

Classical corruption

Hugo van Arckel, dike warden of the Krimpenerwaard, and the corruption of his time

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Introduction

Burgomaster Hugo van Arckel had saved Schoonhoven. When this small Holland town had become part of the Dutch Republic's battle front, during the 1672-1678 war against France, it was he who had almost single-handedly prevented it from giving itself up. Unsurprisingly, Stadtholder Prince William III of Orange, supreme commander of the Army and Navy and the Republic's most influential public official at that moment, rewarded Van Arckel handsomely by bestowing several important offices on him. Four years later the one-time hero was tried and sentenced for corruption. What had happened in the meantime? In most of the contributions to this special issue of *Public Voices* a neo-classical perspective is applied to corruption. Corruption scandals are studied to shed light on the underlying value conflicts. The authors try to find out how corruption is constructed, at a certain moment, and why. Yet, there are far more theory clusters dealing with corruption. We will first take a look at these theory clusters, next analyze Van Arckel's downfall, and then see which cluster is most suitable.

Corruption theories

Corruption is studied in a variety of scholarly disciplines, and there are therefore several corruption discourses dealing with the phenomenon (many clusters are used in more than one discipline, and some disciplines work with several corruption theories). Hoetjes, a scholar studying development administration, distinguishes four such clusters. The first one he calls 'Weberian-idealtypical'. Scholars who follow the Weberian approach to corruption see corruption as a lack of rationalization of the public service. To them it is a phase on the route from patrimonialism to rational legal authority (Hoetjes, 1977: 53-55; Hoetjes, 1982: 65-67; for an example see Rubinstein,

1983). Secondly, the *structural functionalist approach* views society as a collection of coherent systems, in which all societal phenomena have a function. Thus, structural-functionalism inspired scholars ask themselves which function corruption fulfills in a specific society (Hoetjes, 1977: 55-57; Hoetjes, 1982: 67-69). 'Brokerage' can be such a function: corrupt officials can be the go-betweens between the central and the local levels (Campbell, 1989: 334; Huiskamp, 1995 and 1991; Blockmans, 1988). Corruption can also serve to tone down overly harsh laws (McFarlane, 1996: 58-59), or to provide protection and influence for groups in society possessing material wealth, but lacking in political influence (Waquet, 1992: 62). Thirdly, adherents of the *rationality and economy approach* see corrupt officials as rational utility maximizers who simply take the most profitable course of action (Hoetjes, 1977: 57-60; Hoetjes, 1982: 69-71). Sometimes game theory also plays a role in their discourse (Rose-Ackerman, 2006). The *ecological approach* to corruption, finally, the approach favored by Hoetjes himself, is mainly concerned with establishing which environment most fosters corruption (Hoetjes, 1977: 60-65; Hoetjes, 1982: 72-76).

Since Hoetjes wrote his seminal dissertation on corruption in India, new theoretical corruption discourses have sprouted up. In a recent volume on corruption theory (Von Maravic, De Graaf and Wagenaar, forthcoming) seven more are listed. 'System theory' is the Niklas Luhmann approach to corruption. Society is divided into separate self-referential, autopoietic value systems. Corruption ensues when systems start to overlap, for instance when values from the economic system penetrate the legal or the political system (Brans and Roszbach, 1997). In the sociological *neo-institutionalist approach* the embeddedness of individual action in institutions (rules, routines, norms, sense-making, etc.) is stressed. Just behavior is behavior according to shared norms and practices, and unjust behavior is a consequence of institutions being unable to create certainty and agreement about such practices, i.e., of an inadequate collective sense-making. Adherents of the *institutional design approach* believe that some political systems are more prone to corruption than others. The key element appears to be political competition: free and competitive elections provide a check on corruption (Gerring and Thacker, 2004). Then, there is a collection of literature that is not so much a coherent theoretical discourse as a shared methodology. It seeks to demonstrate the relation between certain factors and corruption by using statistical methods (Heywood, 1997: 431). The *neo-classical approach* has already been

discussed in the introduction to this special issue. The last perspective on corruption we need to deal with here is, therefore, the *criminological approach*. For those who take a criminological perspective on corruption, it is the individual corrupt official that is of interest, and it is to these criminological theories are applied. A beautiful example is De Graaf and Huberts (forthcoming), who, after looking into ten recent Dutch corruption cases draw attention to the importance of the psychological make-up of the perpetrators involved. In Holland, as it turns out, corrupt officials are often highly popular with their colleagues, not only because of their openness and flair, but also because of their ability to ‘fix things’. They are usually people intent on solving problems instead of creating them, which is why they are of great value to their organizations. Yet, it is precisely their unorthodox, result-oriented mode of operation which at a certain moment makes them cross the thin line between laudable and lamentable behavior.

