping of the floors. They enjoyed tips from those who rented the men's places on benches and in pews, and fees from occasional visitors, and in addition they rented out cushions and foot warmers – the going rate at the end of the eighteenth century was two guilders and ten *stuivers* per annum.[71]

Doorkeepers and dogslayers also profited from burials in the churches. They rented out the biers on which coffins were carried, the peaked 'roofs', and coffin cloths that added gravitas to the funeral ceremonies, for a prescribed fee. The tariffs were very precisely matched to the status of the deceased and the number of followers behind the bier, and the proportions due to each of the three servant classes were the subject of fervent negotiating between *gravenmakers* on the one hand and doorkeepers and dogslayers on the other. In 1672 the division of the spoils had to be moderated by the burgomasters after the dogslayer of the Westerkerk, Willem Sydrach, and his colleague of the Noorderkerk, protested the greed of the *gravenmakers*.[72]

A later conflict between the churchwardens of the Noorderkerk and Sydrach, who had apparently been promoted to doorkeeper, gives an impression of the earnings of doorkeepers. Sydrach was a former *turfdrager* (porter of peat, also a beneficed position), who had become disabled in the fire of the old city hall. In recompense the burgomasters had

67 SA, Zuiderkerk 88, Instruction for the *gravenmakers*, 1595; SA, Noorderkerk 92, doc. 19, Specification of *gravenmakers*' fees, c. 1650; SA, Hervormde Kerk, Kerkvoogdij 1738, Draft instruction for the *gravenmakers*, 9 February 1715; also in SA, Zuiderkerk 86, dated 'c. 1795'.

68 Loose-leaf memo in SA, Oude Kerk 14.

69 SA, Nieuwezijds Kapel 23, Burgomasters' resolution, 6 January 1595; Spaans, 'Stad van vele geloven', 443.

70 SA, Hervormde Kerk, Kerkvoogdij 1738, Request of the *gravenmakers* with decision by the burgomasters, 15 November 1663. On this so-called Aansprekersoproer, see Dekker, *Oproeren in Holland*, 37-117.

71 SA, Westerkerk 1, Resolution 1665, fols. 47-49; SA, Eilandskerk 9, file 1472, Partial excerpt from a notification by the city council, 1 February 1667; SA, Nieuw Stedelijk Bestuur 1041, Report of the auditing committee, letter A, 1796.

72 SA, Noorderkerk 92, Documents 16-17, c. 1672-1673, and doc. 36, Summary of the conflict and its resolution by the burgomasters, 1698.

appointed him as doorkeeper and his wife as *stoelbewaarster*. In 1683 the churchwardens rearranged the division of work between the various church officials, whereupon Sydrach complained about loss of income and even voiced fears of destitution. This annoyed the churchwardens, who had already found him negligent, often drunk, and quarrelsome. With recourse to his own account books (which he apparently had been careless enough to leave out in the open), they specified the revenues 'unknown to churchwardens' that he reaped: besides his salary of 160 guilders, 300 guilders for assisting with burials, 94.5 guilders for renting out the church's biers (for which he overcharged his customers), 88 guilders and 4 *stuivers* for renting out cushions, 49 guilders and 6 *stuivers* earned in white-washing the church, 30 guilders for taking down and re-hanging the chandeliers and the curtains for cleaning, 36 guilders for cleaning, 125 guilders in New Year's tips, and some smaller posts – 903 guilders in total, over and above free housing, four pitchers of Spanish wine at each communion service, odds and ends from half-spent candles, and suchlike.[73] This incident shows how the office of doorkeeper, like that of all church officials, offered its incumbents a variety of benefits. They received a modest but dependable annual salary, and their wives were often offered a position as well. They were also paid for additional chores, they were allowed to charge churchgoers and bereaved families for services only a church could provide, they collected customary tips and gifts, and pocketed a share of the commodities bought for use in the church.

Until the late 1660s or early 1670s, *stoelbewaarsters* (fig. 7) were independently operating women, often widows. In the interest of proper order, the churchwardens replaced them with beneficed women, although those old-style *stoelbewaarsters* still active were allowed to continue their work for life. One of these, the widow Syburcht Jans, made over sixty guilders a year placing eighteen women's chairs in the Nieuwezijds Kapel.[74] The new, official *stoelbewaarsters* each controlled a block or 'perk' of dozens of chairs. They were often wives and daughters of male church officials.[75] Their annual salaries ranged from twenty to one hundred guilders. In 1795 those at the Oosterkerk had a salary of 63 guilders plus an estimated 265 guilders in emoluments. Like their male counterparts they rented out foot stoves to those who had seats in their 'perk', and could ask fees for the use of chairs that had been left unoccupied by their official tenants.

