Reassessing Rogerius's Hinduism

Antiquarianism and Perennial Philosophy in the Making of Early Modern Religion

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Some Prefatory Explanations

Some decisions regarding translation and references need to be outlined prior to anything else. Dutch texts have been translated as faithfully as possible, with the original text in its original spelling always being found in a corresponding footnote. I have taken some liberties when it comes to terms and names used by both Rogerius and the annotator in order to improve readability. In cases where we find an archaic Dutch spelling in the *Open Deure* I have instead opted for modern English spelling rules: thus *Esvvara* becomes Shiva, *VVistnou* is spelled Vishnu and *Bramma* Brahma. The terms Shaivites and Vaishnavites have been used in favour of *Seivia* and *VVeistnouwa*. For the four *varnas* I have used common Western spelling, so Rogerius's spelling of *Bramines* is abandoned for Brahmins. This should also prevent confusion as to what the original spelling might indicate. Note should also be made that I chose to always translate the term *Heyden* with *pagan*, rather than for instance *heathen* or *gentile*. I chose to prefer pagan as, compared to other terms, it implies the least judgement and is mostly descriptive; it is this meaning which I see as the best reflection of *Heyden* in both the main text and the annotations of the *Open Deure*. Lastly, a practical matter concerning chapter numbers. As the book is divided into two parts of twenty-one chapters each, I decided that for the sake of readability the chapter numbers needed to be abbreviated, a matter which is especially important for chapter five. Chapters will therefore be abbreviated according to book part and chapter number. An example should explain this adequately: chapter fifteen in part two is rendered as 2.15, chapter six in the first part as 1.6 and so forth. A full list of the chapters can also be found in the Appendix, so quick comparisons can be facilitated. A final note on references to the *Open Deure*: as I primarily analyse the annotations of this source I have chosen to adapt the citation style accordingly. When Rogerius himself, so the main text, is referenced I follow the same Chicago Humanities style I have adopted for all references. When instead the annotations are referenced I additionally have provided the name of the footnote, resulting in a reference such as: Rogerius, *Open Deure*, [Het hayr afgesneden] 11-12. The name of the note is given in the square brackets.

1 Introduction

Abraham Rogerius's *Open-Deure tot het Verborgen Heydendom* is somewhat of a singular publication in the history of European writings on India and its religious traditions.[1] The monograph does not easily fit into most European narratives: Rogerius does not exhibit the characteristic portrayal of the Indians as devil-worshipping idolaters, so typical of earlier medieval and contemporary early modern ethnographic writing, and neither does he exhibit the satirical sense of superiority widely seen in late seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Europeans writing about the subcontinent. Additionally, I would argue, there is also no distinct *othering* of the peoples and practices described, so typical of the Orientalism of the nineteenth century but dating back to Rogerius's own time.[2] Rather, through the information gathered from conversing with his Pandit Padmanabha, Rogerius writes in a sober, dry and factual way about the practices and beliefs of the 'Brahmans', by which he means mostly the Vaishnavite and Shaivite Brahmins in Pulicat, where he was engaged as a preacher from 1632 to 1642.[3]

Even though Rogerius's *Open Deure* profoundly impacted the study of India and Indian religious traditions in Europe and remained a reference work for centuries, the book and its author are very little studied. One aspect in particular has not only been overlooked by scholars but almost forgotten: the antiquarian annotations made by an elusive scholar, who in the preface of the work signs himself only as A.W. JCtus. These extraordinarily extensive footnotes are hardly known, not being helped by the fact that Caland cut them from his critical edition in 1915, which has since been the primary edition rather than the original publication of 1651.[4] These annotations made up a substantial part of the book, giving in-depth background information on the topics of travel writing, religion and ancient history, with expert knowledge of the antiquarian scholarship of the time. The annotations were translated along with the main text in the French and German translations of the *Open Deure*, which proved to have a wider reach than the Dutch original. In this thesis I aim to shed a light on this mostly forgotten, yet vital part of the *Open Deure*. I will be looking into A.W.'s connection with Rogerius's

[1] The full title is *De Open-Deure tot het Verborgen Heydendom Ofte Waerachtigh vertoogh van het Leven ende Zeden; mitsgaders de Religie, ende Gods-dienst der Bramines, op de Cust Chormandel, ende de Landen daar ontrent.* Following Caland's critical edition of 1915, which will be discussed below, I shall henceforth refer to the book as *Open Deure*. Caland's edition will be distinguished as *Open Deure 1915* if not otherwise clear.