War

Let us now try to establish which theory cluster best suits the Van Arckel case. Van Arckel’s downfall, as well as his rise, had started during the disastrous year 1672, when the Dutch Republic was attacked by four foreign powers simultaneously. On March 25th 1672 England had declared war on the Dutch Republic, to be joined by France and the German city-states of Münster and Cologne the following weeks. The French army alone numbered four times as many men as the Republic’s, and it was assisted by the combined French and English fleets. Yet, the Republic managed to survive the first attack. In the summer of 1672 the French army conquered the Republic’s landlocked provinces, but the coastal provinces could not be taken, and the enemy fleet was kept at bay. A side effect of the crisis was that it had enabled the Republic’s highest ranking nobleman, Prince William III of Orange, to assume power as stadtholder, one of the most influential public functions in the Republic. He now quickly removed about 130 adversaries from office (Van Deursen, 2004: 310-317).

The province of Holland was defended by the fleet, and by the inundation of its borders with the conquered provinces. Small warships patrolled the lakes and the rivers (De Bas and Ten Raa, 1940: 12). Schoonhoven – a small town, numbering only 3,000 inhabitants - was important for the defense of Holland’s eastern border. Yet, the

Schoonhoven ramparts had been neglected for 60 years, and the citizens refused to allow allied Spanish troops to enter the town. The farmers living near Schoonhoven protested against inundation, which would ruin their property, and refused to do conscripted labor at the town ramparts. This made Schoonhoven, a gateway to Holland, very hard to defend (De Bas and Ten Raa, 1921: 304; Roorda, 1961: 99-101; Schoute, 1979: 88, 91).

Nonetheless, salvation was at hand. The Count de Louvignies was sent down with more than 3,000 allied Spanish troops to defend the town, and Hugo van Arckel, one of the two Schoonhoven burgomasters, drew up a new plan for the fortification of Schoonhoven, which was quickly put into execution. Trees were cut down to be used as barricades, houses demolished to provide a free line of fire, the surrounding countryside was inundated, and small warships were sent to defend the river. The provincial government provided much of the necessary material.

The Schoonhoven garrison would vary in size in the time to come, but could become as large as 4,000 men. It consisted of militiamen as well as professional soldiers. Of course, lodging that many soldiers – and their families -- in such a small town caused tremendous problems. There were no barracks, so that citizens had to take the soldiers in; there were no paillasses, which caused the soldiers to seize the citizens' beds; contagious diseases soon started to spread, and there hardly was an adequate army medical service. Schoonhoven's limited medical capacity was expected to provide a solution. If provisions of food did not come in time the soldiers simply pillaged the countryside (Schoute, 1979: 90-98; De Bas and Ten Raa, 1921: 353-355; De Bas and Ten Raa, 1921: 353-355).

Yet, Schoonhoven managed to withstand a French attack in August and December 1672 (Block, 1792: 349). In the following years it would keep a large garrison, but in 1674 the worst was over. France no longer posed a military threat to Holland, and an end was put to the inundation and billeting of soldiers (De Bas and Ten Raa, 1940: 21-22).

Small-town administration in times of crisis

Schoonhoven's town government consisted of two burgomasters, seven aldermen, a council of 21 members, and a body of 27 'electors', who nominated burgomaster and aldermen candidates, from which the Stadtholder then chose. Then there was a bailiff, directly appointed by the provincial government, who combined the functions of chief of police and public prosecutor. Many of the electors were also members of the town council (Muilwijk, 1989: 134-137; Block, 1792: 460-511; Schoute, 1979: 89; Roorda, 1961: 48, 51). Schoonhoven's administration was of more than just local importance: it played a large role in the dike board of the Krimpenerwaard. The town appointed two of the seven dike reeves, Dordrecht and Gouda each appointed two as well, and the seventh dike reeve was appointed by the dike warden (Schoute, 1979: 89).

