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‘Poor Relief in the Dutch Republic and the Case of Berkel en Rodenrijs, 1745-1812’

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Abstract:

During the early modern period the poor relief systems of the Dutch Republic were the most elaborate and generous forms of poor relief found anywhere in the world. Poor relief in the Dutch Republic was provided by a myriad of different organizations including churches, civic governments, guilds, private institutions of poor relief, and semi-public administrative boards. Although civic governments played an important role in the provision of poor relief, it remained a limited role and civic governments preferred to delegate responsibility over poor relief to existing institutions. Provincial governments, aside from Friesland, and the national government of the Dutch Republic played even less of a role in the provision of poor relief. The Dutch Republic resisted most attempts at centralized control over poor relief, even as other cities and eventually countries in Europe reformed their own poor relief systems to come under state control.

According to the influential theorist, Abram de Swaan, this lack of centralization should have resulted in a complete collapse of Dutch poor relief systems. However, as later scholars have argued, Dutch poor relief systems thrived and survived without coming under direct state control until the 20th century. In light of the failure of De Swaan's model, alternative models of poor relief in the Dutch Republic have been proposed, but a universally accepted theory has not yet emerged, partially as a result of several insufficiently studied themes in poor relief in the Dutch Republic.

One of these themes is the experience of poor relief in rural areas. In an attempt to contribute to the field, this thesis will conduct a case study on poor relief in the village of Berkel en Rodenrijs during the crisis period at the end of the 18th century that eventually resulted in the collapse of the Dutch Republic. Despite extreme pressure, and contrary to De Swaan's predictions, the poor relief system of Berkel en Rodenrijs seems to have survived the chaos.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Poor Relief in the Dutch Republic

Poverty has long been a prominent feature of most human societies, and what should be done about the poor has long been a contentious political issue. In the Low Countries organized poor relief has existed since the Middle Ages (Van Leeuwen, 2013: 177). Starting with alms provided by the church, institutions providing poor relief multiplied. By the late Middle Ages, poor relief in Western Europe, including in the Low Countries, was largely decentralized and characterized by '...a tangled mass of charitable foundations and endowments set up by individuals, guilds, and clergy, and administered by a wide range of bodies...' (Israel, 1995:123). Some scholars, lead by Abram de Swaan, have described the chaotic and local nature of late medieval and early modern poor relief as fragile and prone to frequent collapse. But was this always the case? For De Swaan (2004: 50-51), collapse[1] of poor relief systems could only be averted by centralization of poor relief under the state. But in the Dutch Republic, itself highly decentralized, this was impossible.

The Dutch Republic, established in 1581, was similarly characterized as having '...a weak political centre, but strong local and provincial institutions...' (Prak, 2005: 2-4). For many scholars, the chaotic nature of the Dutch Republic was a source of weakness, a 'constitutional monstrosity' and argued that '[w]hile other countries were improving their political structure...the Netherlands was lapsing into medieval chaos.' However, more recently some contemporary scholars view the Dutch Republic's complex institutional framework as a source of strength by linking the Republic's unique institutional arrangement to the extraordinary success of the Netherlands on the world stage during the early modern period. Perhaps then the same logic can apply to the equally chaotic, but arguably successful Dutch poor relief system?

In the Low Countries, starting in the early 16th century, the old medieval poor relief system was swept aside by new attitudes and new approaches which lead to a fundamental reorganization of how poor relief was organized, what the aim of poor relief was, and who qualified for poor relief. First, the Reformation resulted in the confiscation of Catholic property and revenues, which left a gap in the poor relief system which was filled, by necessity, by civic governments

[1] How and why poor relief systems would collapse according to De Swaan, is discussed in Chapter 2, section 2.3.3.

and semi-public or private institutions. Second, population growth and rapid urbanization created the burgeoning problem of mass poverty. Finally, humanist attitudes came to dominate poor relief and shifted the goal of poor relief from the provision of alms to dealing with the growing practical and moral problems of poverty, vagrancy, and idleness (Israel, 1995: 123--124).

Following these developments, the newly established Dutch Republic developed a poor relief system that was striking both for its elaborate and complex organization (Israel, 1995: 353), and for its apparent generosity and effectiveness. While not generous by modern standards, the Dutch poor relief system was extraordinarily generous by the standards of the time. Contemporary observers were amazed. In 1673, William Temple, a visitor from England, described the Dutch by stating that '[c]harity seems to be very national among them' (Prak, 2005: 147). Today, Heerma van Voss and Van Leeuwen (2012: 176) claim that '...nowhere in the Europe of that time, and possibly in the world, was the level of charitable expenditure as great as it was in the Netherlands.' Could such a generous poor relief system be sustained in the long run, or in the face of crisis?

1.2 Models of Poor Relief in the Dutch Republic

The ability of early modern poor relief systems to cope with crisis is a subject of intense academic debate. As discussed above, one position advocated by Abram de Swaan (2004, 40-49) argues that poor relief systems in early modern Europe and the United States were characterized by inherent instability. Disruptions, such as disease, famine, increases in prices, or a war, even if relatively small, could give rise to large numbers of newly poor who would then overwhelm local poor relief systems causing them to collapse. One option cities had to cope with the influx of the poor was by developing methods of exclusion. These prohibitive measures include providing charity only to citizens or long term residents, shifting the burden to another community. However, by the early modern period this exclusion by cities had become problematic as rapidly growing urban economies demanded labour, but no single city could dare to allow the poor to enter or risk becoming overwhelmed (De Swaan, 1988: 14; Van Leeuwen, 2013: 174).

According to De Swaan (De Swaan, 2004: 50-51), this coordination problem could only be overcome by the state. Some countries, such as England, tried to solve this problem of excluded

poor, by instituting poor laws, such as the Elizabethan Poor Law of 1601, which sought to create a uniform poor relief system for the entire country funded by a special tax. The Dutch Republic, however, resisted this centralizing trend (Prak, 2005: 2-4), and its poor relief systems were predominantly funded by charitable donations, rather than through taxation (Heerma van Voss and Van Leeuwen, 2012: 177). Therefore, De Swaan's model predicts that the Dutch Republic's relatively disorganized poor relief system would have been prone to frequent collapse.

However, De Swaan's predictions do not appear to have been accurate in explaining the experience of poor relief systems in the Dutch Republic. Contrary to De Swaan's predictions, poor relief systems in the Dutch Republic remained remarkably stable, enduring throughout the entire Dutch Republic and beyond, even in times of crisis and until the emergence of the modern welfare system in the 19th and 20th centuries (Prak, 1994: 162-165; Van Leeuwen, 2013: 173, 196-197).

Periods of crisis did occur. The Dutch Republic in the late 18th and early 19th centuries was overwhelmed by economic and political crises that would eventually lead to its collapse, starting with the Batavian revolts after 1783, the French invasion and Batavian revolution in 1794-1795, and culminating in the establishment of the French lead Kingdom of Holland in 1806 (Israel, 1998: 1098-1121; Rowen, 1988: 205-229). This period of turmoil is the ultimate test of De Swaan's model: if poor relief systems in the Dutch Republic could cope with a crisis of this magnitude, then De Swaan's model can be resoundingly rejected. Yet even in the face of this crisis, the poor relief system appears to have survived largely enduring in its decentralized form until the establishment of the modern Dutch welfare state (Van Leeuwen, 2013: 173, 196-197). Why and how was this the case?

In face of the shortcomings of De Swaan's model, various alternative models of poor relief in the Dutch Republic have since been proposed (Van Leeuwen, 1994: 171-183). They will be discussed in more detail in the body of this thesis. However, these models share the shortcoming that they are based on the study of larger urban areas. Rural poor relief in the Dutch Republic remains poorly studied (Dijkman, 2015: 3). To combat this shortcoming, this thesis will therefore discuss poor relief in a rural area. Which model, if any, has the most explanatory value for the experience of rural poor relief in the Dutch Republic?

1.3 Unanswered Questions in the Debate on Dutch Poor Relief

Due to the deficiencies in the academic literature as noted above, this thesis will attempt to contribute to two unanswered questions emerging from the academic debate on poor relief in the Dutch Republic. These questions are as follows. First, how well did rural poor relief systems cope with crises in general, and second, how did poor relief systems in the Dutch Republic specifically cope with the major crisis at the end of the 18th century. These questions can be combined into a single question: How did rural poor relief in the Dutch Republic cope with the crisis at the end of the 18th century? Unfortunately, a question of this magnitude is too broad to be answered within the scope of this thesis. By necessity, this thesis will focus on a more narrow topic, which will be discussed in the next section.

1.4 Methodology

To contribute to answering these questions the thesis will conduct a case study on the village of Berkel en Rodenrijs in the province of Holland[2] during the 18th century. The choice of this village is first, due to the unusual wealth of information available for this village at the Rotterdam City Archives, covering the period between 1503--1813. Of particular value are archives of the *Heilige Geest Armenmeesters* ('Holy Spirit poor masters') of Berkel en Rodenrijs which served as the most significant local civic poor relief institution (Stadsarchief Rotterdam, 2015: Internet; Dijkman, 2015: 4-5). The archives of the *Heilige Geest* for Berkel en Rodenrijs include, with some gaps, the minutes and financial accounts of the organization, and other potentially useful documents from both the *Heilige Geest* and the local government. Second, Berkel en Rodenrijs is an excellent subject for a case study. It is located in Holland, which was the economic and political heart of the Dutch Republic and it is in close proximity to such historically important cities as Rotterdam and Delft. Despite its location Berkel en Rodenrijs was a small village and subject to the unique circumstances that affected the efficacy of poor relief in a small settlement. A third motivating factor for the choice of Berkel en Rodenrijs is the ongoing research of Dr Jessica Dijkman (2015) in the functioning of the poor relief system of Berkel en Rodenrijs during the 16th and 17th centuries. Contributions by other authors also exist, though the 18th century remains largely unstudied. Since this thesis will focus on the 18th century, it can complement the work done on earlier periods, giving future researchers a more

[2] Today, Berkel en Rodenrijs is a part of the Lansingerland municipality and is located in the province of South Holland, near the city of Rotterdam (Historische Vereniging Berkel en Rodenrijs, 2015: Internet).

comprehensive overview of the poor relief system of this village, which can hopefully also serve as a model for rural poor relief in the Dutch Republic.

In this thesis, the poor relief system of Berkel en Rodenrijs will be investigated during two periods between 1745-1812. The first period is the period of 1745-1795 when the poor relief system in Berkel en Rodenrijs was relatively stable and free from crisis. These dates were chosen based on availability of data in the archives. Although characterized by political turmoil (Rowen, 1988: 205-229; Israel, 1998: 1098-1112; Schama, 1977: 64-135), the Dutch Republic was still relatively stable at this time. Studying this period, will therefore provide a baseline for the functioning of the pre--crisis poor relief system.

The second period is the period of 1795-1812, a period during which the Dutch Republic experienced crisis and eventual collapse. The Dutch Republic experienced a disastrous invasion by the newly established French Republic in 1794, followed by the Patriot Revolution and the establishment of the Batavian Republic in 1795. This Batavian Republic ended in 1806, with the establishment of the Kingdom of Holland as a French client state. This too was short lived, and the Netherlands was incorporated into the French Empire in 1810, before regaining its independence after 1813 (Rowen, 1988: 228-229; Israel, 1998: 1113-1130; Schama, 1977: 64-135). Given the turmoil of this period it is reasonable to expect that some degree of that turmoil will be reflected in conditions of the poor relief system in Berkel en Rodenrijs. The focus of the thesis in the study of this period will be to see how, if at all, the poor relief system in Berkel en Rodenrijs coped with the late 18th century crisis that destroyed the Dutch Republic.

Therefore, the final research question for this thesis is as follows: *How was the Heilige Geest poor relief system of Berkel en Rodenrijs affected by the crisis in the Netherlands of 1795-1812, and how did it respond to the crisis?*

To answer these questions, it is necessary to first discuss the current state of the academic literature on poor relief in the Dutch Republic, as well as to describe how Dutch poor relief systems typically functioned. Since these topics are well covered in the academic literature it will not be necessary to delve deeply into primary source materials, and instead secondary sources will be used.