[2] See on this Carlo Ginzburg, 'Provincializing the World: Europeans, Indians, Jews (1704)', *Postcolonial Studies* 14, no. 2 (2011): 135–150.

[3] Padmanabha is mentioned fifty-three times in the main text of the *Open Deure* alone, with Rogerius clearly indicating him as the source of information.

[4] Abraham Rogerius and Willem Caland, *De open-deure tot het verborgen heydendom* ('s-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1915).

writings and its Indian sources and analyse the annotations in the wider context of the religious and intellectual discussions and developments in contemporary Europe. In this way I seek to answer what the annotator's purpose is in his own narrative, to what degree he follows Rogerius and is informed by Rogerius's sources and which - scholarly or otherwise - traditions he intends to contribute to. Ultimately I want to answer *why* the annotator writes and *what he adds* to the *Open Deure*.

1.1 Abraham Rogerius

Very little is known about Rogerius, especially concerning his early life.[5] Born around 1609, possibly in Haarlem, Rogerius studied theology at Leiden in Antonius Walaeus's *Seminarium Indicum*, Leiden University's short-lived missionary training programme.[6] In 1630 Rogerius journeyed to Batavia in order to become a chaplain of the Dutch East India Company (VOC); arriving in Batavia in 1631, he was sent to Pulicat, a VOC outpost north of modern Chennai. He remained there for ten years from 1632 to 1642, after which he spent another five years in Batavia. Rogerius returned to the Netherlands in 1647 and settled in Gouda with his wife, where he died shortly afterwards in 1649.[7]

Apart from his official duties as company chaplain, Rogerius began preaching to the local population during his ten years in Pulicat. A letter from January 1636 attests that he had started to preach in Portuguese and was in the process of learning Tamil.[8] This new endeavour also led him to translate a number of catechisms and parts of the New Testament into Portuguese in order to preach in this language.[9] Knowledge of

[5] A brief account of Rogerius's life is found in the unpaginated dedication ('Opdraght') by fellow preacher Jacobus Sceperus. See Abraham Rogerius, *De Open-Deure Tot het verborgen heydendom: ofte Waerachtigh vertoogh van het Leven ende Zeden; mitsgaders de Religie, ende Gods-dienst der Bramines, op de Cust Chormandel, ende de Landen daar ontrent* (Leiden: Françoys Hackes, 1651); On Rogerius's biography see wider Rogerius and Caland, *Open Deure 1915*, XXVI; See also L.J. Joosse, 'Rogerius, Abraham', in *Biografisch lexicon voor de geschiedenis van het Nederlandse protestantisme*, vol. 5 (Utrecht: Uitgeverij Kok-Kampen, 2001), 433–434.

[6] On his place of birth and early life, see Joosse, 'Rogerius, Abraham', 433; on the *Seminarium Indicum*, see Stephen Neill, *A History of Christianity in India: The Beginnings to AD 1707*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 377-378. Neill also gives quite a good overview of Rogerius's life and the *Open Deure*, 379-380, 419; See further also Will Sweetman, *Mapping Hinduism: 'Hinduism' and the Study of Indian Religions, 1600-1776* (Halle: Otto Harrassowitz Verlag, 2003), 91.

[7] Unpaginated 'Opdraght' Rogerius, *Open Deure*.

[8] 'al begonnen had Portugees (waarvan men den 4den Dec. 1634 al toezegging bekomen had) te prediken en dat Z. Eerw. zich ook verder in 't Malabaars (d.w.z. het Tamil) oefende.' Cited in Rogerius and Caland, *Open Deure 1915*, xxvi.