In the Amstelkerk, and probably also elsewhere, male and female officials placed extra chairs and low stools in between the official rent-bearing chairs and benches, and rented them out for their own profit. Churchwardens turned a blind eye, as long as this practice did not infringe too blatantly on the 'orderliness' at which the official regulations aimed. In 1745, however, doorkeeper Adrianus de Vries and *stoelbewaarster* Aaltje overstepped the bounds of propriety when they demanded money for the use of the free benches along the outer walls of the church, and for the use of extra stools in that area where people were accustomed to stand without paying, obstructing the collection of the deacons. Such greed

73 SA, Noorderkerk 92, docs. 25-27, Correspondence between Sydrach and the churchwardens, 5 August 1683-3 April 1684.

74 SA, Nieuwezijds Kapel 23, Specification of chairs, employers, and fees (apparently in Jans's own hand), c. 1670.

75 SA, Oude Kerk 1, Journal, 20 December 1685, fol. 3.

Fig. 7 Alexander Hugo Bakker Korff, A stoelbewaarster collecting her fee*, c. 1860, 10 x 7,8 cm, Leiden, Lakenhal. Romanticised image, note the foot stove under the feet of the woman in the chair, and how 'her right hand does not know what the left hand is doing'.*

from beneficed officials contributed to the discontent that would violently manifest itself in 1748.[76]

The new-style beneficed *stoelbewaarsters* were no longer poor old women. Arendina Stokkers, *plaatsbewaarster* in the Oude Kerk, was called *juffrouw* Cannen – *juffrouw* being an honorific just below the *mevrouw* (milady) used for women from the nobility or patriciate, and a notch above *vrouw* (goodwife). She was married to Coert Daniel Kanne, who lived at the prestigious Herengracht before their marriage. Her husband encouraged her to let men sit in the women's seats in her 'perk', a form of 'disorderliness' forbidden by custom.

76 SA, Amstelkerk 4, Minutes 31 December 1699, fols. 17-18; SA, Amstelkerk 5, Minutes 18 February 1719, 20 January, 2 February 2, 1745, and 19 January 1776. Cf. SA, Nieuwezijds Kapel 49, Minutes 5 December 1730; SA, Amstelkerk 5, Minutes January 1774; SA, Amstelkerk 4, Minutes 15 December 1789, fols. 146-147. See also Yates, *Buildings, Faith and Worship*, 48; Bennett, 'Informal Pew-Renting'.

He also ordered the carpenter around, for which he was strictly reprimanded by churchwardens. Daniel Canne, their son, studied theology and became a minister.[77]

Genealogical research on such a large group of people in a city with a highly mobile population is fraught with difficulties. Occasionally it allows glimpses into wider family networks, stretching from the artisanal into the intellectual milieus of the time. The immediate family circle of Dirck Hendriks Booner (†1662), precentor of the Nieuwe Kerk, presents a rare and highly interesting case. Booner had been successful: upon his death he left his five children and his widow 4,000 guilders each. His son Dirk Booner (1629-1678) became sexton of the Nieuwe Kerk after having spent some time carrying out his ageing father's duties. His daughter Jannetje married the minister Albertus van Vliet of Ransdorp.[78] Another daughter, Grietje, married the cloak-maker Hendrik Waterloos. Dirk Booner jr. shoehorned his brother-in-law Waterloos into the now vacant precentor's place.[79] Waterloos was involved in attempts to convert a wayward Jew, Samuel Aboab, to Christianity. Aboab even lodged with Waterloos for some time. His house became a venue for debates about Old Testament exegesis and Reformed theology, especially when Jan Pieterszoon Beeldhouwer, a *ziekentrooster* (comforter of the sick) excommunicated for spreading his unorthodox views on the Trinity, came visiting to try to discourage Aboab from seeking baptism with the Reformed and to win him over for his own views.[80]

Besides the burgomasters, churchwardens, sextons, doorkeepers, dogslayers, and *stoelbewaarsters*, a host of others profited from the exploitation of the churches. Organists and precentors were paid salaries in the range of 300-550 and 150-250 guilders respectively, for what were part-time occupations with emoluments. The churchwardens appointed bookkeepers, attendants to keep order at the communion service and during public catechism lessons, bellringers, technicians to repair clocks and organs, people to work the bellows for the organs, to clean the pavement and the gutters around the churches, and women for dusting and cleaning inside. Twice a year a bevy of extra cleaning women came in to scour the chandeliers and the woodwork. All these jobs were granted as benefices in the giving of the churchwardens. Privileged carpenters were retained the year round, to make uniform chairs, coffins, and foot warmers, and for necessary repairs. Other tradesmen and the many suppliers of the church, for everything from communion wine and candles, to building materials, and implements such as ladders, brooms, and buckets, held similarly privileged positions, granted by the churchwardens as personal favours.[81]

77 Registration of banns for Arendina Stokkers and Daniel Kanne, 30 December 1768; baptism of their son Daniel, 9 May 1777; and his banns, 20 December 1685. See for his career Van Lieburg, *Repertorium*, I, 118. Complaints about the husband are noted in SA, Oude Kerk 179, Sexton's notebook, 1786 and 27 May 1789.