When in 1672 Schoonhoven was under threat of being attacked part of the local administration prepared to surrender to the French. The town was indefensible, after all, and large parts of the population and the farmers living in the surrounding countryside opposed any attempt at defense. Yet, burgomaster Hugo van Arckel almost single-handedly managed to render the town defensible, deposing, in the name of the stadtholder, a large part of the local administration in September 1672; exactly the part that had resisted inundation (Muilwijk, 1989: 137-138). Van Arckel's son Rutgerus now became bailiff (Block, 1792: 504), while he himself remained burgomaster in a newly appointed town government. Soon rumors started to spread that some of the newly appointed politicians enjoyed an ill reputation and were not even citizens of Schoonhoven (papers regarding Van Arckel, National Archives [NA], Records Provincial Court [PC], inv. nr. 5326.6).

Hugo van Arckel's fast track to power

Hugo van Arckel, Lord of Kraaienstein (1630-1706), was a building contractor, who had become a citizen of Schoonhoven in 1653. After a few years he had started to pursue a political career, first as councilor, elector and treasurer, and finally making it to burgomaster and 'commissioned councilor', member of the daily administration of the Province. (Van Aesch, 1981; Muilwijk, 1989: 179). In 1672 – after he had removed such a large part of the local government - William III offered him the function of bailiff, but Van Arckel refused, as he intended to become dike warden of

the Krimpenerwaard, a function that was not compatible with that of bailiff. He managed to get his son appointed bailiff, though, and as Rutgerus was still a minor, Hugo temporarily filled in for him until he had come of age. Hugo himself actually did become dike warden; one of the few dike wardens from Schoonhoven that the Krimpenerwaard would ever have (Van Aesch, 1981: 9-10, 42). Combining the functions of burgomaster, dike warden and bailiff, he had now become enormously powerful. William III had rewarded Hugo van Arckel handsomely for his intervention in the summer of 1672, and the burgomaster was now in a position to dominate the Schoonhoven local government on his own and his patron's behalf.

A scandal and a trial

On October 22nd 1677 Holland's provincial court questioned Hugo and Rutgerus van Arckel. A farmer named Claes Gijsbertsz. de Ridder had complained about having been subject to extortion by the burgomaster, who supposedly had seized a considerable part of his property. A few more Schoonhoven officials were heard and the town's judicial records were inspected (resolution PC October 22nd 1677, NA, PC, inv. nr. 284, f. 97ro). As it became clear that there were many more complaints about Van Arckel's behavior, the provincial court decided to keep Van Arckel in The Hague, the court's residence, for the duration of the trial, which had now started. When Van Arckel left for Schoonhoven nonetheless, the court decided to take him into custody, and to officially interrogate him (PC 11-7-1677, NA, PC, inv. nr. 284, f. 98r0-vo and 11-29-1677, f. 100ro). The matter was also taken up with the stadtholder (PC 12-12-1677, NA, PC, inv. nr. 284 f. 101ro). When during the interrogations Van Arckel kept refusing to answer the provincial court committed him to prison for contempt (PC 12-6-1678, NA, PC, inv. nr. 284, f.140ro). Finally, on February 7th 1679, Van Arckel was suspended as dike warden, to be dismissed from office on the 2nd of July 1682. He was barred from fulfilling any government function in the future, and had to pay a fine of 6,000 guilders (PC 2-7-1679 and 7-2-1682, NA, PC, inv. nr. 284, f.141vo and f. 203ro; sentence Van Arckel 7-2-1682, NA, PC, inv. nr. 5657, f. 193vo-205vo).

Naturally, Van Arckel had pointed out that all accusations against him were unfounded, stating that he had always behaved honorably as a local administrator, had

had an impressive career in the Schoonhoven local government, and had personally saved his hometown from being conquered by the French in 1672. He had now been imprisoned and interrogated at length, and the only reason for this ordeal was the jealousy of his enemies. Then of course Van Arckel had started to defend himself against the many accusations (sentence Van Arckel 7-2-1682, NA, PC, inv. nr. 5657, f. 193vo-205vo).