[9] 'Ghetuygen hier van zijn velerhande Schriften, by sijne E. ghestelt; oock Oversettingen van verscheyden Boecken in de Portugijsche Tale, die hy tot dienst der Indianen, ende der gener die het Woort der Zaligheyt onder hun verkondighen, bearbeyt heeft ghelijck onder anderen zijn, het Gebede-Boeck van; Haverman: Catechismusvan Lantsbergen : tneestalle de Psahnen Davids, door hem in rijm ende Portugijsch ghestelt : de Belijdenis-Predicatie van lacobus Laurentius: Een verklaringe over den

Portuguese and some Tamil also enabled him to discuss with the aforementioned Brahmin Padmanabha, who had sought refuge at the Dutch fort, and other Brahmins, among them one called Dammersa who was reported to be more advanced in Portuguese.[10] What Rogerius learnt from conversing with these Brahmins, and Padmanabha especially, served as the basis for the *Open Deure*. From various comments by the annotator of this work we have to assume that Rogerius left behind diverse writings on the Brahmins, although the exact forms of this in relation to the later publication is not certain.

After Rogerius's death his widow Emmerentia Pools arranged for the publication of Rogerius's writings on the Brahmins as the *Open Deure*, published in 1651 in Leiden.

1.2 Editions and Translations of the *Open Deure*

The first surprising fact we must discuss does not concern Rogerius directly, but rather the language of the *Open Deure*; by the eighteenth century there was considerable doubt as to which language the first edition of the work was actually composed in, with some authors asserting the original to have actually been penned in Latin. Will Sweetman proposes that Charles Blount, referencing Rogerius in his *Oracles of Reason* (London 1693), may be the reason for this mistake, as he referred to Rogerius's book as 'Janua aperta ad Arcana Gentilismi'.[11] Caland on the other hand sees the origin of this idea in Jöcher's *Allgemeines Gelehrten Lexicon* (Leipzig 1751), where we read that there had been an original Latin publication by the name 'Gentilismus reseratus'.[12] Either way, should any Latin publication ever have existed, it is now nowhere to be found, and Caland makes a very good argument for the whole affair having been an invention of the *Lexicon*.[13] That Rogerius himself wrote in Dutch therefore seems beyond reasonable doubt and is further enforced by Sceperus' dedication, where he states that 'the sayings by Barthrouherri and the footnotes on the same', as opposed to the footnotes composed by the annotator, 'were compiled by A. Rogerius and written by his own hand' - not

Heydelberghschen Catechismus, by hem selvengemaeckt en gesteltin de Portugijsche Tale: eenighe stuc ken van het Nieuwe Testament. Ende benefifens dese, noch eenige andere seer dienstige Translaten.' Rogerius, *Open Deure*, unpaginated 'Opdraght'.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Sweetman, *Mapping Hinduism*, 90, especially footnote 10.

[12] Christian Gottlieb Jöcher et al., *Allgemeines Gelehrten-Lexicon - Theil 3: M-R*, vol. 3 (Leipzig: Friedrich Gleditsch, 1751), 2182; Rogerius and Caland, *Open Deure 1915*, xxvii.

[13] Caland makes the very good point that, had there been an original Latin version, all of the Tamil and Sanskrit names would have had to have been translated without the help of Rogerius, who was already dead at that time. Caland therefore emphatically negates the possibility of such a publication: 'Dit bericht, dat ons boek oorspronkelijk in het Latijn zou zijn opgesteld, is in vele andere werken te vinden, doch het Latijnsche boek schijnt nergens te bestaan!' Rogerius and Caland, *Open Deure 1915*, xxvii-xxviii.

by a separate translator of the work.[14] There is therefore no reason to doubt that the Dutch publication is indeed the original one.

This first edition was published in Leiden by the printer Frans Hackes (François Hackes in said publication) in 1651. Hackes and after him his sons were a printing family based in Leiden, focussing on scholarly publications and editions of classical texts. The dynasty was active until 1700 and unfortunately we have very little surviving material from them.[15] The original manuscript of the *Open Deure* seems also to be lost. This makes it very difficult to understand what condition Rogerius's writings were in after his death in 1649 and prior to publication. It is a possibility that the final structure of the work was not laid out by Rogerius himself, and that his writings were merely notes that had not yet been arranged into the form of a monograph. The extent of the involvement of Pools, Sceperus, A.W. or even the publisher Frans Hackes in arranging the text is difficult to ascertain, especially as there is neither a manuscript nor any of Rogerius's notes left for us to consult.[16] A compilation by any or all of the actors mentioned above based on various notes by Rogerius would at least partially explain the numerous repetitions that have been noted by several scholars, as well as the abrupt ending of the book. It might also be the origin of the structure of the book into two halves, separating the 'Life and Manners' ('leven ende zeden') from the 'Beliefs and Worship' ('Geloove, ende den Gods-dienst') of the Brahmins, a facet of the Open Deure which, as we shall see, could well be traced back to the annotator.[17]