78 SA, Notarial records 1933, Last will of Dirck Hendriks Booner, 23 June 1622, fols. 56-59; Registration of banns for Dirck Boner and Judith de Gier, 13 August 1654, and his burial, 26 October 1678.

79 SA, Hervormde Kerk, Consistory 10, Minutes 24 April-11 September 1659, fols. 54-76; Registration of banns for Hendrik Waterloos and Grietje Dirks, 10 July 1649. He was not identical with the poet and comforter of the sick Hendrik Frederiksz. Waterloos (†1723), although a family relation is probable: SA, Hervormde Kerk, Consistory 9, Minutes 18 February 1655, fol. 73v, 3 and 24 February 1656, fols. 145, 154.

80 Roodenburg, *Onder censuur*, 187; Evenhuis, *Ook dat was Amsterdam*, II, 298; Zilverberg, 'Jan Pieterszoon Beelthouwer'.

81 SA, Westerkerk 1, Resolutions, seventeenth-eighteenth centuries, passim; SA, Amstelkerk 3, Minutes 10 August 1678, fol. 5r.

Essential personnel, such as the sexton, the doorkeeper, the *gravenmaker*, and many of the *stoelbewaarsters*, enjoyed free housing, an allowance of peat and candles, and, for the sextons, free cleaning. The auditing committee of 1795 observed that churchwardens were very liberal with candles, wine, and the (much cheaper) bread bought for the communion service. For the Nieuwezijds Kapel churchwardens bought fourteen *ankers* (1 *anker* equals 38.4 litres) of Spanish wine each year, at least five and a half of which were distributed among the four churchwardens, four ministers, the sexton, doorkeeper, dogslayer, precentor, deacons, cleaners, and manservants of that church. In other churches distributions were of a comparable order of magnitude. Most churches also reported that the sickly poor of their neighbourhood received a share of the wine, suggesting that communion wine, although not consecrated in a Reformed context, was credited with special healing powers. Although the committee was in favour of remuneration for the extra work a communion service demanded, and not against charity, it considered the amounts extravagant.[82]

Decline in Religion

From the middle of the eighteenth century, economic malaise, popular murmurings against social privilege, and a changing religious culture started to affect the finances of the churches. In 1748 widespread rioting broke out in various Dutch cities to protest against tax-farming. While a more equitable system of tax collecting was imposed under the newly installed stadholder Willem IV, the riots had stirred deeper discontent against the venality of the regents. One of the demands of the Amsterdam protesters was that lucrative offices, whether high or low, ought to be sold in public, thus ending the favouritism that sapped the wealth of the city to line the pockets of regents. The States of Holland responded with a request for overviews of all offices in the gift of urban magistracies, with their salaries and a realistic estimate, confirmed by sworn statements, of their other emoluments. Amsterdam handed in such a list, but it was incomplete and often omitted the value of the benefices. Practical reform proposals did not materialise.[83]

Although the positions of church officials were thus for the moment secure, the seating arrangements in the churches now became a bone of contention. During the riots, common people had pulled the locks off the doors to the closed pews and claimed the right to sit in the reserved seats, a modest prequel to the vandalism of the Patriot militias. This shocked the burgomasters into ordering the arrangement of free benches and of more commodious places for standing, albeit without compromising the social hierarchy. Under no pretext were poor people to be allowed in the women's chairs or the pews for the magistracy.[84] The public catechism lessons for children and adults were moved from

82 SA, Nieuw Stedelijk Bestuur 1042, Report of the auditing committee, 1796.

83 Hell, 'Revolt, rust en revolutie', 325-335; Bussemaker, 'Lijst van ambten en officiën, 480-518; Van Nierop, 'Het Dagboek' (1939) 238-240; SA, Gasthuizen 1059, Minutes 5 July, 2 September 1749.