Normal accusations

There had been the normal accusations, of course, the kind the Republic's administrators were always confronted with. The sale of offices was one of these. Hugo van Arckel was accused of having farmed out the pawnbroker's shop too cheaply, and to have extorted money from the ferrymen. Van Arckel's defense was that the pawnbroker's shop had gone downhill during the war, and that he had only tried to get it going again. It was true that he had demanded money from ferrymen, but only from those that had not been paying for their permit before (sentence Van Arckel 7-2-1682, NA, PC, inv. nr. 5657, f. 193vo-205vo). Then there were accusations the public prosecutor did not manage to substantiate: selling a university scholarship for Theology, for instance, or a position as alderman of Schoonhoven and dike reeve of the Krimpenerwaard (sentence Van Arckel 7-2-1682, NA, PC, inv. nr. 5657, f. 193vo-205vo).

Extortion was another crime Holland's administrators were often accused of at the time. As a dike warden Van Arckel was in a position to fine people for insufficiently contributing to waterworks, a power that could of course be abused. He could also make building contractors pay for contracts, and these were indeed crimes he was accused of. Van Arckel replied that he had done nothing that hadn't been done by his predecessors in office as well, and that he had always behaved prudently as a dike warden (sentence Van Arckel 7-2-1682, NA, PC, inv. nr. 5657, f. 193vo-205vo).

Obviously, as Hugo van Arckel substituted for his son Rutgerus, who was not yet old enough to take up his function of bailiff, many of the accusations against him were about his behavior in that capacity. These were the kinds of accusation always uttered against bailiffs at the time: abuse of power to extort money from criminals and then

letting them go, which not only caused the arrest of completely innocent peoples, but also made crime commutable. This, supposedly, had happened in the case of Micheas Cocxius, a vicar's son, who when drunk had smashed Willem van der Sprongh's cane against a bridge, destroying its silver handle. Van Arckel pointed out that Cocxius had been brought before the aldermen before he was allowed to settle his case directly with the substitute bailiff outside of court, which made the transaction completely legal. Cocxius had then had the damage repaired (sentence Van Arckel 7-2-1682, NA, PC, inv. nr. 5657, f. 193vo-205vo; papers regarding Van Arckel, NA, PC, inv. nr. 5325).

The case of Johannes Schoonhoven alias Jan Vinck, a local ruffian, was similar. Schoonhoven had thrown bricks and skewers for smoking eel at former bailiff Cornelis van Nesch, Van Arckel's predecessor in that office. He was one of the town gunners, and also held a job as ferryman. In that capacity Schoonhoven had stolen money from the passengers, had acted so incompetently that Hugo van Arckel and his wife had been thrown overboard, had then refused to help them and had insulted them gravely. The following day Schoonhoven had threatened to run Hugo and his son through with a knife, and had tried to force various people to fight a duel with him, showing them the sword he had hidden in his cane. After the ferryman had been arrested for the various acts of violence he had committed, his wife had tried to settle things out of court, fearing that her husband would be condemned to death if she did not. Van Arckel appears to have accepted the money, without notifying the bench of aldermen –which would have made this legal - but to have returned it to her later. Rutgerus had then brought Schoonhoven to court (sentence Van Arckel 7-2-1682, NA, PC, inv. nr. 5657, f. 193vo-205vo; papers regarding Van Arckel, NA, PC, inv. nr. 5325).

Defending the town of Schoonhoven

A special, and much larger, category of accusations against Van Arckel had to do with the defense of the town of Schoonhoven. Making the small town defensible in a hurry had been a formidable financial challenge. Provincial government had made the money available, but did not have the necessary liquid assets at its disposal, upon which Van Arckel had bridged the gap. When the citizens, who had to lodge soldiers,

asked for paillasses, for instance, Van Arckel had supplied these. Provincial government was supposed to pay for them, but did not send any money; Van Arckel then made the citizens pay for the paillasses from the money they received for lodging soldiers, a service the citizens had volunteered for (sentence Van Arckel 7-2-1682, NA, PC, inv. nr. 5657, f. 193vo-205vo; papers regarding Van Arckel, NA, PC, inv. nr. 5325; papers regarding Van Arckel, NA, PC, inv. nr. 5326.6). A similar thing had happened when a contagious disease had spread among the soldiers. The victims were taken to the town hospital, where many of them died, and there were not enough coffins for their burial. Van Arckel had then supplied coffins, but charged twice as much for these as the local statutes allowed.