The 1651 edition numbers 251 pages and consists of a dedication, a foreword and three main parts. The dedication was written by Jacob Sceperus, a preacher from Gouda known for his polemical attacks against the Kingdom of England. Sceperus dedicates the six-page foreword to the governors of the VOC and briefly discusses Rogerius's life in India and his writings. Following this is the preface titled 'To the Reader' ('tot den leser') written by the annotator of the book, an unknown antiquarian who merely signs himself as A.W. JCtus. Here the annotator makes a short antiquarian analysis of the Indian 'heathendom' and compares them to the ancient West as well as the rest of the world on eight pages - as we shall see, this serves as a prelude to the actual annotations throughout the monograph. In the first part of the book proper, Rogerius talks about

[14] 'Doch betreffende het Leven, ende de Spreucken van den vermaerden Heydenschen Barthrouherri, ende de Aenteyckeningen op de selve, hier achter volgende; de selve sijn van Dom. Rogerio ghesamentlycken gestelt, en gheschreven by syn eygene hant' Rogerius, *Open Deure*, unpaginated 'Opdraght'; Caland makes this observation as well, Rogerius and Caland, *Open Deure 1915*, xxviii.

[15] Michael F. Suarez and Henry R. Woudhuysen, 'Hackius Family', in *Oxford Companion to the Book*, vol. 2: D-Z (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 775.

[16] Sweetman, *Mapping Hinduism*, 94, 99.

[17] Sweetman gives a good albeit brief account of this issue. See ibid., 99.