84 SA, Hervormde Kerk, Consistory 23, Minutes 23 December 1748, fols. 11-12; SA, Hervormde Kerk, Kerkvoogdij 1760, doc. 2, Printed notification, 27 December 1748 (also as a handwritten note in SA, Zuiderkerk 86); SA, Amstelkerk 4, Minutes 27 December 1748, fol. 124; SA, Gasthuizen 1019, fol. 87; SA, Amstelkerk 5, Minutes 28 December 1748, 4 January 1749, 1764.

a private room adjoining the church into the nave, but by the placement of movable barriers the places for paying pupils were distinguished from those where people could sit for free.[85] At one point the burgomasters decreed that the occupants of complimentary seats in the *doophuizen* and the closed pews should pay rents equivalent to their prominence, but this seems to have been quickly rescinded.[86] The old arrangement with its ostentatious display of rank and favour caused increasing resentment. In the Oude Kerk the *wijkmeesters* (neighbourhood watchmen), who enjoyed free seats in enclosed pews in all churches as a perquisite of their onerous office, recalcitrantly refused to give the doorkeeper his customary tip at the New Year – a loss of fifteen guilders and fifteen *stuivers* annually, about which he bitterly complained.[87] The magic of the churches as lavishly appointed theatres of social stratification had lost its appeal, and this diminished the income of the churchwardens.

Up to this point the city's treasury had only been required to subsidise the churches occasionally, and then for costly repairs such as when the Noorderkerk needed new slates for the roof.[88] From 1750, however, subventions of thousands of guilders were needed every year. The advancing age of the buildings certainly played a role, but the burgomasters and churchwardens also saw a 'decline in religion', that is: the traditional performance thereof. The demand for rented church seats plummeted, especially in the men's benches and pews. The burgomasters' automatic response was to withdraw the discretionary powers of churchwardens to grant poor church members places for a lower rent or even for free, and to insist on economising again and again. The churchwardens responded by raising the seat rents.[89] This may have discouraged churchgoing, while the inequalities between the privileged and the unprivileged became ever more glaring.

In 1785, the protests of the Patriots against privilege nudged the burgomasters towards cuts in the generous fixed contracts with favoured craftsmen and suppliers. They insisted on awarding maintenance projects and the supply of materials only by public tender.[90] They also started a new round of enquiries into the emoluments for privileged beneficiaries that were hidden from the public eye. The churchwardens, however, although vociferous enough when it came to complaints about the age of their buildings, the decline in demand for rented seats, the rising costs of cleaning because of the mess the citizen militias' drills had left behind, their hard work and frugality, studiously kept silent about the emoluments of church personnel over and above free housing.[91] And, just as in 1749, nothing much changed for the main beneficiaries.

85 SA, Oude Kerk 1, Journal, 28 June-19 September 1752, fols. 13-18. See also SA, Hervormde Kerk, Consistory 23, Minutes 4 and 11 December 1749, fols. 162-163, 381.

86 SA, Burgemeesters 3, Resolution 22 April 1750; SA, Amstelkerk 4, Minutes 8 September 1750, fol. 127.

87 SA, Oude Kerk 1, Journal, 17 February 1754, fol. 23.

88 SA, Noorderkerk 162, Accounts, 1682-1782, passim; SA, Amstelkerk 5, Minutes 24 February 1734; Amstelkerk 4, Minutes 16 February 1741, fol. 111, and passim after 1750.

89 SA, Burgemeester 3, Resolutions, 22 April 1750; SA, Nieuwezijds Kapel 49, Minutes 28 July 1750; SA, Amstelkerk 4, Minutes 8 September 1750, fol. 127.

90 SA, Gasthuizen 1059, Notification by the burgomasters, 29 January 1773; SA, Noorderkerk 108, Notification by the burgomasters, 30 December 1785.

91 SA, Oude Kerk 179, Lists of officials and their emoluments in kind, 1785-1786.

Ten years later, the auditing committee working on behalf of the new Batavian administration again saw itself confronted with a wall of silence. Starting its work in November 1795 with the Oude Kerk, the commissioners soon found their audit mired in a sea of detail. Apparently, they began their task by examining the churchwardens' financial administration, which in terms of the church's turnover showed only the tip of the iceberg. They focused on the declining seat rents, and formulated detailed plans for improvement. They also looked at the administration of the graves in the church, the salaries and emoluments of church officials, the contracts with tenured maintenance workers, and the wasteful use of supplies. By the end of January 1796, having made little progress, the auditors started to make pointed inquiries about the pre-revolutionary income of the sexton of the Nieuwe Kerk. They must have heard rumours of princely profits obtaining from this office. Their questions may have been an attempt to force an opening in the wall of silence surrounding the officials' emoluments. The old sexton of the Nieuwe Kerk, Johannes Matthijs Ritter, had been fired for lack of allegiance to the new regime.[92] Although his successor, citizen H.W. de Bruijn, proved more cooperative, he was initially as ignorant as the auditors.