The sections on Berkel en Rodenrijs will require use of primary sources found in the Rotterdam city archives. In interpreting these sources, the thesis will use both qualitative analysis, especially with regards to documents such as letters and minutes of meetings from the *Heilige Geest* of Berkel en Rodenrijs as well as the local government. However, these sections will also make use of quantitative analysis. The *Heilige Geest* of Berkel en Rodenrijs kept extensive financial records, and certain statistical information such as numbers of persons receiving bread. Census records kept by the local government are also used. This information was taken directly from the documents and typed up into spreadsheets which are included in the appendix.

The financial records are partially a result of unpublished research shared by Dr Jessica Dijkman, and are used with permission of the author. New information from other primary sources have been used to extend and modify the spreadsheets made by Dr Dijkman. They have also been simplified to contain only data directly relevant to the thesis. These spreadsheets are therefore similar, but not identical to the spreadsheets by Dr Dijkman, and may not match her interpretation of the data, nor are they endorsed by her.

The census records, and records of persons receiving bread are entirely based on original research and have likely never been published before. Since no academic analysis of poor relief in Berkel en Rodenrijs during the 18th and 19th centuries exist, all analysis in these sections, both qualitative and quantitative are entirely original.

1.5 Outline of Thesis

After the introductory chapter, Chapter 2 will conduct a literature review of the current debate regarding poor relief in the Dutch Republic. It will discuss the model of Abram de Swaan, and the various models which have emerged as an alternative to De Swaan's model, such as the models of Maarten Prak and Marco van Leeuwen. The chapter will attempt to classify the various alternative models into broad categories. The overarching purpose of this chapter is to provide the reader with an oversight of existing theories, which will later be tested against the historical development of the poor relief system in Berkel en Rodenrijs.

Chapter 3 will discuss the village of Berkel en Rodenrijs, its broader context within the Dutch Republic, and the functioning of its poor relief system. First, the chapter will provide a brief description of the events in the Netherlands during the late 18th and early 19th centuries. It will

then discuss Berkel en Rodenrijs's poor relief system during a period of relative stability, from 1745 onwards. Next the chapter will discuss the period of major crisis from 1795-1812.

Finally, the conclusion will test the models discussed in the first chapter against the case study discussed in Chapter 3 and determine which models, if any, have best explained the experience of poor relief in Berkel en Rodenrijs during the period being studied.

At the end of the thesis, after the bibliography, there is an appendix containing the spreadsheets of data used in in Chapter 3.

Chapter 2: Theories on Poor Relief in the Dutch Republic

2.1 Introduction

There is no academic consensus model of poor relief in Dutch Republic. Multiple different models have been presented with radical differences between them. These include the model of Abram de Swaan, the models of Maarten Prak and Marco van Leeuwen, as well as other models. To date, no model has been universally accepted, and each of the several proposed models suffers from certain shortcomings (Van Leeuwen, 1994: 180). It is impossible for this thesis to settle the debate, but by comparing the various models to a case study it may be possible to determine which theory has the most explanatory value, at least within the limited parameters of the case study on Berkel en Rodenrijs during the late 18th and early 19th centuries that will be conducted in Chapter 3. Before it is possible to discuss the theories, this chapter will first briefly discuss the history of poor relief in the Netherlands.

2.2 The History and Organization of Poor Relief in the Netherlands

Poor relief in the Low Countries had its origins in the Middle Ages. Initially, poor relief was primarily provided for by the church. Local parishes were required by canon law to provide for their destitute members. If a local parish could not afford to meet the cost of poor relief a levy would be raised from its parishioners. Other institutions also provided some limited forms of poor relief. These included monasteries and the nobility who were expected to take care of their ill or elderly servants. However, poor relief remained limited until the advent of rapid urbanization in the Low Countries, starting in the 11th century (Van Leeuwen, 2013: 177).

Early urban poor relief was primarily focused on taking care of orphans, the elderly, and the ill. Most regular food distribution was undertaken by the *Heilige Geestmeesters*, or Masters of the Holy Spirit. The *Heilige Geest* would later emerge as one of the most significant poor relief institutions in the Netherlands. Despite the emergence of cities, poor relief remained primarily a religious undertaking and most forms of poor relief was administered by the church. However,

at this time civic authorities began to become involved in poor relief as well, intervening when necessary to stave off a crisis (Van Leeuwen, 2013: 177-178).
Poor relief was typically funded by large endowments, usually granted to and administered by the church. Before the change in attitudes regarding poor relief occurred in the 16th century, the provision of poor relief was guided by religious morality. Wealthy donors would donate money to the church for the provision of poor relief in order to secure their salvation. Recipients of poor relief were expected to pray for the souls of the dead to ensure their passage into the afterlife, typically during masses held by the church. This religious function was a significant component of total expenditure on poor relief (Van Leeuwen, 2013: 178).

By the 16th century, attitudes to poor relief had begun to change. The medieval poor relief system was no longer able to cope with the masses of urban poor, the result of the rapid urbanization experienced in the Low Countries starting in the late Middle Ages and continuing into the early modern period. As one of the most urbanized regions in the world at the time, the Low Countries was forced to pioneer new approaches to poor relief. In addition to practical concerns, new humanist attitudes had begun to spread through urban society. With the spread of humanism, came new criticism of both alms givers and those poor who relied on alms. Alms givers were criticized for their haphazard and uncoordinated ways of delivering poor relief, while alms receivers came under increased moral scrutiny. In medieval Europe, poverty was seen as noble, but by the 16th century the poor increasingly came to be seen as vagrants and criminals. Poor relief came under heightened scrutiny to ensure that only the truly deserving poor would receive poor relief, while the undeserving poor were expected to work, and could be punished for wrongfully receiving alms (Van Leeuwen, 2013: 178; Israel, 1995: 123-124).

The new attitude was exemplified by Spanish humanist Juan Luis Vives, a resident of Bruges, who in 1526 published his *De Subventione Pauperum* (On Assistance to the Poor). He advocated radical reform of poor relief along humanist lines, including state intervention to ensure a more coherent and centralized provision of poor relief, as opposed to a myriad of organizations acting separately. Furthermore, this new way of organizing poor relief would be accompanied by strict supervision over the poor and prohibition of access to poor relief by those deemed undeserving (Van Leeuwen, 2013: 178; Israel, 1995: 123-124; Schama, 1997: 579-580).

As a result of this ideological shift, poor relief was reformed in many cities in the southern Low Countries, as well as a number of French, German, and Italian cities. In the northern Low

Countries, urbanization was not yet so far advanced as in the southern Low Countries, and so reform was not yet an urgent priority. Nevertheless, in 1527 the States of Holland[3] made official enquiries into the reforms implemented in Bruges and Ypres. By 1531, the Holy Roman Emperor, and ruler of the Low Countries, Charles V, stepped in and decreed that parochial charity be centralized with a single common fund. As part of the reform poor were now required to register as residents of a city to qualify as poor relief, and had to wear an identifying badge. Vagabonds were banned from entering into cities, and begging in cities was prohibited. These reforms might have changed the history of poor relief in the Netherlands, but in practice they were poorly implemented in the northern Low Countries and substantial reform took place only in Friesland. Even there the reforms were only implemented to a limited degree. The spread of the Reformation, and later the Dutch Revolt put a stop to any serious prospect of centralizing reform in the northern Low Countries (Van Leeuwen, 2013: 178-179).

After the spread of the Reformation and the Dutch Revolt in the late 16th century, the Low Countries became divided along political and sectarian lines. Politically, the Dutch Revolt opposed, among other things, the centralization efforts that had been undertaken by Charles V and his successors including Philip II, as well as opposing the higher taxes required to fund these centralization efforts. The Dutch Revolt was also partially a religious conflict, with many Protestants favouring the revolting side, and many Catholics remaining loyal to the Habsburg monarchy (Prak, 2005: 15-17). In those cities that allied themselves with the Dutch Revolt, Catholic institutions such as monasteries were dissolved and their assets seized. This included their endowments which were placed under control of the local civic authorities. Although the emerging Dutch state was closely allied with the Reformed Church, the church never achieved the status of a state church, and was not obligated to provide poor relief to non-members. Furthermore, there was a far greater divided between civic authorities and the Reformed Church in the provision of poor relief than there had been before the Reformation (Van Leeuwen, 2013: 179).

As a result, the centralizing reforms over poor relief that had taken place in other parts of Europe did not occur in the Netherlands. Instead poor relief became fragmented again, now along confessional lines as well, with each religious denomination expected to provide for its own poor. So the Reformed Church provided for the Reformed Poor and the Catholic Church

[3] Representatives of the two estates, i.e. the nobles and the commoners in the court of the Count of Holland. After the Dutch Revolt, the States of Holland functioned as the government of Holland.

provided for the Catholic poor and so on. Since religious denominations were only expected to take care of their own poor, civic governments stepped in as limited providers of last resort, but civic involvement in poor relief in the Dutch Republic remained far more limited than it did in other many other parts of Europe (Van Leeuwen, 2013: 179-180).

Despite the lack of centralization, the Dutch model of poor relief was initially an overwhelming success. During the Golden Age of the Dutch Republic, the Netherlands rapidly grew into one of the richest countries in the world. As discussed earlier, it also became the most charitable country (Heerma van Voss and Van Leeuwen, 2012: 176), with the highest per capita expenditure on poor relief anywhere in the world. Jean de Parival, a French speaking traveller, described the enormous wealth of poor relief organizations in the Dutch Republic by noting that the Amsterdam hospital had an annual income of eighty thousand livres and set aside 'eighteen tonnes of gold'[4] each year for distribution of bread to the poor which he describes as '...an immense sum that is afforded by the great riches of the city and the infinite number of merchants, the great affluence of the people, and which testifies to the charitable inclinations of the Dutch' (Schama, 1997: 576). This was almost entirely funded by endowments or charitable donations rather than through taxation. By way of comparison England, itself quite wealthy by contemporary standards, per capita expenditure on poor relief would not reach Dutch levels until the 18th century (Van Leeuwen, 2013: 179-180).

In the Dutch Republic, poor relief organizations existed in every large town and city, and in many smaller villages, including Berkel en Rodenrijs. In principle each religious denomination took care of its own poor, including almshouses for elderly parishioners and orphanages, but most denominations provided at least some alms to the 'ordinary poor' as well. This later category of relief was limited, and so most cities also featured non-denominational forms of poor relief, established by the civic government or even private individuals. For example, Amsterdam had two civic orphanages, one for children of citizens, and one for children of non-citizens. Organizations such as guilds also provided some form of poor relief for their members (Van Leeuwen, 2013: 180). The *Heilige Geest* survived the Reformation and was well established throughout the Dutch Republic as the largest non-denominational provider of poor relief. In smaller towns, the *Heilige Geest* was sometimes the only source of poor relief, aside possibly from the local Reformed diaconate (Dijkman, 2015: 8; Schama, 1997: 577-598).

[4] This does seem an improbably large amount of gold.

Most poor relief organizations were funded through income generated by their own properties or through charitable giving. Donations were extensive. According to Prak (2005: 147, in the town of Sneek, two thirds of the alms given to the poor were collected every month by overseers of poor relief who went door to door with a collection plate. This method highly successful and for two centuries the proceeds in Sneek remained at the same level. Charitable giving was voluntary, but well organized and widely practiced. Alms boxed were numerous and situated strategically at places such as ferries, post offices, and inns. Collections were also held by churches, as well as by civic governments. Funds could also be raised through excise taxes, such as a tax on beer, or through a lottery (Van Leeuwen, 2013: 180; Schama, 1997: 578-579). Civic governments provided oversight over the collections and audited annual accounts, but were otherwise reluctant to become involved. Instead responsibility over poor relief, along with collected funds, were delegated to churches, administrative boards, or even independent or semi-independent bodies. Van Leeuwen (2013: 180) describes this system as corporatist, and it allowed citizens to have an influence over the distribution of funds. He further argues that this system survives, essentially intact until the *Algemene Bijstandswet* of 1965 finally solidified state control over poor relief and welfare.