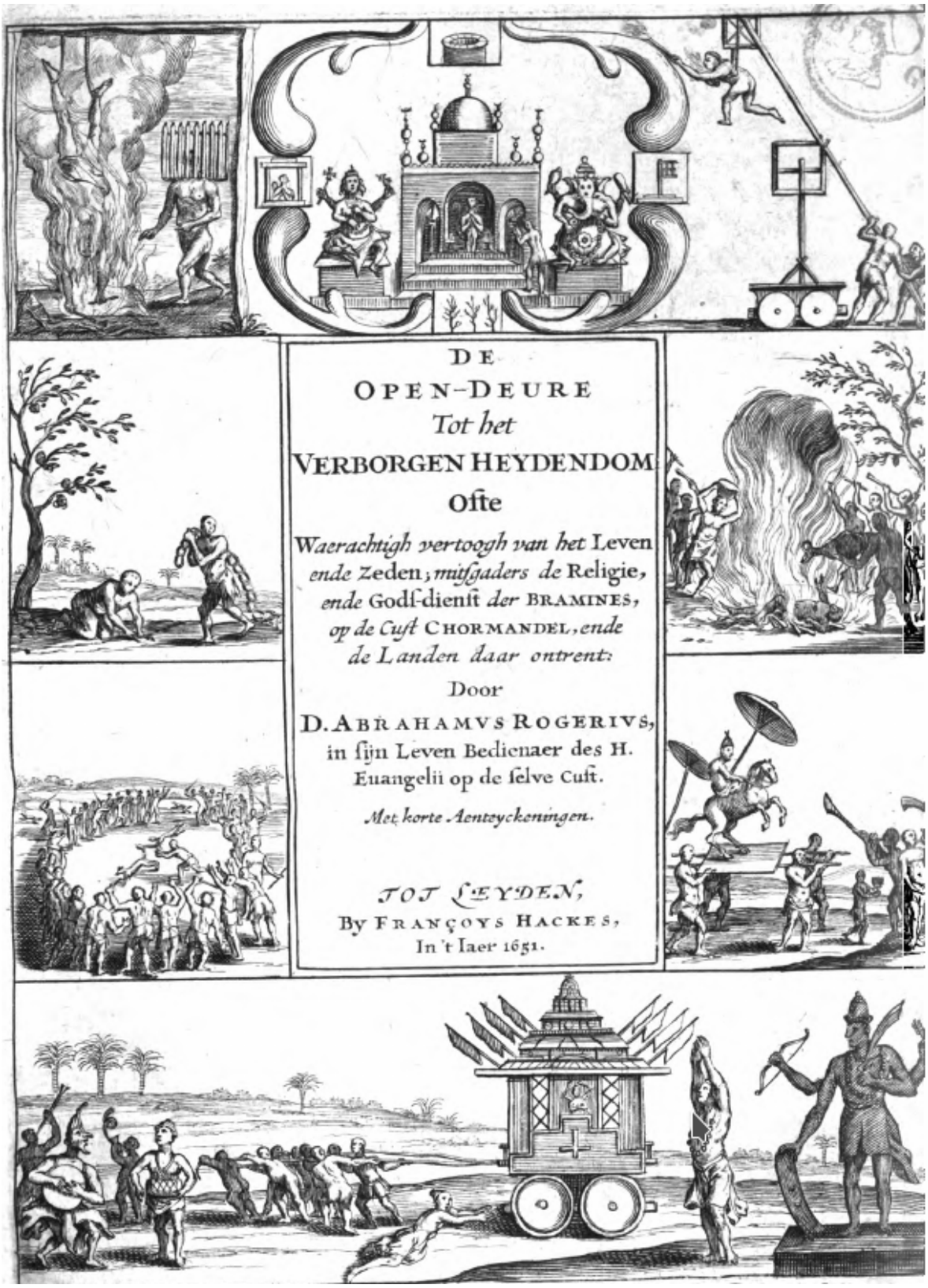

Figure 1: Title page of the 1651 edition of the *Open Deure*, displaying various practices associated with Brahmin idolatry

the 'Life and Manners of the Brahmins' (pages 1-101); this includes various aspects of life such as child-rearing, philosophical knowledge, as well as the organisation of society and a discussion of the four *varnas*. The second part discusses the religious practices and beliefs of the various Brahmins in the region around Pulicat (pages 103-216), focussing on Vaishnavites and Shaivites, but mentioning other traditions as well, although most of these are branded as heterodox. Rogerius discusses cosmology and especially religious worship (in Dutch *Gods-dienst*) in detail. The last part, mostly an appendix to the actual discussion preceding it, is Rogerius's translation of 'sayings of Barthrouherri', that is Bhartrhari's Niti- and Vairagya-satakas (pages 217-251). This last element is especially significant for Indologists, as it presents the first published European translation of a Sanskrit work.[18] This last part stands apart from the main work and does not include footnotes by the annotator, but from Rogerius himself. It will therefore not be considered in my main analysis beyond the numerous references that are made to it throughout the two main parts.

The book seems to have attracted a large readership as both a German and a French translation were quickly made. The German edition was translated by Christoph Arnold, a Lutheran theologian from Nuremberg, where *Abraham Rogers Offne Thür* was published in 1663.[19] Arnold left the structure of the Dutch original largely intact: he made one foreword out of Sceperus's dedication and A.W.'s 'To the Reader', adding some rare comments of his own in the process. He translated the main text of the book in a faithful way, except for rarely omitting a few lines of text or cutting and sometimes adding a footnote. This is valid for both Rogerius's main text as well as for the notes by A.W., the original annotator. The faithfulness of the translation also extends to the usage of terms: when for instance Rogerius uses *Gods-dienst* rather than *religie*, Arnold uses the corresponding term in German (*Gottesdienst*), rather than substituting it with something he finds more fitting; *Religion* is only used if it corresponds to *religie* in the original. Complementing the translation of the *Open Deure* Arnold adds his own treatise of 'additions of numerous heathen Religions'.[20] Much like the original footnotes, this takes on the form of a universalistic treatise on religion, embedded in an antiquarian

[18] Sweetman, *Mapping Hinduism*, 89.