When it was necessary to inundate the Schoonhoven territory, and to make the river defensible, Van Arckel, in his capacity as a building contractor, had supplied materials and had his men do part of the work. Yet, as a dike warden he was not allowed to act as contractor for waterworks himself. He denied knowing about this prohibition, but it was easy to prove that he did know. He had been a member of the daily provincial government when the decision to ban the dike wardens themselves from involvement in waterworks' construction had been made. Part of the construction had consisted in barring entry to the river by means of a palisade. When some of the poles had come loose and had floated downriver, Van Arckel had collected these, and sold them to the province again. The dike warden did not deny having acted as a building contractor, but pointed out that at the time no one else was prepared to supply materials to the province, and that his activities had prevented the flooding of vast stretches of land (sentence Van Arckel 7-2-1682, NA, PC, inv. nr. 5657, f. 193vo-205vo; papers regarding Van Arckel, NA, PC, inv. nr. 5325).

In all these cases it proved difficult to establish whether Van Arckel had actually embezzled money. As a building contractor he had supplied a great deal of material during the war, local and provincial finances were still in disarray, and many accounts still had not been settled (papers regarding Van Arckel, NA, PC, inv. nr. 5325).

Using force against fellow citizens when Schoonhoven's defense made it necessary was another source of accusations. The Schoonhoven carters, for instance, had refused to work for the army, for which they had been fined by Van Arckel and had lost their

guild's privilege. They had had to pay Van Arckel to obtain a new privilege (as was the custom in Schoonhoven), and complained heavily about not having received sufficient pay for the services they had rendered during the war, and about the fact that one of the carters had even been taken into custody (papers regarding Van Arckel, NA, PC, inv. nr. 5325; papers regarding Van Arckel, NA, PC, inv. nr. 5326.6).

Protecting the citizens against the epiphenomena of defense was a cause of complaints as well. Van Arckel was accused of locking up a certain Rochus de Visser, color bearer in a company of Rotterdam militiamen, in order to extort money from him. He had kept De Visser in a private jail, in chains, without ever bringing him before the board of aldermen. He had even refused to free De Visser after the prisoner had gone insane, until, finally, a brother of De Visser's had paid Van Arckel to get his relative out of prison. The whole story had started with a certain Neeltje den Uijl, a widow, with whom de Visser lodged. When De Visser had failed to pay her the money he owed her for that, she had had his belongings seized. De Visser had then come to her house to take back his luggage, assisted by the company clerk. Mrs. Den Uijl had complained about his behavior, after which the Schoonhoven police force had come to take De Visser into custody. The company clerk had promptly drawn his sword and started to thrust it at people, and about ten of De Visser's fellow military men had come to their comrade's aid and had driven off the police. When Van Arckel finally managed to arrest De Visser again, he had had no other option than to lock him up in a room in the home of one of his policemen, he later claimed. The prison, after all, was in the town hall, which was being guarded by soldiers. Naturally, Van Arckel denied having demanded money for De Visser's release (papers regarding Van Arckel, NA, PC, inv. nr. 5326.6; sentence Van Arckel 7-2-1682, NA, PC, inv. nr. 5657, f. 193vo-205vo; papers regarding Van Arckel, NA, PC, inv. nr. 5325).

Cornelis Halfhaeck, skipper of a snow called the 'Griffin' that was used to guard the river near Schoonhoven, had also been locked up. In order to haul cannon that had fallen overboard to the surface again he had used wood which Van Arckel had accused him of having stolen. Van Arckel, in his turn, was accused of having detained Halfhaeck to extort money from him, in which he succeeded: Halfhaeck had already received orders to join admiral De Ruyter's fleet with his ship and was in a hurry.