Why was charity so extensive during the Golden Age? One possible answer was the great emphasis that *burgerlijk* (civic) culture placed on giving to charity. Philanthropy was seen as a form of acceptable conspicuous consumption, a way for the rich to flaunt their wealth without violating social mores. Religion also placed emphasis on charitable giving and churches emphasized the notion of '[g]ive, for one day you may be needy as it pleases the Almighty.' It is also important to note that many of the poor were still seen as *burgers* (citizens) and were therefore entitled to all the benefits of *burgerlijk* life. This was not the case for all the poor, and despite the relative absence of roving bands of poor that plagued parts of Europe, there was still a deep-seated fear of crime committed by the poor against the rich. Charity was therefore also a kind of self-defence by the rich in order to prevent the poor from becoming too numerous or too dangerous. It was a tool of 'social control', intend to keep poorer citizens in place, and as a means enforcing public morality, as only the those deemed deserving were given poor relief. To a degree this was a necessity, as the wealth of the Dutch Republic made it a magnet for immigrants from the countryside and also from other countries in Europe (Schama, 1997: 573-586).

The extreme opulence and wealth of the Golden Age of the Netherlands didn't last. By the end of the 17th century as the Golden Age came to an end, the Dutch economy began to stagnate and combined with fears of fraud and abuse, poor relief again became more limited. In the city of Leeuwarden in Friesland poor relief was initially restricted only to those who had been residents for a minimum of one year. In 1630, this was extended to two years, and in 1660, the States of Friesland set the requirement for the whole province to five years. In 1682, the States of Holland attempted to do the same, followed by similar laws in Utrecht in 1687 and Zeeland in 1705. Despite the strain caused by economic stagnation, the Dutch Republic remained one of the wealthies countries in the world, and the poor relief systems would endure, though somewhat less generous, through the 18th century and until beyond the end of the Dutch Republic (Gelderblom, 2009: 13-15; Prak, 2005: 147-149; Schama, 1977: 24-63).

The next sections will more specifically discuss various models of Dutch poor relief in the academic literature. The section on De Swaan will discuss some of the same topics that were discussed in this section, but from a theoretical perspective, while the section on Prak will discuss the development of poor relief specifically in the Dutch city of Den Bosch.

2.3 Abram de Swaan: Poor Relief in Early Modern Europe and the United States

One of the most contentious contributions to the literature on poor relief are the arguments of Abram de Swaan presented in his book *In Care of the State,* first published in 1988.[5] In this book, De Swaan discusses poor relief in early modern Europe and the United States, which, as as discussed in the following section, was characterized, as '[f]ragile, continually impaired, [and] subject to repeated collapse before being continually rebuilt' (Van Leeuwen, 2013: 174).

2.3.1 Why does poverty exist?

De Swaan (1988: 13-15) begins his argument by first describing the origins of poverty and the relationship between the rich and the poor in general terms. De Swaan links the origins of poverty to the institution of property rights. In an economic system characterized by property

[5] Published in Dutch as *Zorg en de Staat* in 1989. Both the English and Dutch versions were used in this thesis.

rights, these rights represent both a claim on surplus output, and a means, in the form of rights and defensive measures, to defend that claim. Those without sufficient claim to the surplus are the poor, '...the ones who had less of whatever it takes to survive.' However, while property rights serve to exclude the poor from a claim on a surplus, it must also define some limited entitlement for the poor. The institution of property rights can only survive if it is possible persuade the majority of the poor of the moral rightness of property which justifies their exclusion and the claim on the surplus to by the rich. The concept of poverty is therefore paradoxical: the poor suffer from want in the presence of surplus, but are also entitled to a portion of the surplus under conditions of exclusion. What does this mean in practice?

Under conditions of poverty, the primary aim of the poor is survival. The primary aim of the rich however, is to protect themselves and their property from the poor. Therefore, the rich must find ways of distributing enough of the surplus to the poor to ensure their survival, without undermining the institution of property rights, a situation which De Swaan describes as '...the problem of distributing a minimal amount of the social surplus without altering the patterns of dependency and exclusion which define the rich...[and]...the poor...' This paradox imposes a structure of mutual interdependence on both the poor and the rich, two classes that otherwise might have ignored each other, or even gone to war (De Swaan, 1988: 13-15).

In De Swaan's theory the rich and the poor are therefore inescapably bound to each other, and the development of a system of poor relief is an inevitable consequence of the system of exclusion developed under the institution of property rights. However, this system of poor relief is inherently unstable due to the difficulties of coordination of poor relief in early modern Europe and the United States resulting in what Van Leeuwen (2013: 174) describes as '...a serious free rider problem.'

2.3.2 Who gives, and who is deserving?

The free rider problem occurs when certain groups or individuals can benefit from a system put in place by others without contributing to that system. In De Swaan's theory on poor relief there are two kinds of free riders: those among the wealthy who do not contribute, and those among the poor who do not deserve to benefit.

The wealthy benefit from poor relief as it protects the system of property rights, pacifies the poor, and guarantees the long term reproduction and working capacity of the work force (De Swaan, 1988: 14). A system of poor relief cannot be put in place by any single wealthy individual, as that person would soon be '...overwhelmed by hordes of supplicants and doomed to bankruptcy...' The wealthy therefore need to coordinate their poor relief efforts. However, this coordination does not eliminate the free rider problem. If a system of poor relief was sufficiently stable, a minority of the wealthy could opt out, while still enjoying the benefits provided by the poor relief system. However, any of the wealthy opting out of the system would provide an incentive for even more of the wealthy to opt out, until the system collapses. The rich therefore needed to find a way of exerting pressure on their own kind (De Swaan, 1988: 14-15).

At the same time, a poor relief system would have to avoid the problem of being overwhelmed by too many of the poor making a claim on poor relief. If poverty is '...a social status... [and an] invention of civilization...' as De Swaan (1988: 13) claims, then who constitutes the deserving and undeserving poor is also ultimately determined by society. De Swaan (1988: 16) identifies three criteria which he claims are '...implicit in almost all classifications of poverty...' These categories are: *disability*, *proximity*, and *docility*.

The first category, *disability*, is based on *need* and refers to the incapacity to survive from one's own efforts alone. In any society characterized by division of labour, it is not possible for an individual to provide for all their needs. Rather, in this form economy, an individual trades their own efforts for the efforts of others. *Disability* is therefore the inability to participate in an economic system based on reciprocal exchange. However, even the disabled poor can reciprocate for charity received after a fashion 'rewarding' benefactors with blessings or prayers and 'punishing' those who abstain from charity through curses of spells. Therefore, by making claims to part of the surplus under the dominant system of beliefs, laws, and values, even the disabled poor could represent a threat to the wealthy (De Swaan, 1988: 15-16; Schama, 1997: 579-587).

The second criteria, *proximity*, is based on *entitlement* to poor relief and can refer to proximity of kinship, where families are expected to take care of their relatives, and proximity of residence, the notion that the wealthy are expected to contribute to the poor in close geographic proximity. This implies that non-local poor were typically excluded from poor relief systems, but prevents local poor relief systems from chasing their own poor away. The residence criteria attempted to

solve a serious problem in many early modern societies: the problem of banditry and vagrancy. The excluded poor often formed their own communities as roving bands, which at places may have constituted up to 20 per cent of the population. These roving bands, which local police forces could rarely eradicate[6], were such a significant problem that De Swaan describes the early modern landscape as being virtually under siege from the poor: 'Often, the walls, [of towns] served as much to defend the towns against [the poor] as against enemy armies' (De Swaan, 1988: 16-20). Not all towns had walls or similar effective means of excluding the poor. Both smaller settlements, who could not wall themselves off, and large cities, who could not effectively control the influx of migrants, could not protect themselves from the poor.

The third criteria, *docility*, is also based on *entitlement* to poor relief. *Docility* describes the role of moral and religious values in determining who constituted the deserving poor. The truly deserving poor were docile, accepting their place in society without resort to violence. However, while moral and religious dictates aimed to protect the wealthy from the poor, they protected the poor as well, as the wealthy had a moral and religious duty to contribute to charity, a duty that was typically enforced by the local religious authority, as well pressure from certain classes, such as peasants, who tended to be sympathetic to the poor (De Swaan, 1988: 16-17).

2.3.3 The Development of Poor Relief in Europe, and the Unstable Equilibrium

European poor relief systems developed between the 9th and 14th centuries as agricultural activities centred on village communities became the predominant form of life throughout Western Europe. Where peasant communities could exist in peace and security, systems of poor relief developed at level sufficient to keep the poor alive. However, that the poor persisted as a class, resulted from more or less stable patterns of ownership, defined by the institution of property rights and reinforced by military protection provided by feudal lords (De Swaan, 1988: 22-23).

While feudal lords provided security, they typically left local communities to organize themselves so long as rents were paid. Therefore, it fell on established members of communities to provide for the local poor. The poor typically had the same rights to communal lands as the

[6] Schama (1997: 583) argues that in the Netherlands at least this was more a bourgeois fantasy than reality, and the tribes of beggars and vagrants common elsewhere in Europe were largely absent in the Netherlands, while law enforcement was largely effective at dealing with criminals.

settled peasants, and this communal land could be used for providing part of their needs. The rest of the needs of the local poor would be provided for by the local farmers and coordinated by the local clergy. Despite the existence of these early poor relief systems, poor relief remained rudimentary, largely voluntary, and characterized by little coordination on a regional scale (De Swaan, 1988: 23).

Poor relief became more sophisticated by the 13th and 14th centuries. Collective poor relief systems emerged in both the countryside and in towns. However, the contributions to poor relief remained largely voluntary and there was no general poor tax. So, why did people give to charity if there was no guarantee that their neighbour would do the same? Although poor relief had a threefold function: as defence against the poor, to ensure a pool of reserve labour, and as insurance for those at risk of becoming poor, the actual motivation for giving was provided by moral and religious values which promised eternal reward to those who contributed generously. Charity was given publicly, with generous givers held up as examples of virtue. Those who refrained from giving were admonished not only for their greed, but for undermining the sense of community and the values on which collective charity was built (De Swaan, 1988: 23-28). Finally, the poor had allies, in the form of religious institutions, and the poorer classes in society, who could exert pressure on the wealthy to contribute to charity (De Swaan, 1988: 28-29).

As a result, an equilibrium emerged in most areas during times of peace and prosperity. Those who could work were required to do so, either on their own land, or as hired labour. The deserving poor, those unable to work, were provided for by the community and local religious institutions. This was hardly an idyllic state of affairs, charities could not afford to be too generous or risk attracting outsiders and discourage locals from working, but in times of stability the poor were at least provided for to a minimum level necessary for survival and reproduction (De Swaan, 1988: 28-30).

However, De Swaan's key argument is that this equilibrium in poor relief was inherently fragile and unstable. A sudden disturbance whether a price fluctuation in a staple good, an epidemic, crop failure, or war, could cause mass desertion as the newly impoverished sought refuge in other communities. Faced with sudden increases in the number of poor, a local poor relief system risked being overwhelmed. One way to prevent this from happening would be to exclude strangers and new arrivals from receiving assistance, followed by reducing assistance even to the

local poor. In a crisis, a community might even seek to drive out the poor entirely (De Swaan, 1988: 30-31). However, as discussed earlier, not all communities had effective means of excluding the poor, so both large and small communities were at risk of being overwhelmed.
According to De Swaan (1988: 31), a crisis could easily result in the breaking down of a local poor relief system, both due to a lack of available resources and a breakdown in the motivations for providing for the poor, whether ties of kinship and proximity, or moral and religious requirements to donate could not be adapted to a sudden influx of poor, especially non-local poor. Since poor relief was local, rather than regional or national, local catastrophes could have a knock on effect, disturbing the fragile equilibrium of poor relief over a wide area as movements of victims from one place to another could overwhelm even those communities who were spared the initial disaster. Since a village could reap short term benefit by violating the principle of proximity and expelling their poor, a prisoners' dilemma could emerge where each village was better off excluding or expelling the poor, rather than risk being swamped by the influx of poor from other villages taking the same action. If the rich balked at the expense of providing for a sudden influx of poor, this could lead to mass withdrawal of aid by the wealthy who would be less motivated to give to charity when faced with the refusal to do so by their peers.