By mid-February, the committee had concluded that no matter how much the churchwardens economised, the Oude Kerk would always need subsidies, if only because of its venerable age. In the meantime, the municipal council had all the signs of rank and privilege that symbolised the hierarchies of the old regime removed from the churches. Again, citizens' militias held their drills in the churches. In March the committee convinced the new municipality that the considerable costs of cleaning up after them, and of watching out against damage, should not fall to the churchwardens. It also requested information from the churchwardens of the other churches, again about the known revenues and expenses, and possible budget cuts – but by now the auditors were aware of the complexity of the system of patronage, favours, and emoluments, and could direct their questions accordingly.

They found a strong ally in sexton De Bruijn. With his help they unravelled the entire system of benefices and started to make calculations on how much of the money that flowed into the churches could be directed to the maintenance of buildings and less into the pockets of regents and privileged functionaries. They estimated that the onerous office of sexton of the Nieuwe Kerk, which had yielded between 6,000 and 7,000 guilders annually in the last decades, objectively merited an income of 3,000 guilders. The amount should be found in a fixed salary of 1,000 guilders, plus free housing, an allowance for fuel and candles, and some of the traditional emoluments from his office. This should be adequate to keep the incumbent honest, even considering some of it should have to go into paying hired help to fulfil his many duties.[93]

In March, after consultations with the municipal treasurers, and having received written reports from the churchwardens of the other churches, the committee began interviewing the latter. Between the lines one reads a growing irritation with the auditors over the inability or unwillingness of the churchwardens to give realistic estimates of the

92 SA, Nieuwe Kerk 1, Resolution 28 September 1795.

93 SA, Nieuw Stedelijk Bestuur 1040, Report of the auditing committee, 29 March 1796, fol. 33r-v.

extent of church officials' profits, which prompted the auditors to begin independent inquiries. By his own declaration the sexton of the Zuiderkerk made 733 guilders plus free housing, fuel, and candles, far less than what his colleague of the less prestigious Oosterkerk claimed (976.5 guilders). The auditors must have suspected both of gross underreporting. They kept digging, and in mid-May, when the sexton of the Zuiderkerk had died and a new sexton had to be appointed, they could present the municipal council with their own analysis. According to their calculations, the deceased had enjoyed an average annual income of over 2,400 guilders. They took the liberty to present a blueprint for an economical exploitation of the church and a pragmatic job description for a successor, adapted to the new political realities, as a model to be applied to all churches. They advised the council to pay the new incumbent no salary at all, as he could expect between 1,200 and 1,500 guilders annually from the registration of baptisms and the fees for unoccupied chairs in the *doophuis*. Because unlike the Nieuwe Kerk none of the other churches needed full-time attention, the new-style sextons could supplement their income by taking on other paid work.

During their interviews with the churchwardens the members of the committee also tried to understand why the income from seat rents – once such a cash cow – had declined. Rather than cite economic pressures or the increasing resentment of such visible signifiers of inequality, the churchwardens blamed the loss of income on a 'decline in religion'. Yet only those of the Gasthuiskerk and the Nieuwezijds Kapel complained about declining audiences: the former because the ministers whose turn it was to preach often sent *proponenten* (candidates for the ministry) as their substitutes, the latter because there the sermons were in German, which drew a relatively small number of dedicated worshippers. In general, however, it appears that the decline in rental income was the result of an increasing discernment on the part of the people, who had begun to favour services conducted by specific ministers rather than those conducted at their nearest church. A sustained policy of advanced catechisation from the middle decades of the seventeenth century had educated church members theologically and enabled them to develop dogmatic and stylistic preferences.[94] They chose to pay fees for available seats per visit instead of paying a church, or even several churches, for an entire year. The value of a prominent seat of one's own, reflecting one's rank and dignity, had declined, especially for men. This fits with the theory that in the seventeenth century religion had been localised in the social order, as reflected in the seating arrangements in the churches, whereas the eighteenth placed it in the inner disposition of the individual.[95]

In its final report the auditing committee systematically laid out ways and means of rationalising the management of the churches. Now that privileges had been abolished, the auditors advised the churchwardens to lower the seat rents so that more people would be induced to rent a seat of their choice the year round. They provided model contracts, and suggested both a reduction in the personnel employed and a way of dividing the necessary tasks amongst this smaller number. Furthermore, they suggested altering

94 SA, Hervormde Kerk, Consistory 9, Minutes 2 October 1654, fol. 62; Touber, 'The Culture of Catechesis and Lay Theology'; Spaans, 'Between the Catechism and the Microscope'.