[19] Full title: Abraham Rogerius and Christoph Arnold, *Abraham Rogers Offne Thür zu dem verborgenen Heydenthum : oder,warhaftige Vorweisung dess Lebens, und der Sitten, samt der Religion, und dem Gottesdienst der Bramines, auf der Cust Chormandel, und denen herumligenden Ländern : mit kurtzen Anmerkungen,* (Nürnberg: In Verlegung Johann Andreas Endters, 1663); See on this Ralph Häfner, 'Shaping Early Modern Comparitive Studies: The Significance of Christoph Arnold (1627-1685)', in *Patristic Tradition and Intellectual Paradigms in the 17th Century*, ed. Silke-Petra Bergjan and Karla Pollmann (Heidelberg: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 11.

[20] On Arnold and this additional treatise see Häfner, 'Shaping Early Modern Comparitive Studies: The Significance of Christoph Arnold (1627-1685)'.

analytical frame, albeit widening the analysis to include contemporary religions and practices in Asia, Africa and America.[21]

Seven years after Arnold's German edition a French translation was published in 1670 in Amsterdam under the title *Théâtre de l'idolâtrie*.[22] The translator in this case was Thomas La Grue, a French refugee who had settled in Amsterdam after his conversion to Protestantism.[23] La Grue, much like Arnold, translated the original in a very faithful manner, with only minor changes to Rogerius's narrative as well as to the original notes. There has been some speculation regarding the involvement of A.W. in this publication, as it was published in Amsterdam, yet this seems rather unlikely, as La Grue himself is not able to tell us exactly who the annotator is.[24] Joan-Pau Rubiès notes that it was certainly not La Grue who was responsible for the annotations, as the latter had translated them faithfully from the original, which can be seen through even from a cursory comparison of the notes with the Dutch *Open Deure*.[25] There cannot be any doubt that La Grue was indeed not responsible for the notes, as he . The misconception most probably derived from the greater popularity of the French over the Dutch edition and the lack of a name with whom to associate the annotator, a fact which is remarked upon by La Grue himself.[26] La Grue mentions in his own foreword, which is mostly just A.W.'s 'To the Reader' in French, that the division into two parts and the annotations were done by a 'certain very learned man and a very well-known professor at the University of Leyden'.[27]

[21] The full title of these additions is 'C. Arnolds Auserlesene Zugaben/ Von mancherley heydnischen Religionen/ Secten/ Göttern/ Tempeln/ Bildern/ Priestern/ Festtaegen/ Opfern; wie auch unterschiedlichen Christen; weltlichen Gesetzen/ Ordnungen/ Gerichten/ Straffen/ Sitten/ Gewohnheiten/ Geberden/ Kuensten/ Sprachen/ Gebäuen/ Kleidungen/ Speisen/ Getraenke/ Gewaechsen/ Thieren/ Bergen/ Flüssen/ etc. Welche fuernemlich Durch ganz Asia/ Africa/ und America heut zu Tag gebraeuchlich/ und befindlich sind.' Rogerius and Arnold, *Abraham Rogers Offne Thür zu dem verborgenen Heydenthum*, 537.

[22] Full title: Abraham Rogerius and Thomas La Grue, *Le Théâtre de l'idolâtrie, ou la Porte ouverte, pour parvenir à la connoissance du paganisme caché, ou La vraye representation de la vie, des moeurs, de la Religion, & du service divin des Bramines qui demeurent sur les côtes de Chormandel* (Amsterdam: Jean Schipper, 1670).

[23] On La Grue see Armand Lods, 'Thomas La Grue 1620 – 1680', *Bulletin historique et littéraire (Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français)* 49, no. 6 (1900): 329–334.

[24] Rogerius and La Grue, *Théâtre de l'idolâtrie*, unpaginated 'au lecteur'.

[25] Joan-Pau Rubiés, 'Reassessing 'the Discovery of Hinduism': Jesuit Discourse on Gentile Idolatry and the European Republic of Letters', in *Intercultural Encounter and the Jesuit Mission in South Asia (16th-18th Centuries)*, ed. Ines G. Zupanov and Anand Amaladass (Bangalore: Asian Trading Corporation, 2014), 144.

[26] Rogerius and La Grue, *Théâtre de l'idolâtrie*, unpaginated 'au lecteur'.