Thus, even a relatively small crisis could overwhelm poor relief in an entire region. According to De Swaan (1988: 32), '[t]he fact that the poor wandered and sought a better place abolished those better places' as no community would defect from the new equilibrium or risk being overwhelmed by hordes of desperate poor. As a result, medieval and early modern societies in Europe suffered frequent disintegration into '...an archipelago of small fortresses with vast stretches in between, where the poor were left roam and perish.' Eventually a charitable equilibrium could be re-established after a period of regional stability, but this equilibrium would be as fragile as the one that preceded it.

What could solve this problem of a fragile charitable equilibrium? For De Swaan, the solution was the creation of larger institutions which had a vested interest in preventing a complete breakdown of the commercial and taxation systems on which they depended. The first such institutions included courts, and religious institutions such as abbeys and monasteries. These institutions had regional, rather than local interests, and were large enough to accumulate their own surpluses, some of which could used to provide poor relief. In this way, these institutions helped to transform poor relief from being locally coordinated to being regionally coordinated (De Swaan, 1988: 32-33).

By the 16th century certain large cities, including Amsterdam[7] in the Netherlands, and other cities such as Paris, Lyons, Berlin, Rome, and Vienna, had begun to play a similar role in maintaining the charitable equilibrium. These cities were sufficiently dominant over their region that they were compelled to protect the regional equilibrium of poor relief. These cities were typically open and could not prevent an influx of the poor. By establishing large poor relief systems, often based on poorhouses, these cities could act as a way of absorbing the poor from an entire region, thus acting as a buffer for local communities (De Swaan, 1988: 32-33).

By the 17th century, poor relief, at least in some parts of Europe were increasingly gaining regional, and eventually national scope. In England, the Elizabethan Poor Law of 1601, replaced the system of voluntary local charity with a system of compulsory taxation. Under this law, the provision of poor relief was shifted from local clergy to local elected overseers of poor relief. The act, in its preamble, states it is aimed at preventing '...poor people [who] are not restrained from going from one parish to another...and when having consumed it, then to another parish, and at last become rogues and vagabonds...' Under the Poor Relief Law of 1601, the burden of care fell on community of residence or birth. Similar regional or national arrangements were adopted in colonial New England, and in France, but not in the Low Countries, which widely adopted certain similar principles, such as a citizenship requirement, but largely avoided centralization of poor relief under the state until the emergence of the modern welfare state (De Swaan, 1988: 35-36; Van Leeuwen, 2013: 175).

This centralization of responsibility for poor relief helped to strengthen the poor relief equilibrium, but did not completely remove the temptation of local communities to drive out their poor as it was often impossible to distinguish able-bodied workers seeking employment from beggars posing as labourers in order to gain access to a community[8] (De Swaan, 1988: 36-37). This was especially prominent in the crisis period of the 17th century, where much Europe experienced significant upheaval, making it nearly impossible for many governments to deal with the problem of mass vagrancy.

For De Swaan the only true solution to the problem of poor relief was the creation of the modern, centralized state, which was the outcome of a long process of collectivization of

[7] See the discussion on Marco van Leeuwen in Chapter 2, section 2.5 for a similar theory.
[8] Posing as a member of a community when one was not was a serious crime according to Schama (1997: 579-580).

formerly local or regional functions such as healthcare, or education (De Swaan, 1998: 11). By the 17th century onwards many European states had become deeply involved in the financing and administering poor relief over its territory (De Swaan, 1998: 41-42).

2.3.4 Workhouses

Why would the state be interested in dealing with poor relief? Maintaining stability was an important concern. But according to De Swaan, moving from the fragile equilibrium required an incentive of such a nature that the poor were no longer seen as a burden to be chased away and inflicted on other, weaker communities. This incentive was provided by an innovation: the workhouse, the first being the *Rasphuis* in Amsterdam in 1596. Workhouses were part poor relief, part prison, and part for-profit industry. Under the new system of workhouses all able-bodied poor could be confined there, and forced to work, while only the deserving poor would receive poor assistance (De Swaan, 1988: 42, 46; Prak, 2005: 148-149).

Under the ideologies and religious beliefs of the time, able-bodied poverty was seen as a vice, and a cause of further vices. Work was seen as ennobling, a comfort to the virtuous poor, and a source of education, or punishment for the idle poor. Workhouses were expected to pay for themselves, providing a powerful financial incentive for their inclusion in a poor relief system. The workhouse system did not inherently require any form of regional cooperation. Each settlement could set up its own workhouse and profit from it, removing the incentive to chase away the poor (De Swaan, 1988: 42-43).

Workhouses proved to be a controversial solution. In some workhouses conditions were purported to be extreme and inhuman, and the depiction of the horrors of workhouses became a fashionable theme in the literature of the time. Conversely, some workhouses were purported to be too kind to the poor, which also stoked outrage at the notion that the poor were benefitting too easily, or that taxpayers' money was being squandered (De Swaan, 1988: 43).

Perhaps the biggest criticism of the workhouses, both contemporary, and in the modern academic debate is that the majority of workhouses weren't profitable. In fact, workhouses were often more expenses than the poor relief systems it replaced. This, combined with accusations of corruption and cruelty, meant that the workhouses could not prove an effective solution to the problems of poor relief (De Swaan, 1988: 43-44; Prak, 2005: 148-149).

Though workhouses proved to be a failure, De Swaan nevertheless describes the establishment of workhouses as the moment in which the state became involved in poor relief. Although workhouses were largely unsuccessful, poor relief, at least outside the Netherlands, had become a state function, and remained a state function ever since (De Swaan, 1988: 50-51). However, as discussed earlier, this centralization did not fully take place in the Netherlands until the 20th century (Van Leeuwen, 2013: 180).

2.4 Maarten Prak: Poor relief in s'-Hertogenbosch and the Shortcomings of De Swaan's Model

Perhaps the most significant criticism of De Swaan's model of a fragile poor relief equilibrium is that the historical record does not always match De Swaan's predictions. De Swaan's theory has especially come under attack in scholarship on poor relief in the Low Countries, particularly in the Netherlands.

Maarten Prak (1994) in his study on poor relief in the Dutch city of 's-Hertogenbosch[9] argues that, in this city at least, poor relief was remarkably stable over a period of several centuries and not prone to the periodic collapse predicted by De Swaan's model. Not only does Prak's findings undermine De Swaan's model, but Prak develops his own model of poor relief based on his case study. Prak's case study also provides useful insight of the development of a Dutch urban poor relief system.

2.4.1 The Four Phases of Development of Poor Relief in Den Bosch

The city of Den Bosch was founded at the end of the 12th century and gained city rights shortly after. The city developed its own poor relief system, which through most of the city's history was locally run, in contrast to De Swaan's predictions of regional and national centralization. Prak categorizes the development of the city's poor relief system in four periods: *construction* (13th-15th centuries), *consolidation* (16th-18th centuries), *integration* (19th century), and *nationalization* (20th century) (Prak, 1994: 150, 162-163).

[9] In the Netherlands this city is commonly referred to as 'Den Bosch' rather than by its full name.

The *construction* period was the period following the establishment of the city of Den Bosch. As the city grew it became necessary to provide for the growing numbers of poor. This happened through the establishment of several local, and largely independent poor relief organizations. These included a *Groot Gasthuis* ('Great Guest House') by 1274, a house for lepers, and a *Tafel van de Heilige Geest* ('Table of the Holy Spirit'), also known as the *Geefhuis* ('House of Giving) by 1281 which provided, among other things, bread for the poor. Later institutions included the *Groot Ziekengasthuis* ('Great Guesthouse for the Sick'); in 1439, a house for the insane; the Nine Neighbourhoods, which divided the city in nine wards, with each ward responsible for its own poor; and the *Onze Lieve Vrouwe Broederschap* ('Our Beloved Lady Fellowship') by the 14th century which also provided bread and clothing (Prak, 1994: 150-151; Prak, 2005: 147).

The Table of the Holy Spirit was established by the local parochial church, but largely operated as an independent organization under the authority of the local government. This arrangement was common in Den Bosch where poor relief organizations were typically either independent but with a semi-public character, or alternatively privately funded (Prak, 1994: 151). Private or semi-public poor relief were the most common forms of poor relief in the Netherlands, and public poor relief on a national scale did not truly emerge until the 19th and 20th centuries (Van Leeuwen, 2013: 175). Den Bosch's poor relief was therefore fairly typical compared to other Dutch settlements including large cities like Amsterdam (Prak, 2005: 147) and small villages like Berkel en Rodenrijs (Dijkman, 2015).

A consequence of the private or semi-public nature of poor relief in Den Bosch, was that poor relief organizations mostly had control over their own money and assets. Money could be raised by transfer from public authorities, but also from private donations and collections, and most importantly out of the income of their own assets. In Den Bosch, many poor relief organizations built a significant portfolio of assets which could fund poor relief efforts. The Table of the Holy Spirit, for example, owned at least 29 farms by 1433, and added 14 more by 1515. These farms provided not only an income, but also a source of bread to give to the poor. Likewise the Nine Neighbourhoods possessed its own assets, mostly in the form of interest bearing public debt (Prak, 1994: 151-152).[10]

[10] The Low Countries was extremely innovative in the development of financial instruments, which many academics link to the region's extraordinary wealth during the early modern period.

Although assets provided a secure income and a source of food for the poor, there were also some disadvantages. A regional crop failure would not only increase the numbers of poor requesting assistance, but reduce incomes and available bread for poor relief organizations. Despite this risk poor relief in Den Bosch appears to have been successful: By the 16th century Den Bosch possessed multiple poor relief organizations, funded by their own financial capital. So extensive was Den Bosch's poor relief efforts that by 1526, 15 per cent of the city's population were receiving some form of poor relief (Prak, 1994: 152-153).

The *consolidation* period was characterized by continued growth in poor relief including the establishment of protestant and Wallonian (French speaking Reformed church) diaconates. These religious charities, founded in the aftermath of the Reformation, would eventually overshadow some older institutions such as the Holy Spirit or the Nine Neighbourhoods, but the older institutions likely remained an invaluable source of poor relief for poor not associated with the 'correct' religion (Prak, 1994: 153; Dijkman, 2015: 10).

The key characteristic of the *consolidation* period was the decreasing reliance of poor relief organizations in Den Bosch on external income such as collections or contributions from the local government. As discussed above, poor relief organizations in Den Bosch had established significant asset portfolios, and during the *consolidation* period income from assets was responsible for the majority of the income of the Holy Spirit and the Nine Neighbourhoods. A consequence of this reliance on self-generated income was the conservative policies by those responsible for the management of these organizations. For poor relief organizations protecting the value of assets was a significant concern, and so any decline in income, or increase in the numbers or requirements of the poor, was met with either increasing their income, by requesting public money or holding collections, or by restricting expenditures either by giving less, or excluding certain categories of poor from receiving relief (Prak, 1994: 155-156).

Examples of this can be seen in the actions of the Holy Spirit and the Nine Neighbourhoods in 1770, a period during which the poor relief system of Den Bosch was under significant strain. In 1526, the Holy Spirit had provided for 574 households. In 1770, it provided for 752 households, while at the same time earning a much smaller income. In response to the financial strain the Holy Spirit practised welfare exclusion by reaffirming that it would only provide for local born citizens, or inhabitants who had been living in the city for at least fifteen years. Both organizations requested that the city government find ways of preventing non-local poor from

moving to the city. The city responded by ordering a census of all heads of households, their birthplace, and how long they've lived in Den Bosch. Another crisis occurred in 1789, when the city responded to a grain crisis by ordering a collection, which came to 1200 francs, to be divided by the local poor relief organizations (Prak, 1994: 156-157).