95 Van Rooden, *Religieuze Regimes*, 78-120.

the administration of the graves in the churches to yield greater profit for the churches (which would be lost again if church burial would be abolished), and economies in maintenance contracts, cleaning, wine, candles, and peat. They emphasised that, despite their best efforts, they faced an uphill battle against vested interests, and municipal subsidies would remain necessary. Even they did not envisage a system in which all the rents, gifts, and fees would directly benefit the church and church functionaries would be employees plain and simple.

Conclusion

For a century following the Reformation, funding of Amsterdam's public churches had been from the bottom up, rather than from the top down. The costs were shouldered by the families who came to give their dead a solemn burial; the prosperous burghers who cherished commodious seats with footwarmers and cushions in positions that reflected their rank; well-to-do couples who desired a sumptuous wedding; and parents who brought their infants not only to be baptised but also to be provided with a birth certificate that proved their citizenship.

The atmosphere created by the lofty and well-kept buildings, the candles and music, the rhetorical finesse of accomplished preachers, and the well-ordered seating arrangements, into which a bustling team of dignified ushers herded all comers, each in accordance with their rank and station, enabled the congregation to bask in the prosperity of the civic community. A discerning audience was prepared to pay for all of it. With the introduction of seat rents the churchwardens had tapped into a new, lucrative source of income. Hierarchical seating arrangements produced order and discipline. Genteel church personnel recruited from the social milieu just below the elite but well above the working poor guaranteed the orderliness of the services. This class of church functionaries has so far not been identified and studied in churches outside the Dutch Republic; their existence may well have depended on the extraordinary prosperity of the citizenry of a city like Amsterdam. As long as religion was embodied in the order of society, the arrangement yielded generous benefits to the burgomasters, churchwardens, and the minor functionaries in their various ranks – and even made the Amsterdam churches self-sufficient.

When by the middle of the eighteenth century the social order of the old regime, with its display of social hierarchies, came under fire, the economy declined, and religious sensibilities changed, this affected church finances. Although church functionaries still prospered, the sources of income of the churchwardens dried up, while the costs of maintenance remained. If the revolutionary auditing committee, despite its unrelenting investigations, did not fully grasp how the once so successful exploitation of the churches had failed, and how to return them to financial health, this was because they were caught between two stools – they had lost faith in the system of patronage that typified the old regime, but had yet to come to terms with the market-led thinking that would come to define the modern age.

Bibliography

Archival Sources

Amsterdam, Stadsarchief (hereafter SA), Amstelkerk, 3-5, Minutes 1674-1788.
SA, Burgemeesters 1-6, Resolutions, 1603-1794.
SA, Eilandskerk 3, Incoming correspondence and lists of officials.
SA, Eilandskerk 4-6, Accounts, 1660-1798.
SA, Eilandskerk 9, Miscellaneous documents concerning graves.
SA, Gasthuizen 1059, Correspondence prior to 1795.
SA, Hervormde Kerk, Consistory 6-28, Minutes, 1627-1787.
SA, Hervormde Kerk, Consistory 736, Instructions and regulations.
SA, Hervormde Kerk, Kerkvoogdij 1738, Documents on graves and *gravenmakers*.
SA, Hervormde Kerk, Kerkvoogdij 1760, Miscellaneous documents.
SA, Nieuw Stedelijk Bestuur, 1040-1042, Report of the auditing committee of the public churches, with annexes, 1795-1796.
SA, Nieuwe Kerk 1, Resolutions, 1662-1810.
SA, Nieuwe Kerk 54-70, Journal, 1682-1866.
SA, Nieuwe Kerk 251, Correspondence and miscellaneous documents.
SA, Nieuwezijds Kapel 23, Miscellaneous documents.
SA, Nieuwezijds Kapel 49, Minutes, 1717-1810.
SA, Noorderkerk 4, Expenses, 1645-1719.
SA, Noorderkerk 92, Accounts and records.
SA, Noorderkerk 108, Miscellaneous documents.
SA, Noorderkerk 147, Documents concerning sexton Daniel Gerard Römer.
SA, Noorderkerk 162, Accounts, 1682-1782.
SA, Notarial records 1933, Register of notary David Doornick, 1662-1663.
SA, Oude Kerk 1, Journal, 1683-1761.
SA, Oude Kerk 11, Memorial, 1582-1681.
SA, Oude Kerk 14, Accounts, 1695.
SA, Oude Kerk 72, Documents concerning seat rents.
SA, Oude Kerk 179, Miscellaneous documents.
SA, Vroedschap 33-34, Resolutions, 1679-1682.
SA, Westerkerk 1, Resolutions, 1684-1787.
SA, Westerkerk 2, Minutes, 1797-1805.
SA, Zuiderkerk 86, Miscellaneous documents.
SA, Zuiderkerk 88, Documents concerning graves.