[27] This is what the passage seems to imply. The full remark is as follows: '[...] divided into two little treatises by a certain skilled savant and a very renowned Professor at the University of Leyden, which [the treatises] I have tried with him to have printed & put to light, adding a few small remarks' ('divise en deux petits traitez par un certain fort sçavant, & fort renommé Professeur dans l'Université de Leyden, lesquels j'ay tâché avec luy de faire imprimer & mettre en lumiere, y adjoutant quelques

Even though plagiarising travel writing had increasingly started to be regarded in ill-favour, it was still very common in the seventeenth century, and so it should not come as a surprise that many authors copied parts of Rogerius's treatise without acknowledging him.[28] Two prominent examples of this are Olfert Dapper's *Asia, of Naukeurige Beschryving van Het Rijk des Grooten Mogols, En een groot gedeelte van Indien* (Amsterdam 1672) and the famous book by Philip Baldaeus, *Naauwkeurige Beschryvinge van Malabar en Choromandel, der zelver aangrenzende Ryken, en het machtige Eyland Ceylon* (Amsterdam 1672) which incorporate large parts of the *Open Deure*.[29] One of the most influential printings of Rogerius's *Open Deure* was an abridged version of the French translation that was incorporated into Bernard and Picart's *Cérémonies et coutumes religieuses de tous les peuples du monde* (Amsterdam 1723-1743), reworked by Antoine-Augustine Bruzen de La Martinière.[30] Whilst no English translation of the original appeared in print, English translations of the popular *Cérémonies et coutumes* as well as of Olfert's and Baldaeus's works were made.[31] These works only feature extracts of the *Open Deure*, resulting in no full English translation being in print up to this day.

Some remarks need also be made on Caland's critical edition, published by the Linschoten Vereeniging in 1915.[32] Caland makes some major changes to the original 1651 publication; first of all he reworks the introduction to include, besides Sceperus' dedication and A.W.'s 'To the Reader', a well-researched introduction of his own. Here he offers remarks on European descriptions of Indian religious traditions up to Rogerius's time and discusses the preacher's life and activities in India. As has already become

petites remarques'). The mention of 'with him' could imply that this supposed professor was actually involved in the project and might be the origin of this particular idea. However, La Grue tells us nothing about this individual, who is not mentioned to be a professor anywhere else, making this unlikely. Rogerius and La Grue, *Théâtre de l'idolâtrie*, unpaginated 'au lecteur'.

[28] See Joan-Pau Rubiés, 'Travel Writing as a Genre: Facts, Fictions and the Invention of a Scientific Discourse in Early Modern Europe', *Journeys* 1, no. 1 (2000): 5–35; Joan-Pau Rubiés, 'Instructions for Travellers: Teaching the Eye to See', *History & Anthropology* 9, nos. 2/3 (1996): 139-142.

[29] Olfert Dapper, *Asia, of Naukeurige Beschryving van Het Rijk des Grooten Mogols, En een groot gedeelte van Indien* (Amsterdam: By Jakob van Meurs, 1672); Philippus Baldaeus, *Naauwkeurige Beschryvinge van Malabar en Choromandel, der zelver aangrenzende Ryken, en het machtige Eyland Ceylon: Nevens een omstandige en grondigh doorzochte ontdekking en wederlegginge van de afgoderye der Oost-Indische heydenen* (Amsterdam: By Johannes Janssonius van Waasberge, en Johannes van Someren, 1672); see also Sweetman, *Mapping Hinduism*, 89-90.

[30] This appears in Tome 1.2 from 1723, which after Bernard's later reordering of the book series is listed as tome 6. Bernard Picart et al., *Ceremonies et coutumes religieuses de tous les peuples du monde*, vol. [t. 6]. t. 1. 2. ptie. Dissertations sur les pratiques religieuses des Indiens Orientaux (Amsterdam: Chez J.F. Bernard, 1723); see further Lynn Hunt et al., *The Book that Changed Europe: Picart & Bernard's Religious Ceremonies of the World* (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2010), 227; Sweetman, *Mapping Hinduism*, 90.

[31] Sweetman, *Mapping Hinduism*, 90.