The *centralization* and *nationalization* periods took place during the 19th and 20th centuries. During this period local poor relief in Den Bosch and elsewhere in the Netherlands increasingly came under control of regional and national bodies. In the Dutch Republic only the province of Friesland effectively coordinated poor relief at a regional level, although similar unsuccessful attempts at centralization were made in other provinces such Holland, Utrecht, and Zeeland (Prak, 2005: 147-148). Poor relief in the Netherlands therefore remained predominantly local and privately funded or semi-public until the *centralization* and *nationalization* period. Centralization of poor relief began in the 18th century and accelerated under the period of French dominance starting at the end of the 18th century and continuing until the early 19th century. Despite centralization efforts, local poor relief persisted, and only came to a definitive end with the *Bijstandswet* (Law of Assistance) of 1965 (Prak, 1994: 158-165).

2.4.2 Prak's Continuity Thesis

It is evident from Prak's description of poor relief in Den Bosch that many details of the historical development of poor relief there do not match the predictions of De Swaan's model. Contrary to De Swaan's claim that local poor relief was fragile and prone to frequent collapse, poor relief in Den Bosch, and many other Dutch cities, remained remarkably stable over a period of centuries. Prak's model emphasizes the adaptability of Dutch poor relief in the face of crisis which Van Leeuwen (2013: 175) describes as 'the continuity thesis'. Although periodic crises occurred, local poor relief system in the Dutch Republic could manage increased strain through income generated from assets, and could respond to crises by raising more money, practising welfare exclusion, or reducing the amount of poor relief supplied (Prak, 1994: 155-156; Van Leeuwen, 2013: 175).

Other studies conducted on other large cities in the Dutch Republic have reached similar conclusions. However, the current literature is predominantly focused on larger towns and cities. It is possible that De Swaan's model still holds true for smaller settlements in the Dutch Republic. For this reason the next section will look at smaller settlement in the Dutch Republic

and hopefully determine which model, if any, has the most explanatory power for the development of poor relief in a Dutch village.

2.5 Other Approaches

Along similar lines as De Swaan, Van der Heijden et al. (2009: 135-138) argue that the collapse of poor relief systems was avoided by reform in the form of centralization under civic governments, although Van der Heijden argues that this centralizing tendency by civic governments increased the financial pressure on civic governments in the long run. Therefore, poor relief under local charity is not doomed to collapse as it is under De Swaan's model. However, this argument does not explain the case of Amsterdam, which due to its demand for labour, did not take similar exclusionary steps. We are therefore presented with two paradoxes. First, how did Amsterdam's poor relief system survive despite the fact that it did not limit its poor relief system in the same way as other Dutch cities; and second, how did the cities that excluded immigrants from the poor relief system satisfy their demand for labour?

Van Leeuwen argues De Swaan's model of periodic collapse of local poor relief systems does not hold up in the case of the Dutch Republic where, despite occasional strain, the poor relief system did not collapse (Van Leeuwen, 2003: 173-174). This is despite the fact that the Dutch Republic did not institute uniform regional poor relief policies as England did. De Swaan's proposed solution, the role of workhouses, does not hold up either. Both Prak (2006: 148-149) and Van Leeuwen (2013: 175) have pointed out the workhouses were not particularly successful. Outside of Amsterdam, workhouses proved too costly to maintain and most workhouses had closed within in twenty years of their establishment.

Instead Van Leeuwen (2013: 196-198) proposes the following explanation for the stability of poor relief systems in the Dutch Republic: During the early part of the 17th century, rapid economic growth meant that urban markets were able to absorb immigrants without threat to their poor relief systems as both work and charitable donations were plentiful. During the later part of the 17th century, economic stagnation threatened the poor relief systems of many urban areas in the Dutch Republic, which is in line with De Swaan's model. However, instead of collapsing, urban areas, with the exception of Amsterdam, were able to protect their poor relief systems by excluding certain groups from poor relief as Prak has demonstrated in the case of Den Bosch. Meanwhile, Amsterdam, which had both enormous wealth and an insatiable

demand for labour was able to maintain its poor relief system without exclusion of immigrants, which acted as a kind of 'safety valve' allowing the Dutch Republic to continue to attract labour without overwhelming the poor relief systems of smaller cities.

All three of these models are primarily based on economic concerns. Alternative perspectives such as those offered by Schama (1987: 570-587) and Van Voss and Van Leeuwen (2012: 192-193) focus on the role of non-economic factors such as culture, religion, and the practical problems of urban life, as a motivation for providing poor relief. Schama makes no explicit argument as to why the poor relief system was able to survive the influx of immigration during the seventeenth century. However, Schama does point out to the multitude of charitable institutions many of which practiced exclusionary practices, but some of which, such as *Heilige Geest* institutions, provided for non-favoured groups as well. Rather than simply being excluded, non-favoured groups instead had to make do with less generous poor relief (Blockmans and Prevenier, 1975: 527). This argument therefore implicitly endorses the notion that Dutch poor relief systems were able to survive by establishing a dual structure of generous relief for favoured groups, and limited relief for non-favoured groups. This would allow the Dutch Republic to attract immigrant labour without overwhelming its poor relief systems.

2.6 Conclusion

It is clear from the literature that there are several competing models as to why the Dutch poor relief system during the Golden Age did not collapse. The following models have been identified by the literature survey: the Periodic Collapse Model (De Swaan) which argues that early modern poor relief systems, including in the Dutch Republic, were prone to periodically being overwhelmed and collapse; the Continuity Model (Prak) argues that poor relief systems in the Dutch Republic were able to avoid collapse by controlling their own finances and practicing welfare exclusion; the Safety Valve Model (Van Leeuwen) argues that Amsterdam was able to act as a destination for immigrants which prevented smaller Dutch cities from being overwhelmed; and the Dual Track Model (Schama) which argues that the Dutch Republic's system of poor relief was able to cope with an influx of poor by being widely decentralized with different forms of relief originating from different groups and with different standards of who could qualify for poor relief. There is not yet a consensus model, as each existing model has its own shortcomings (Van Leeuwen, 1994: 180). More models may emerge with further study.

Analyzing the above models have also helped to identify several shortcomings. First, the majority of these models only discuss the Dutch Republic during the Golden Age of the 17th century, with comparatively little said about poor relief in the 18th and 19th centuries. Second, none of the above models discuss smaller settlements. Instead, all of the above models were based on studying a major Dutch city. Do these models still hold up in the case of a village?

Chapter 3: Poor Relief in Berkel en Rodenrijs, 1745-1812

3.1 Introduction

The second section of this thesis will attempt to apply the theories discussed in the first section to a case study. The previous section has identified two major shortcomings in the current academic literature on poor relief in the Dutch Republic. First, the majority of the current literature discusses poor relief in the 17th century Dutch Republic, with much less research conducted on poor relief in the 18th century Dutch Republic. Second, the existing academic literature primarily discusses larger cities in the Dutch Republic, such as Amsterdam, Leiden, or 's-Hertogenbosch, while neglecting rural poor relief systems. As a result, surprisingly little is known about rural poor relief in the Dutch Republic (Dijkman, 2015: 7).

Therefore, this thesis will attempt to contribute to the existing academic literature by conducting a case study on the poor relief system of a rural village. This paper will focus on the village of Berkel en Rodenrijs during the middle to late 18th century. Berkel en Rodenrijs is an excellent candidate for a case study for several reasons. First, it is located in the historic province of Holland which was the economic and political heart of the Dutch Republic. Berkel en Rodenrijs is also located near such historically important cities as Rotterdam and Delft, while Leiden and the Hague are also nearby. Berkel en Rodenrijs can therefore potentially serve as a model for poor relief in other smaller settlements in Holland. Second, the choice of Berkel en Rodenrijs is motivated by the availability of a significant amount of documents in the Stadsarchief Rotterdam. Among these documents there is a wealth of documentation from the *Heilige Geest Armmeesters*, the local poor relief organization, dating back from as early as the 15th century, and exceptionally detailed information is available for the 18th century. These documents include minutes (*notulen)* of meetings, financial records, correspondences, and receipts of expenditures. Similar documentation is available for the local government of Berkel en Rodenrijs including census information, *notulen*, and financial records from the 16th to the early 19th century.

Furthermore, the poor relief system of Berkel en Rodenrijs is one of the few rural poor relief systems of the Dutch Republic that has been discussed in the academic literature thanks to Dijkman's (2015) unpublished study of the poor relief in Berkel en Rodenrijs during the 16th and 17th centuries. This thesis will attempt contribute to the literature by extending that

analysis to include the late 18th and early 19th centuries, which, in combination with the other literature on Berkel en Rodenrijs, will allow for an overview of this village's poor relief system over a period of more than 300 years.

The choice of the 18th century for a time frame is motivated not only by the relative scarcity of academic literature on Dutch poor relief during the 18th century, but also because the unique events that took place during that time. The late 18th century was a period of immense turmoil for the Dutch Republic as the republic faced a succession of crises, first economic stagnation, followed by political crisis and military invasion.

3.2 The Batavian Revolution and the Period of French Dominance

The Dutch Golden Age drew to a close at the end of the 17th century as the Dutch economy had begun to stagnate, and its political and military power began to decline. As discussed earlier, the declining economy also lead to increased pressure on Dutch poor relief systems, although they survived relatively intact, despite cuts and the practice of welfare exclusion. Although the Dutch economy was still one of the richest in the world, the Dutch Republic no longer enjoyed the same economic power as it had in the previous century (Gelderblom, 2009: 13-15; Prak, 2005: 147-149; Schama, 1977: 24-63).

However, the most significant issue facing the late 18th century Dutch Republicwas not economic but was the political conflict between the *Prinsgezinden* or Orangists, defenders of the House of Orange, which had traditionally held the office of Stadholder and acted as the *de facto* heads of state of the Dutch Republic, and the anti-Orangist republicans who styled themselves as the *patriotten* (patriots). This conflict was not in itself new, as republicans and the House of Orange and their supporters had been in periodic conflict since before the execution of the *Landsadvocaat* (Land's Advocate, roughly equivalent to a Prime Minister) Johan van Oldenbarnevelt in 1619.[11] Conflict flared up again with the successful coup against the republicans by Stadholder William II in 1650, the anti-Orangist counter-coup under Johan de Witt in 1651 resulting in the first Stadholderless Period, the murder of Johan de Witt in 1672, and the Second Stadholderless Period from 1702-1747 (Prak, 2005: 33-37; Rowen, 1986: 16-34, 205-219; Rowen, 1998: 77-130, 148-162).

[11] Van Oldenbarnevelt also happened to be the Lord of Berkel en Rodenrijs after 1600.

While it seemed that the republican States Party had finally been defeated by the first half of the 17th century, republican opposition to the House of Orange reemerged in the form of the Patriot Party during the second half of the 18th century. The Patriots were inspired by the American and French Revolutions and lead a series of revolts against the Orangists between 1781-1787 (Schama, 1977: 64-135).

Following an invasion by the French Republic in 1794, these revolutions culminated in the establishment of the Batavian Republic in 1795. The Batavian Republic had its origins in the French Revolution and was founded by local republicans who sought emulate the newly established French Republic (Israel, 1995: 1098-1121). It is commonly regarded as a client state of France, therefore the establishment of the Batavian Republic also heralds the era of French influence over the Netherlands. The period of French influence was not only a period of crisis, but also a period of substantial legal and political reform.