Printed Sources

Albrecht, Peter, 'The Extraordinary Life of a Retired Sexton on the Brink of Poverty. Friedrich Wilhelm Hirsemann (1741-1802)', *Central European History* 27 (1994) 185-204.
Bennett, J.C., 'Informal Pew-Renting and Pew-Openers in English Anglican Churches', *Church History and Religious Culture* 100 (2020) 364-382.
Biemen, Wytske van, Brigitte Linskens, and Arie de Groot, *Koper in kerken. Geelgieters en hun werk in Nederlandse kerkgebouwen* (s.l. 2018).
Bom, G.D., *De Oosterkerk te Amsterdam. Geschiedkundig overzicht van den bouw van, en den dienst in deze kerk, van 1659 tot heden* (Amsterdam 1922).
Bree, G.W.G. van, G.P. Nijkamp, and H. Spijkerman, *Inventaris familiearchief Calkoen* (Den Haag 2020).
Bussemaker, Th., 'Lijst van ambten en officiën ter begeving staande van burgemeesteren van Amsterdam in 1749', *Bijdragen en Mededeelingen van het Historisch Genootschap (gevestigd te Utrecht)* 28 (1907) 474-518.

Craig, John, 'Psalms, groans and dog whippers. The soundscape of the English parish church, 1547-1642', in Will Coster and Andrew Spicer (eds.), *Sacred Space in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge 2005) 104-123.
Dapper, Olfert, *Historische Beschryving der Stadt Amsterdam* (Amsterdam: Jacob van Meurs, 1663).
Dekker, Rudolf, *Oproeren in Holland gezien door tijdgenoten. Ooggetuigenverslagen van oproeren in de provincie Holland ten tijde van de Republiek (1690-1750)* (Assen 1979).
Eeghen, Isabella H. van, 'Amsterdamse doophuizen', *Maandblad Amstelodamum* 50 (1963) 220-226.
Eeghen, Isabella H. van, 'De geestelijke en wereldlijke functionarissen verbonden aan de Oude of S. Nicolaaskerk te Amsterdam (tot 1578)', *Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis* 37 (1949) 65-109.
Eibl, Sabine, *Küster im Fürstbistum Münster. Stabsdisziplinierung, Gemeindeansprüche und Eigeninteressen im Konfessionellen Zeitalter* (Münster 2016).
Elias, Arthur M., and Paula C.M. Schölvinck, *Volksrepresentanten en wetgevers. De politieke elite in de Bataafs-Franse tijd* (Amsterdam 1991).
Evenhuis, Rudolf B., *Ook dat was Amsterdam*, 5 vols. (Baarn 1965-1978).
Grosse, Christian, 'Places of sanctification. The liturgical sacrality of Genevan Reformed Churches, 1535-1566', in Will Coster and Andrew Spicer (eds.), *Sacred Space in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge 2005) 60-80.
Hell, Maarten, 'Revolt, rust en revolutie, 1747-1795', in Marijke Carasso-Kok (ed.), *Geschiedenis van Amsterdam*, 4 vols. (Amsterdam 2005) II.2, 267-375.
Janse, H., *De Oude Kerk te Amsterdam. Bouwgeschiedenis en restauratie* (Zwolle 2004).
Laenen, Joseph, *Introduction à l'histoire paroissale du diocèse de Malines. Les institutions* (Brussels 1924, repr. Brussels 1994).
Lieburg, Fred van, *Repertorium van Nederlandse hervormde predikanten tot 1816*, 2 vols. (Dordrecht 1996).
Losserand, Léonore, 'Un autre son de cloche. Le rôle des marguillers dans les chantiers des églises paroissales de Paris sous l'Ancien Régime', in Julie Pironi and Adriana Sénard-Kiernan (eds.), *Batîr pour Dieu. L'oeuvre des religieuses et religieux architectes (XVIIe-XVIIIe siècles)* (Lyon 2019) 133-156.
Lucassen, Jan, and Gerard Trienekens, 'Om de plaats in de kerk. Een onderzoek naar maatschappelijke ongelijkheid, voornamelijk in de negentiende eeuw', *Tijdschrift voor Sociale Geschiedenis* 10 (1978) 239-304.
Luth, Jan Roelof, *"Daer wert om 't seerste uytgekreten…" Bijdragen tot de geschiedenis van de gemeentezang in het Nederlandse Gereformeerde protestantisme, ±1550-±1852*, 2 vols. (Kampen 1986).
Mochizuki, Mia, *The Netherlandish image after iconoclasm, 1566-1672. Material religion in the Dutch Golden Age* (Aldershot 2008).
Nierop, Leonie van, 'Het dagboek van Jacob Bicker Raye 1732-1772', *Jaarboek Amstelodamum* 33 (1936) 173-247 and 36 (1939) 213-51.
Nolet, Willem, and Petrus Cornelis Boeren, *Kerkelijke instellingen in de Middeleeuwen* (Amsterdam 1951).
Poell, Thomas, 'Het einde van een tijdperk. De Bataafs-Franse tijd, 1795-1813', in Marijke Carasso-Kok (ed.), *Geschiedenis van Amsterdam*, 4 vols. (Amsterdam 2005) II.2, 429-499.
Pollmer, Almut, *Kirchenbilder. Der Kirchenraum in der holländische Malerei um 1650* (Leiden 2011).
Post, Reinier, *Kerkelijke verhoudingen in Nederland vóór de Reformatie van ± 1500 tot ± 1580* (Utrecht 1954).
Post, Reinier, *Scholen en onderwijs in Nederland gedurende de Middeleeuwen* (Utrecht 1954).
Rausch, Rudolf, *Muziek in de Republiek. Muziek en maatschappij in de Republiek der Zeven Verenigde Nederlanden 1572-1795* (Utrecht 2018).
Reglement voor de Voorzangers en Orgelisten, nopens het leezen, zingen en speelen, in de kerken der hervormde gemeente van Amsterdam (Amsterdam 1775).
Rooden, Peter van, *Religieuze Regimes. Over godsdienst en maatschappij in Nederland 1570-1990* (Amsterdam 1996).
Roodenburg, Herman, *Onder censuur. De kerkelijke tucht in de gereformeerde gemeente van Amsterdam, 1578-1700* (Hilversum 1990).
Schwartz, Gary, and Marten Jan Bok, *Pieter Saenredam. The Painter and his Time* (Maarssen 1990).
Spaans, Joke, 'Between the Catechism and the Microscope. The World of Johannes Duijkerius', in Joke Spaans and Jetze Touber (eds.), *Enlightened Religion. From Confessional Churches to Polite Piety in the Dutch Republic* (Leiden 2019) 316-345.