Whether Halfhaeck had actually stolen the wood was difficult to establish at the time of Van Arckel's trial, as the skipper had been enslaved by Ottoman corsairs in the meantime. Yet, his crew did testify that Halfhaeck always paid for the materials he used. Van Arckel defended himself, stating that he had had Halfhaeck pay only for the costs of detaining him, as he had had to let him go to enable him to join the Republic's fleet, that he had acted on the aldermen's orders, and that he had kept no part of the money himself (sentence Van Arckel 7-2-1682, NA, PC, inv. nr. 5657, f. 193vo-205vo; papers regarding Van Arckel, NA, PC, inv. nr. 5325).

Finally, there was the very confusing case of Claes de Ridder, a farmer who had lost his land to Van Arckel. When the Republic was attacked by four enemy powers simultaneously, enormous amounts of money had been needed to pay for its defense. The solution had been found in levying extraordinary taxes and raising government loans. If people felt they were taxed too heavily, they were of course allowed to complain, and that is how De Ridder's problems had started. He had objected to his tax assessment, but the accuracy of his declaration had been doubted.

De Ridder later explained to the provincial court what had happened after that: Van Arckel had locked him up in a private prison, and had threatened him with the severe punishment the provincial government imposed on tax fraud. De Ridder would be taken to The Hague, Van Arckel had said, displayed on the scaffold, and all his property would be confiscated. After having kept De Ridder in custody in a private prison for a night, Van Arckel told him that a coach was already waiting outside to take him to The Hague. De Ridder had then given Van Arckel his farm, and a large stretch of land: two thirds of what the farmer possessed. This bankrupted him, as he now was no longer able to pay off his debts. A deed of sale had been drawn up, but Van Arckel had of course never paid. What he did do was to seize De Ridder's land immediately, which he then used for grazing oxen, and to rebuild what used to be De Ridder's farm.

It soon turned out, however, that Van Arckel had not acted on his own. The board of aldermen had earlier questioned De Ridder, and had allowed Van Arckel to settle the case out of court. It appeared that the board did not know that crimes such as De Ridder was accused of could not be settled in this manner. The use of private prisons

was not uncommon in Schoonhoven, the aldermen declared, and neither was making arrests without their permission. Van Arckel appears to have altogether denied to have settled out of court. He declared that he had simply bought De Ridder's land, although he had not managed to get the cash to the farmer yet, and that De Ridder had sold it of his own free will. Van Arckel managed to produce witnesses willing to testify on his behalf, and these witnesses also declared that De Ridder had been busy inciting people to file complaints against Van Arckel. According to the witnesses De Ridder had told various people that Van Arckel had received money from the provincial government to help rebuild the houses that had been demolished during the war. If only they would sign a petition, De Ridder would make sure they would receive the compensation they were entitled to (sentence Van Arckel 7-2-1682, NA, PC, inv. nr. 5657, f. 193vo-205vo; papers regarding Van Arckel, NA, PC, inv. nr. 5325; papers regarding Van Arckel, NA, PC, inv. nr. 5326.6).

Local politics

This brings us to the political circumstances surrounding Van Arckel's downfall. Van Arckel, already a burgomaster, had managed to obtain the functions of dike warden and substitute bailiff as well, thus becoming the most powerful man in Schoonhoven. He had been appointed by stadtholder William III, who had also replaced part of the Schoonhoven local government with Van Arckel's help.

Unsurprisingly, Van Arckel quickly managed to bring the Schoonhoven government under his control. In preparation for the trial against Van Arckel the Schoonhoven administrators were questioned, and a few of them admitted that a so-called 'correspondence' [Dutch: *correspondentie*] existed among them: a small majority of the councilors had promised complete obedience to Van Arckel. This group of men divided the most important offices among themselves, as well as the remuneration from these functions. Most administrators refused to answer the provincial court's questions about this matter, however, as these were of a political rather than a judicial nature; legally, they were within their rights in resisting the court in this.

Dominating the town government also enabled Van Arckel to lord it over the dike board of the Krimpenerwaard. Schoonhoven – read: Van Arckel – appointed two out

of seven dike reeves. In his function as dike warden Van Arckel was allowed to appoint yet a third. Obtaining such a position must have been exactly what William III had hoped Van Arckel would do. The Stadtholder had made use of the 1672 crisis to appoint figureheads everywhere in Holland's local government, who were then supposed to make the authorities execute his instructions, and for this he needed men who were able to domineer their fellow administrators.