Berkel en Rodenrijs was not spared this political turmoil. The local government, the *Schout en Wethouders* of Berkel en Rodenrijs was reorganized as the *Gemeente* (municipality) of Berkel en Rodenrijs. Starting in 1795, the minutes of the municipal government show that the newly organized *gemeentebestuur*, or town council of Berkel en Rodenrijs, both started and ended their meetings with the motto '*Vrijheid, Gelijkheid, Broederschap*' a Dutch translation of the French revolutionary slogan '*Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité*.'[12] Many of the minutes detail the local government's attempts at dealing with the fallout of the turmoil of the late 18th century. It is also evident that the local government was firmly under control of pro-French republicans, and several references show that *prinsgezinden* were not held in high regard in Berkel en Rodenrijs. Documents from Berkel en Rodenrijs during the Batavian Republic are dated not only according to the conventional dating system, but also enthusiastically dated from the year of the establishment of the Batavian Republic. Thus, minutes from a town council meeting in 1796 are dated as '1796, or the second year of Batavian freedom.' The changing political attitudes and developments in Berkel en Rodenrijs are a potentially interesting topic for future research, but fall outside the scope of this thesis (SR AABR, 1306: 11).

The Batavian Republic did not survive for long. Though largely a French client state, it was still seen as too independent, and it was replaced by the Kingdom of Holland in 1806, under the rule

[12] 'Liberty, equality, fraternity'

of King Louis Napoléon Bonaparte, the brother of the more famous Napoléon, the emperor of France. The turmoil continued with the dissolution of the Kingdom of Holland, and the Netherland's annexation to France in 1810 (Israel, 1995: 1122-1130). This too can be seen in the documents of Berkel en Rodenrijs. For example, a military census conducted in Berkel en Rodenrijs in 1811 is published in the French language, rather than Dutch.[13] In this *Registre Civique*, it is clear that Berkel en Rodenrijs has been reorganized again and is described as a *commune,* part of the Rotterdam *arrondissement* (SR AABR, 1306: 248).

The Netherlands finally regained its independence in 1813, and in 1815 was restablished as the United Kingdom of the Netherlands, marking the end of over 30 years of turmoil (Schama, 1977: 611-655).

3.3 Outline of the Case Study

The choice of the late 18th and early 19th century for a case study is therefore an interesting one. As discussed in the first section, the most prominent theory, which has for decades dominated debates around poor relief in the Dutch Republic, is the theory of Abram de Swaan, who argued that the fragmented and disorganized poor relief systems of a country like the Dutch Republic could not cope with even relatively minor crises, let alone major upheaval (De Swaan, 1988: 13-51). The thesis has discussed how the academic literature on poor relief in larger cities like Amsterdam had defied De Swaan's predictions. Likewise, Dijkman (2015: 20-21) has showed that the poor relief system of a rural town in the Dutch Republic, specifically Berkel en Rodenrijs, could weather the various crises, such as hunger, that had occurred during the 16th and 17th centuries. If the poor relief system of a rural area could also survive even the momentous events of the 18th century Netherlands, then De Swaan's theory can be rejected for virtually all cases, at least as far as the Netherlands is concerned.

Unfortunately, despite the wealth of archival records from Berkel en Rodenrijs there are shortcomings in the documentation. Unsurprisingly, documentation from Berkel en Rodenrijs become less detailed, or are even entirely absent, for the years at the height of the 18th century crisis. Therefore, this thesis will occasionally be forced to rely on information from the years

[13] Causing no small amount of consternation for the author of this thesis.

immediately preceding, or succeeding, the crisis. In these cases, inferences will be made based on what information is available.

The aim of this section is to answer several questions regarding the poor relief system of Berkel en Rodenrijs. Did the poor relief system in this town survive the crisis at the end of the 18th century, and if so, how? To answer this question, this section will first, provide background information about Berkel en Rodenrijs, its population, and its economic structure. Second, this section will discuss the functioning of poor relief in Berkel en Rodenrijs during a period of stability. Third, this section will then discuss the crisis, and how it affected the poor relief system of Berkel en Rodenrijs. Finally, the concluding chapter will compare the theories discussed in the first section of this thesis with the case study and attempt to determine which theories, if any, best explains the poor relief system of Berkel en Rodenrijs.

3.3 Berkel en Rodenrijs: Location, Population, Economy

Berkel en Rodenrijs is a small town in the contemporary province of South Holland near such cities as Rotterdam and the Hague. The town was founded in the 10th or 11th century. Since 2007, Berkel en Rodenrijs is part of the larger Lanseringland municipality, but historically the town governed itself (Historische Vereniging Berkel en Rodenrijs, 2015: Internet). Today the town is home to over 20,000 people, but throughout most of its history Berkel en Rodenrijs's population was much lower: 600 people around the year 1500, which had increased to 1250 people in the year 1850. For most of its history the population was therefore fairly stable. The most accurate population figure for the period under discussion in this thesis is 1129 people, according to the 1795 census of the Batavian Republic (Volkstelling.nl, 2015: Internet).

According to Dijkman (2015: 6-7), Berkel en Rodenrijs had historically survived on digging peat for fuel combined with small scale farming. By the 16th and 17th centuries, peat resources had been depleted, and the town survived mainly on farming. As a result, in 1597, two thirds of the heads of households were described as farmers, with only eleven per cent employed as weavers or labourers. The town economy slowly became engaged in proto-industrial activities over the course of the 17th century. By 1715, nearly as many people were described as labourers or textile workers respectively as were described as farmers and peat diggers combined.

It is not possible to get an overview of the economic structure of the town at the end of the 18th century, however, a detailed source is available for the year 1811. During this year a census was conducted in Berkel en Rodenrijs of all men fit for military duty. This census, published in French, shows Berkel as having 200 men of military age. The census further lists the men's *qualifications* which may indicate their occupations. This data is reproduced in the table below.

Fig. 1: Qualifications of Men of Military Age in Berkel en Rodenrijs, 1811.
(SR AABR, 1306: 248; see appendix no. 2: *Registre Civique* of Military Age Men in Berkel en Rodenrijs, 1811.)

Qualification	**Number of Men**	**% of Male Population**
Artisans	42	21%
Labourers	88	44%
Merchants	19	9.5%
Millers	9	4.5%
Officials	6	4%
Other	36	17%
Total	200	100%

Unfortunately it is not possible to compare this data to earlier periods as the datasets are not directly comparable due to the political reforms carried out since 1795. As a result, the borders of Berkel en Rodenrijs had likely been shifted. Likely as a result of these reforms, this census, unlike earlier censuses, makes no reference at all to farmers, possibly showing that farming was taking place outside the town's limits, or that farmers were not required to be counted for military duty.[14] Within the town, the plurality of the population was involved in manual labour. Although the average wage in the Dutch Republic was high compared to much of the rest of the world, many labourers still worked for less than a living wage. Even temporary unemployment might push them into poverty and requiring them to throw themselves at the mercy of the local poor relief systems (Prak, 1998: 49-53).

[14] Interestingly, the major, other town officials, as well as the town's priest and two pastors were included in the census. Apparently local officials and dignitaries were not exempt from being counted for military purposes.

This census seems to indicate a reasonably prosperous town in the process of gradual industrialization. However, with so much of the population employed in manual labour, the majority of the town's inhabitants were at risk of falling into poverty if the town's economy experienced a decline. As a result, poor relief in Berkel en Rodenrijs served as an important safety net for those living at the edge of poverty.

3.4 Poor Relief in Berkel en Rodenrijs: Stability and Crisis, 1745-1812

Poor relief in Berkel en Rodenrijs during this period was primarily the responsibility of five organizations: Berkel en Rodenrijs's local government, the Reformed Church of Berkel en Rodenrijs, the Catholic Church of Berkel en Rodenrijs, the Remonstrant Church of Berkel en Rodenrijs, and the *Heilige Geest Armmeesters* of Berkel en Rodenrijs. Of these five institutions, the primary poor relief institution and the only truly public poor relief institution was the *Heilige Geest* or Holy Spirit. This institution, which was widespread throughout the Dutch Republic, originated in the Middle Ages within the Catholic Church. The earliest reference to the Holy Spirit in Holland dates back to 1317. Although initially a Catholic institution, the Holy Spirit endured as a poor relief institution after the Reformation. For those who did not qualify for poor relief from the local government or church, the Holy Spirit acted as a poor relief institution of last resort. In rural areas, where other poor relief institutions were often lacking, the Holy Spirit was typically the largest, or even only, source of poor relief (Prak, 1994: 153; Dijkman, 2015: 10).

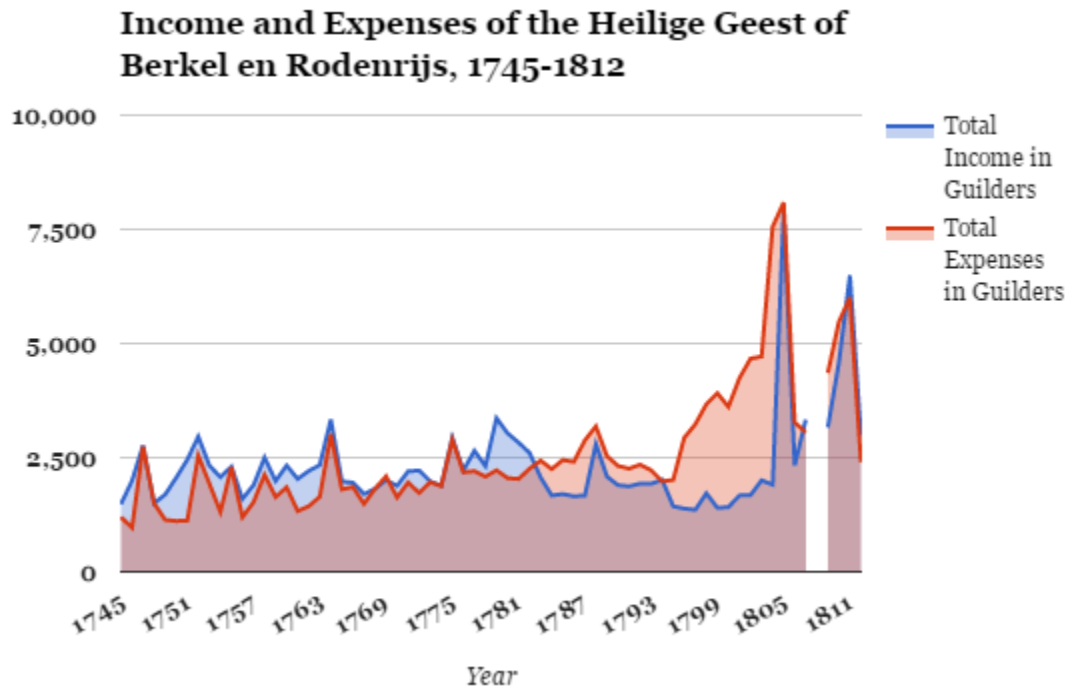
In Berkel en Rodenrijs references to the Holy Spirit date back to 1488, and this institution appears to have continued to operate until at least 1837. The Holy Spirit was the only poor relief organization in Berkel en Rodenrijs until the establishment of the Reformed diaconate in 1587. However, the diaconate was only open to members of the Reformed Church. Until the later establishment of Catholic (1644) and Remonstrant (1660) churches in the town, other religious groups in Berkel en Rodenrijs were forced to rely on the Holy Spirit as their primary source of poor relief. Reference is also made to religious minorities, such as Jansenites, Jews, and Mennonites,[15] who lacking their own local religious institutions would have been forced to rely

[15] According to a religious census conducted in 1798, Berkel en Rodenrijs had at least 3 Jews as well as a small number of Jansenites, Mennonites, and possibly other denominations in addition to the town's three main denominations. Unfortunately, there are some issues with the way the documents were compiled, resulting in certain ambiguities and making this census unsuitable for use in this thesis (SR AABR, 1306: 247).

on the Holy Spirit. Finally, although members of the local churches could turn to their own denomination for support, such support was rarely generous, therefore the *Heilige Geest* served as an important source of supplementary assitance.

The Holy Spirit earned most of its income from properties and donations while churches typically relied on collections. For much of the 18th century, the Holy Spirit had a stable income. Between 1745 and 1780 the average income of the Holy Spirit was 2221,85 guilders and the average expenses were 1818,26 guilders. While occasional spikes in expenditures, or dips in income occur, the situation remains stable until 1781. After 1781 the Holy Spirit's finances come under increasing pressure. The graph below[16], gives a visual indication of the severity of the crisis which followed.