Spaans, Joke, 'Honden en hondenslagers in de kerk', *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandse Kerkgeschiedenis* 24 (2021) 99-100.
Spicer, Andrew, *Calvinist churches in early modern Europe* (Manchester 2007).
Spierenburg, Pieter, *Zwarte schapen. Losbollen, dronkaards en levensgenieters in achttiende-eeuwse beterhuizen* (Hilversum 1995).
Steensma, Regnerus, *Opdat de ruimten meevieren. Een studie over de spanning tussen liturgie en monumentenzorg bij de herinrichting en het gebruik van monumentale hervormde kerken* (Baarn 1982).
Swigchem, Cornelis A. van, Teunis Brouwer, and W. van Os, *Een huis voor het Woord. Het Protestantse kerkinterieur in Nederland tot 1900* (The Hague 1984).
Touber, Jetze, 'The Culture of Catechesis and Lay Theology. Lay Engagement with the Bible in the Dutch Reformed Church, 1640-1710', *Church History and Religious Culture* 98 (2018) 31-55.
Verkaaik, Oskar, 'Religious Architecture. Anthropological Perspectives', in Oskar Verkaaik (ed.), *Religious Architecture. Anthropological Perspectives* (Amsterdam 2013) 7-24.
Voetius, Gisbertus, *Politica ecclesiastica*, 4 vols. (Utrecht: Johannes Janssonius van Waesberge and Elizaeus Weyerstraet, 1663-1676).
Wagenaar, Jan, *Amsterdam in zyne opkomst, aanwas, Geschiedenissen, voorregten, koophandel, Gebouwen, kerkenstaat, schoolen, schutterye, gilden en Regeeringe*, 13 vols. (Amsterdam: Jacob Yntema and Jacob Tieboel 1760-1768).
Wumkes, G.A., 'Aeneae, Hendrikus', in P.C. Molhuysen and P.J. Blok (eds.), *Nieuw Nederlands Biografisch Woordenboek*, 10 vols. (Leiden 1911-1937) X, 7-8.
Yates, Nigel, *Buildings, Faith and Worship. The Liturgical Arrangements of Anglican Churches 1600-1900* (Oxford 2006).
Zilverberg, Siegfried B.J., 'Jan Pieterszoon Beelthouwer (±1603-±1669) en de joden', *Studia Rosenthaliana* 3 (1969) 156-167.