As was to be expected, the administrators outside the correspondence opposed Van Arckel. Two of them, Nicolaes Juijnbol and Dirck Hoola, actively assisted the provincial court in building its case against Van Arckel. They constantly sent letters containing material incriminating Van Arckel and updates on the political situation in Schoonhoven. Their reasons had little to do with Van Arckel's functioning. Juijnbol was unhappy with his present position in the Schoonhoven government, and was trying to incite the civic militia to demand his reinstatement as burgomaster. Hoola was involved in a personal conflict with Van Arckel at the time. As a delegate to the meeting of the provincial government in 1676 he had acted against Van Arckel's orders, and the burgomaster had then insulted him gravely, calling him 'a liar who consorted with the devil to do wrong'. On the same occasion Rutgerus van Arckel had called Hoola a 'cuckold' and a 'scoundrel'; grave matters in those days (papers regarding Van Arckel, NA, PC, inv. nr. 5326.6; papers regarding Van Arckel, NA, PC, inv. nr. 5325; Records Schoonhoven 12-6 to 12-28-1677, Gouda record office [GR], Schoonhoven records [SR], inv. nr. 10, f11ro-24v; Papers regarding Hoola and Van Arckel, NA, PC, inv. nr. 5315.11).

After the trial

The provincial court tried to get Van Arckel denaturalized as a Schoonhoven citizen, but Schoonhoven's local government refused to do this, as this constituted an invasion of local administrative authority. Van Arckel then tried to reinstate himself to his office, entering the council room on Election Day with a drawn sword, after kicking in two doors (Resolution burgomasters Schoonhoven 7-10-1679, GR, SR, inv. nr. 1, f 101ro Records Schoonhoven 7-10-1679, 11-3-1679 and 4-17-1680, GR, SR, inv. nr. 10, f. 57ro, f. 67ro, f.73ro). Van Arckel was sentenced on July 2nd 1682, but that was not the end of the story. He immediately tried to appeal; while the decision whether to

grant this appeal was pending, he had to be restored to his former state (papers regarding Van Arckel, NA, PC, inv. nr. 5325). Naturally, he never made it burgomaster or dike warden again, but after a while the town of Schoonhoven found that it could not do without Van Arckel's financial expertise. The Schoonhoven local government had the powers to appoint its own treasurers (Muilwijk, 1989: 134-137). Some six years after his verdict it appointed Van Arckel again, who then went on to serve five terms as treasurer (Muilwijk, 1989: 179). When Van Arckel died the town government found that his personal finances were still entangled with those of Schoonhoven's charitable institutions, as he had personally borrowed money from them in 1672 to pay for the town's defenses (resolution 'weeskamer' Schoonhoven, 1-14-1707, GR, SR, inv. nr. 284; Van der Molen 2000: 195).

Conclusion

What stands out in the Van Arckel case is its almost complete lack of ambiguity. Van Arckel had crossed a well-defined line, and was made to pay for his transgressions. There appears to have been no conflict of, or shift in, administrative values here, which makes the neo-classical approach rather hard to apply in this case.

Van Arckel seems to have been a highly enterprising and energetic administrator. It was his resourcefulness, creativity and vigor that had saved Schoonhoven from the French. Yet, these exact same qualities were the reason that the dike warden also acted in ways that were clearly considered to be corrupt according to the norms of his time. This makes Van Arckel an example of the kind of administrator that figures so prominently in present-day Dutch corruption cases. Is it indeed the criminological perspective that is the most helpful in providing insight into his case?

That Van Arckel succeeded in abusing his powers to this degree had everything to do with the political and military situation at the time when he obtained his office and with the amateurism of the other small town administrators, who should have kept him under control. Naturally, his downfall was also connected with the political circumstances of the moment. The stadtholder's overwhelming power position had gradually declined when the war was drawing to an end, and Van Arckel's central position in the Schoonhoven local government had resulted in the formation of a

competent opposition. The driving forces behind this opposition seem to have been the ambition of Van Arckel's rivals, and probably a real concern about the way the dike warden had discharged his duties. It is possible to deduce conflicts between and the evolution of administrative value systems from corruption scandals, but not every scandal reflects a shift in such systems -- that is probably the lesson to be learned from the Van Arckel case.

Literature

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