Fig. 2: Income and Expenses of the Heilige Geest of Berkel en Rodenrijs, 1745-1812
(SR AABR, 1306: 499, 500, 517; see appendix no. 3: Income and Expenses of the *Heilige Geest* of Berkel en Rodenrijs, 1745-1812)

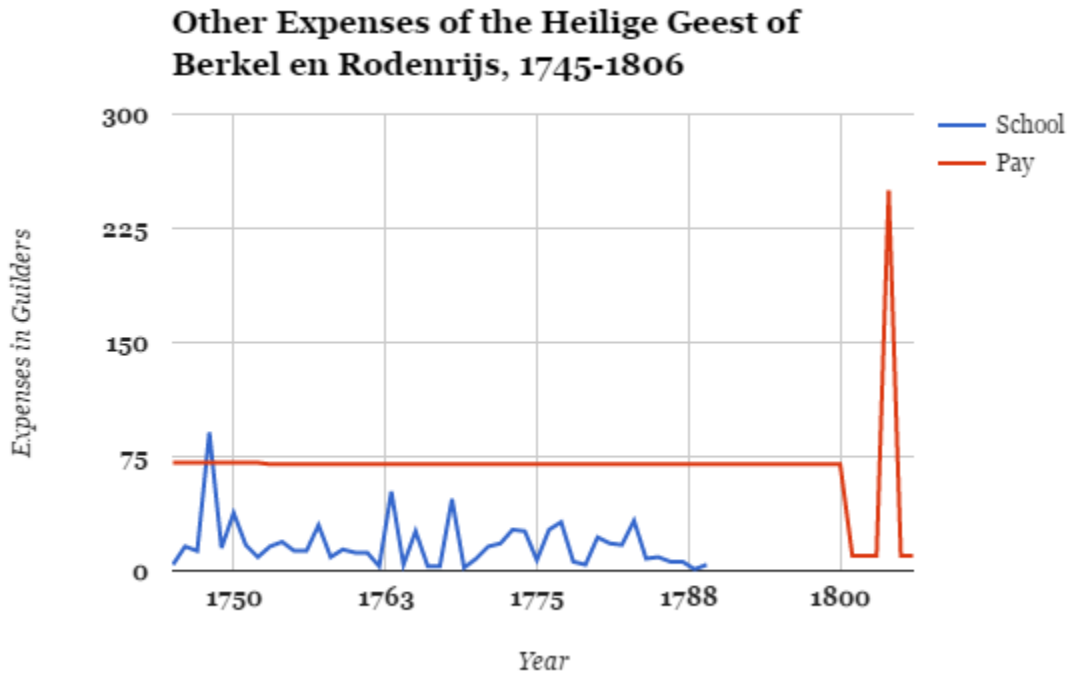


[16] There is no data from the year 1808, hence the gap in the graph.

As expected crisis becomes evident in the period 1795-1805 the start of which coincides with the French invasion of 1794, and the revolution of 1795. During this period average income drops slightly to 2169 guilders, and average expenses increase drastically to 4422 guilders. While income usually exceeded expenses in the period 1745-1880, the entire period from 1781 to 1806 is characterized by expenses that exceeded incomes. Between 1781 to 1795 this is relatively small, but after 1795 the difference between income and expenses becomes substantial.

How did the Holy Spirit cope with this crisis? One solution was to cut back on certain expenses. Through most of the 18th century, the Holy Spirit typically paid a small amount for money for maintenance of a local school. This averaged 18,7 guilders between 1745 and 1780 and drops to an average of 11,3 guilders between 1781 and 1789 before the payments stop altogether after 1790.

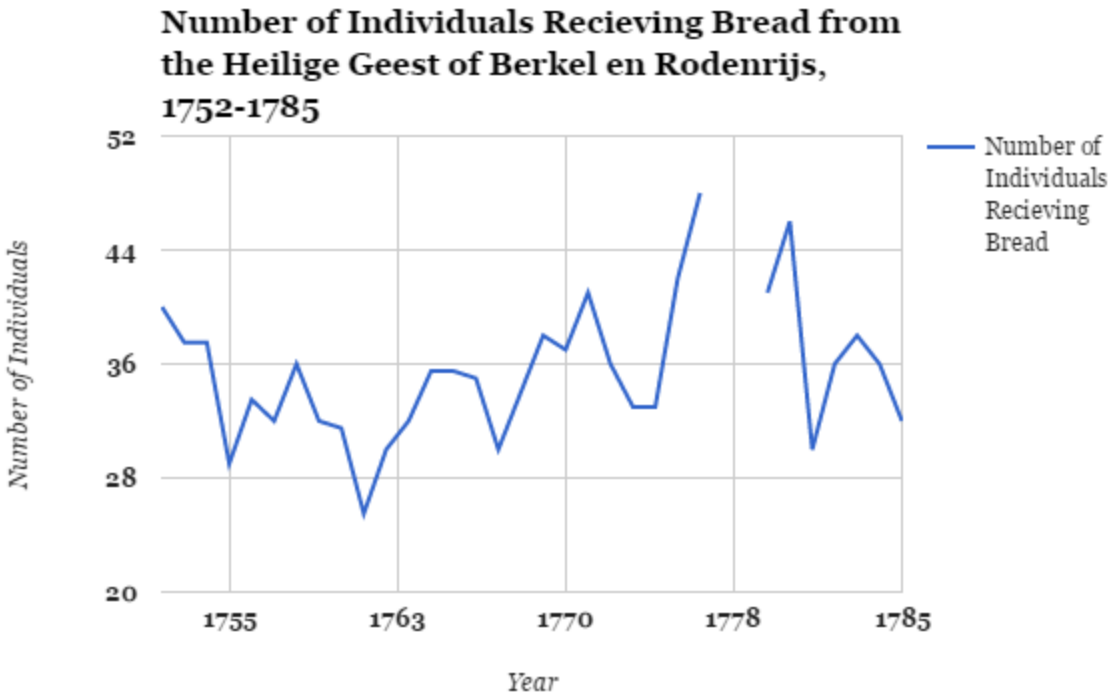
Fig. 3: Expenditures on School and Salaries of the Heilige Geest of Berkel en Rodenrijs, 1745-1806
(SR AABR 1306: 499, 500; see appendix no. 4: Specified Expenses of the *Heilige Geest* of Berkel en Rodenrijs, 1745-1806)



Another expense was salaries paid to Holy Spirit officials which were always 70-71 guilders between 1745 and 1800. Between 1801 and 1803 this amount drops to 10 guilders, in 1804 this amount suddenly jumps to 250 guilders, possibly indicating back payments or extraordinary payments. In 1805 and 1806 the salary expenses is once again 10 guilders. No data on these salaries is available for the period 1806-1812.

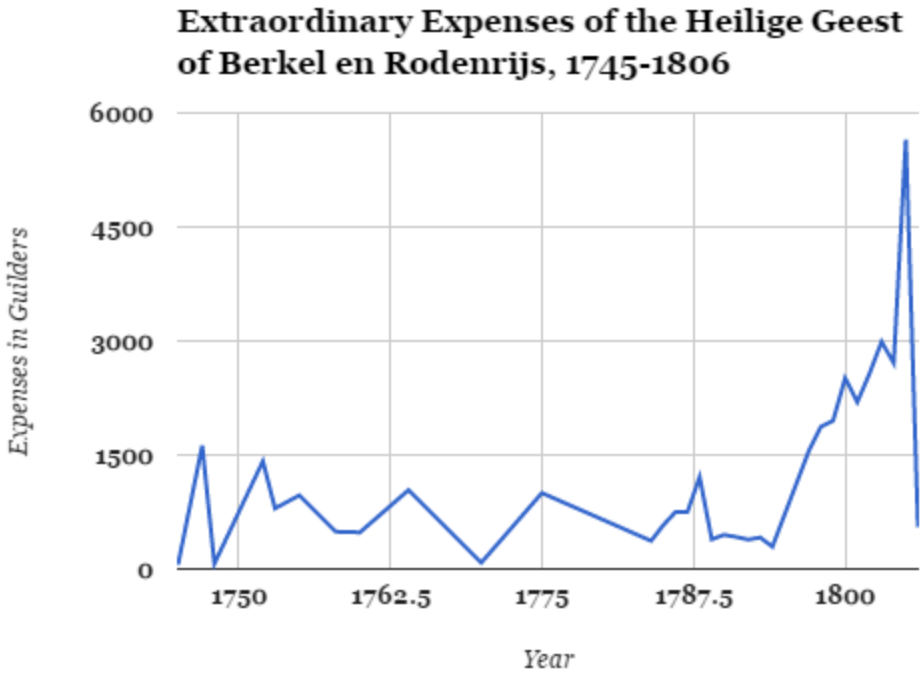
The Holy Spirit also cut back on poor relief. A similar trend can be spotted in the amount of people receiving bread from the Holy Spirit. Between 1775 and 1780 an average of 44 people were receiving bread, and that number increased every year between 1773 and 1776. However, between 1781 and 1785 the average abruptly drops by a nearly quarter to 34 people and then continues on a downwards trend until the last data point in 1785. After 1785, the data on bread distribution stops altogether. The abrupt spike and then drop in the number of people receiving bread, especially when viewed in light of the reduced income and increased expenses discussed earlier, seems to provide further evidence of a crisis, followed by cutbacks. From the *notulen* it seems that the Holy Spirit continued to distribute bread, but at a reduced scale. It is also possible the sudden disappearance of a data set that had been maintained for decades, is further evidence of a crisis.

Fig. 4: Number of Individuals Receiving Bread from the Heilige Geest of Berkel en Rodenrijs, 1752-1785.
(SR AABR, 1306: 452, 453, 482; see appendix no. 1: Bread Distribution by the *Heilige Geest* of Berkel en Rodenrijs, 1752-1785)



Extraordinary expenses were relatively rare before 1784. In the 38 years from 1745 to 1783 extraordinary expenses only occur 11 times for a total amount of 8026 guilders. From 1784-1806 extraordinary expenses occur 21 out of 23 years for a total of 30 564 guilders.

Fig. 5: Extraordinary Expenses of the Heilige Geest of Berkel en Rodenrijs, 1745-1806
(SR AABR 1306: 499, 500; see appendix no. 4: Specified Expenses of the *Heilige Geest* of Berkel en Rodenrijs, 1745-1806)



Of course, cutting back on expenses is not the only possible solution to a crisis. As discussed earlier poor relief organizations could turn to the civic government in times of emergency. In Berkel en Rodenrijs extraordinary incomes are also recorded. On several occasions after 1781 the financial situation of the Holy Spirit was sufficiently dire to send out a letter requesting a special collection from the local churches (SR AABR, 1306: 453).

3.5 Conclusion

With such little data, it is impossible to draw any firm conclusions. Furthermore, the data does not directly imply causation, that is to say that the crisis in the Netherlands directly caused the crisis experienced in Berkel en Rodenrijs. However, from this section it is clear that some form of crisis did occur in Berkel en Rodenrijs, and that it roughly coincided with the larger crisis in the Netherlands. As a result of this crisis incomes dropped, and expenses increased. The *Heilige Geest* of Berkel en Rodenrijs responded by cutting back on expenses, but it had little room to do so. It also responded turning to the civic government for assitance, which it received in the form of special collections held at local churches.

Unfortunately, the datasets do not continue far enough to see the recovery in the *Heilige Geest´*s finances. However, there is some limited indication of a recovery towards the end of the dataset. Expenses have been somewhat reduced and incomes were larger with a possible recovery occuring around 1805, although this is not certain as data from after 1806 are somewhat ambigious. The best evidence of a recovery is in the continued existence of the *Heilige Geest* in Berkel en Rodenrijs which endured until at least 1837. The datasets used in this section have been included for the reader´s convenience in the appendix which may be found at the end of this document, after the bibliography.

Chapter 4: Conclusion

In Chapter 2 several models of poor relief in the Dutch Republic were identified. The first was the Periodic Collapse Model of De Swaan. De Swaan's model had already largely been dismissed by Chapter 2 as poor relief in the Dutch Republic did not experience periodic collapse at all, but as Prak and Van Leeuwen showed, continued to exist until the 20th century. However, Prak's argument was largely limited to a larger city, in this case Den Bosch, and does not necessarily hold up for a village like Berkel en Rodenrijs.

The first evidence that De Swaan's theory is not applicable to the case study is the length of time during which the Holy Spirit operated in Berkel en Rodenrijs. By the time the crisis struck in 1781, the Holy Spirit had already operated in Berkel en Rodenrijs for 293 years which could hardly be the case in a system characterized by frequent crisis and collapse.

Berkel en Rodenrijs experienced a significant crisis at the end of the 18th century starting in 1781 and accelerating after 1795. The poor relief system appears to have almost collapsed, but documents from the 18th century prove that it continued to exist beyond the crisis. The Holy Spirit for example continued to operate until at least 1837, which is 56 years after the crisis that afflicted the Netherlands began. It seems that the Holy Spirit in Berkel en Rodenrijs was able to survive by successfully cutting expenses, and increasing incomes with help from the other local poor relief organizations and the civic government.

Since De Swaan´s theory did not hold up, Prak's theory, which Van Leeuwen named the 'Continuity Thesis' has the greater explanatory value. Prak's theory predicts that a Dutch a poor relief system, at least in Den Bosch, was remarkably resilient in crisis. This was due to two factors. First, local poor relief systems possessed significant capital which funded them during hard times, and second, local poor relief systems could adjust through reduction of benefits, practicing welfare exclusion, or by increasing incomes, in order to stay solvent. Evidence both factors can be found in the experience of Berkel en Rodenrijs, which bolsters the strength of Prak´s argument.

Prak's model seems to have accurate predictive capacity as far as Berkel en Rodenrijs is concerned. Like the much larger city of Den Bosch, Berkel en Rodenrijs's Holy Spirit built up a significant stock of capital which it could use to fund its efforts. When the crisis struck, the Holy

Spirit could earn at least some income from its assets, augmented by increased income in the form of collections. Furthermore, The Holy Spirit was able to reduce expenses to remain solvent. As a result, while the system came close to collapsing, it was able to survive the crisis and endure past the collapse of the Dutch Republic. The Holy Spirit in Berkel en Rodenrijs came to an end at some point after 1837 at which point poor relief had become more centralized, although true state centralization of poor relief in the Netherlands did not take place until more than a century later. This too is in line with Den Bosch's experience in the 19th and 20th centuries.

The other models are harder to apply to the case of Berkel en Rodenrijs. Schama's model is not applicable since Berkel en Rodenrijs did not have the diversity of poor relief organizations that might be found in a city. Van Leeuwen's Safety Valve Model may or may not apply to the case of Berkel en Rodenrijs, but whether Berkel en Rodenrijs benefitted from Amsterdam's role in absorbing the excess poor remains uncertain. Further research is needed. Of potential value for future researchers are the *notulen* or minutes of civic government meetings, as well as minutes of the meetings of the *Heilige Geest*. Also potentially useful are the *attestatien* or attestations which accompanied migrants moving to or from Berkel en Rodenrijs. This is an enormous task, but may help to support or refute the claims made in this thesis

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Appendix

1. Bread Distribution by the *Heilige Geest* of Berkel en Rodenrijs, 1752-1785

(SR AABR, 1306: 452, 453, 482)

Year	Inventory no.	No. of Families	Number of Individuals Receiving Bread	Comments
1752	452	18	40	Several entries contain 1/2. Presumably some people received half rations.
1753	452	19	37.5	
1754	452	19	37.5	
1755	452	16	29	
1756	452	19	33.5	
1757	452	19	32	
1758	452	20	36	
1759	452	15	32	
1760	452	15	31.5	
1761	452	12	25.5	
1762	452	16	30	
1763	452	17	32	
1764	452	19	35.5	
1765	452	19	35.5	Last instance of fractions.
1766	452	19	35	
1767	453	20	30	Two families received nothing.
1768	453	21	34	
1769	453	24	38	

1770	453	23	37	
1771	453	25	41	
1772	453	21	36	
1773	453	19	33	
1774	453	18	33	
1775	453	24	42	
1776	482	30	48	Found in a separate source, but same format.
1777				Missing?
1778				Missing?
1779	453	21	41	
1780	453	26	46	
1781	453	20	30	My count comes to 29.
1782	453	20	36	My count comes to 35.
1783	453	20	38	Entries are shorter now.
1784	453	18	36	Recipients are numbered now.
1785	453	17	32	Last entry of this type.

2. *Registre Civique* of Military Age Men in Berkel en Rodenrijs, 1811.

(SR AABR, 1306: 248)

Qualification	**Translation**	**Group**	**No.**
Boulanger	Baker	Artisan	2
Charpentier de Vaisseau	Boat Carpenter	Artisan	2
Macon	Bricklayer	Artisan	1

Boucher	Butcher	Artisan	2
Charpentier	Carpenter	Artisan	5
Horlogier	Clockmaker	Artisan	1
Cordonnier	Cobbler	Artisan	6
Tonnelier	Cooper	Artisan	1
Teinturier	Dyer	Artisan	2
Couvreur	Roofer	Artisan	4
Valet de Charpentier de Vaisseau	Servant of Boat Carpenter	Artisan	1
Garçon macon	Servant of Bricklayer	Artisan	1
Valet de Charpentier	Servant of Carpenter	Artisan	1
Valet de Cordonnier	Servant of Cobbler	Artisan	1
Valet de Charron	Servant of Wheelwright	Artisan	1
Tailleur	Tailor	Artisan	4
Charron	Wheelwright	Artisan	1
Negociant	Winemaker	Artisan	6
Journalier	Day Labourer	Labourer	54
Laboureur	Labourer	Labourer	31
Voiturier	Porter	Labourer	1
Portefaix	Porter	Labourer	2
Batelier Marchand	Boat Merchant	Merchant	1
Poissonnier	Fishmonger	Merchant	2
Marchand de Gruau	Gruel Merchant	Merchant	1
Marchand	Merchant	Merchant	5
Hullier	Oil Merchant	Merchant	1
Cabaretier	Restaurateur	Merchant	2
Valet de Poissonnier	Servant of Fishmonger	Merchant	1
Boutiquier	Shopkeeper	Merchant	2
Marchande de Tourbes	Turf/Peat merchant	Merchant	4
Meunier à eau	Water Miller	Miller	8
Meunïer à Blé	Wheat Miller	Miller	1
Pastor de la Culte Catholique	Catholic Priest	Official	1

Griffier	Clerk	Official	1
Maire	Mayor	Official	1
Ministre de la Culte reformée	Reformed Pastor	Official	1
Ministre de la Culte Remonstrante	Remonstrant Pastor	Official	1
Maître d'école	Schoolmaster	Official	1
[blank]	[unknown]	Other	1
Chirurgijn Adjoint	Adjunct surgeon	Other	1
Batelier	Boatman	Other	1
Jardinier	Gardener	Other	3
Particulier	Private Individual	Other	26
Chirurgijn	Surgeon	Other	2
Marechal	Policeman/Military	Official	2

3. Income and Expenses of the *Heilige Geest* of Berkel en Rodenrijs, 1745-1812

(SR AABR 1306: 499, 500, 517)

Year	Inventory No.	Total Income in Guilders	Total Expenses in Guilders	Comments
1745	499	1482.45	1198.02	
1746	499	1994.92	964.12	
1747	499	2767.19	2746.19	
1748	499	1501,76	1501.76	
1749	499	1691.55	1137.73	
1750	499	2059.86	1111.86	
1751	499	2452.56	1118.55	
1752	499	2961.21	2547.29	
1753	499	2330.07	1933.44	
1754	499	2072.14	1312.25	
1755	499	2302.13	2291.11	

1756	499	1595.70	1194.74	
1757	499	1897.83	1523.53	
1758	499	2502.15	2123.95	
1759	499	1988.46	1635.89	
1760	499	2328.24	1850.66	
1761	499	2033.33	1329.23	
1762	499	2208.55	1435.36	
1763	499	2338.87	1643.44	
1764	499	3333.63	3012.94	
1765	499	1978.21	1804.14	
1766	499	1952.88	1857.34	
1767	499	1702.15	1486.21	
1768	499	1816.94	1818.63	
1769	499	2007.64	2090.04	
1770	499	1883.85	1630.37	
1771	499	2200.08	1956.02	
1772	499	2217.28	1725.51	
1773	499	1978.32	1963.04	
1774	500	1887.95	1875.19	
1775	500	2933.39	2896.18	
1776	500	2218.48	2179.89	
1777	500	2650.66	2203.76	
1778	500	2315.75	2083.76	
1779	500	3365.70	2222.96	
1780	500	3034.80	2052.16	
1781	500	2829.85	2032.92	
1782	500	2603.08	2258.71	

1783	500	2065.60	2435.45	Total income not given, total found by adding up subtotals.
1784	500	1672.14	2248.47	
1785	500	1702.07	2448.78	
1786	500	1655.19	2408.93	
1787	500	1669.23	2879.08	
1788	500	2795.15	3185.24	
1789	500	2085.63	2535.10	
1790	500	1896.59	2318.68	
1791	500	1872.65	2259.52	
1792	500	1931.73	2345.99	
1793	500	1927.74	2222.30	
1794	500	2013.72	1982.21	
1795	500	1435.11	2013.27	
1796	500	1383.53	2935.78	
1797	500	1357.80	3230.43	
1798	500	1717.94	3669.30	
1799	500	1401.27	3912.51	
1800	500	1414.97	3611.98	
1801	500	1671.78	4242.02	
1802	500	1678.83	4668.81	
1803	500	2003.60	4713.74	
1804	500	1906.81	7554.66	
1805	500	7887.76	8087.83	
1806	500	2330.74	3270.90	
1807	517	3331.18	3054.88	

1808				Missing?
1809	517	3162.38	4355.38	Multiple copies means the correct dataset is ambiguous.
1810	517	4581.61	5474.94	One dataset (combined with 1809) has the expenses as exactly 10 guilders less. The higher amount is used.
1811	517	6492.48	6001.18	Multiple copies means the correct dataset is ambiguous, but this is probably the correct one.
1812	517	2980.08	2397.91	One dataset has the expenses as exactly 10 guilders less. The higher amount is used.

4. Specified Expenses of the Heilige Geest of Berkel en Rodenrijs, 1745-1806

(SR AABR, 1306: 499, 500)

Year	Inventory no.	Extraordinary Expenses	School	Pay
1745	499	54	4	71
1746	499		16	71
1747	499	1624	13	71
1748	499	70	91	71
1749	499		15	71
1750	499		38	71
1751	499		17	71
1752	499	1418	9	71
1753	499	797	16	70

1754	499		19	70
1755	499	969	13	70
1756	499		13	70
1757	499		30	70
1758	499	491	9	70
1759	499		14	70
1760	499	482	12	70
1761	499		12	70
1762	499		3	70
1763	499		52	70
1764	499	1038	4	70
1765	499		26	70
1766	499		3	70
1767	499		3	70
1768	499		47	70
1769	499		2	70
1770	499	83	8	70
1771	499		16	70
1772	499		18	70
1773	499		27	70
1774	500		26	70
1775	500	1000	7	70
1776	500		27	70
1777	500		32	70
1778	500		6	70
1779	500		4	70
1780	500		22	70
1781	500		18	70
1782	500		17	70
1783	500		33	70
1784	500	370	8	70
1785	500	576	9	70
1786	500	747	6	70
1787	500	753	6	70
1788	500	1210	1	70
1789	500	390	4	70

1790	500	449		70
1791	500	422		70
1792	500	387		70
1793	500	414		70
1794	500	294		70
1795	500			70
1796	500			70
1797	500	1552		70
1798	500	1873		70
1799	500	1951		70
1800	500	2511		70
1801	500	2197		10
1802	500	2570		10
1803	500	2990		10
1804	500	2710		250
1805	500	5648		10
1806	500	550		10