[32] Rogerius and Caland, *Open Deure 1915*.

evident from the above consideration, Caland also discusses the publication history of the *Open Deure* in depth and refutes the claim of the annotator A.W. being Andreas Wissowatius, a topic to which I will return shortly. The main text of the *Open Deure* is left intact but not the annotations; Caland removed all of A.W.'s footnotes, replacing them with his own, as for Caland's indological purposes these notes were 'worthless' and could therefore 'be left out without harm'.[33] This decision has meant that the annotator and his work have been largely forgotten and not been studied. Before I turn my attention fully to the annotations themselves, I will briefly discuss the identity of the annotator.

1.3 The *Aenteyckeninghen* by the Elusive A.W.

The annotator therefore has largely remained a mystery, whenever he was acknowledged at all. When A.W. is mentioned anywhere, he is usually identified with Andreas Wissowatius (Andrzej Wiszowaty), a Polish Socinian theologian who had studied at the University of Leiden in 1631.[34] A recent article by Bettina Noak discusses the annotations and its author, assuming the latter to be Wissowatius, claiming there be no reason *not* to believe this association to indeed be correct.[35] I would argue that, on the contrary, there is no reason to actually believe that the initials A.W. stand for Andreas Wissowatius, an argumentation for which Caland already brought forth many good points in 1915.[36] Caland argues that the original misidentification stems from Jöcher's *Allgemeines Gelehrten-Lexicon*, and actually from the very same article on Rogerius where the alleged original Latin publication is mentioned. This article names Andreas Wissowatius as having edited the *Open Deure*.[37] Yet, if we turn to the article on Wissowatius in the fourth volume of the *Lexicon*, this information is conspicuously

[33] The full passage in the original is: 'In de oorspronkelijke editie worden eveneens "Aenteyckeningen" aangetroffen, "daer bij gevoeght door een ervaren Lief-hebber der Outheyt", die zich teekent A. W. JCtus en die eveneens de voorrede "tot den Leser" schreef. Aangezien deze Aanteekeningen niet het minste bevatten, wat tot verklaring of juister begrip van den tekstvan Rogerius strekt, doch in dit opzicht geheel en al waardeloos zijn, heeft de bewerker gemeend deze "Aenteyckeningen" zonder schade te kunnen weglaten; ze zijn vervangen door andere, waarin er naar gestreefd is de juistheid van het door Rogerius gezegde aan de bronnen, voor zoover zij ons (d.w.z. den bewerker) bekend en toegankelijk zijn, te toetsen. Rogerius and Caland, *Open Deure 1915*, xxv.

[34] A. De Groot, 'Wissowatius (Wiszowaty), Andreas (Andrzej)', in *Biografisch lexicon voor de geschiedenis van het Nederlandse protestantisme*, vol. 1 (Utrecht: Uitgeverij Kok-Kampen, 2001), There are some scholars who have followed Caland and not identified A.W. with Wissowatius, most notably in Joan-Pau Rubiés's work, see below.

[35] Bettina Noak, 'Glossaries and Knowledge-Transfer: Andreas Wissowatius and Abraham Rogerius', in *Dynamics of Neo-Latin and the Vernacular*, ed. Tom B. Deneire (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 251–265.

[36] Rogerius and Caland, *Open Deure 1915*, xxviii.

[37] Jöcher et al., *Allgemeines Gelehrten-Lexicon - Theil 3: M-R*, 2182.

missing.[38] This most likely the originating statement for the identification of A.W. as Wissowatius, as A.W.'s full name is not alluded to in the *Open Deure* nor its translations. An additional clue that this is a mistaken name association is that A.W. adds the suffix JCtus to his initials, which equals the title of *jurisconsultus*, identifying him as having completed studies in law, whereas Wissowatius was a theologian. Further proof is the fact that Wissowatius was not even residing in the Netherlands between the time of Rogerius's death and the publication of the *Open Deure*, as he only returned to the Dutch Republic after his banishment from Poland, settling in Amsterdam in 1666 - fifteen years after the publication of Rogerius's book![39] All this makes Wissowatius a virtually impossible identification for A.W.

Having established that A.W. is not Wissowatius opens the problem of who A.W. was instead. Identifying him is a rather difficult and volatile affair, as we have only two immediate hints towards his identity, namely his initials *A. W.* and his title which distinguishes him as a lawyer. The annotations of the *Open Deure* of course provide us with some additional clues: the book having been published in Leiden combined with the depth of the annotator's knowledge of historical and religious scholarship make it likely that he was affiliated with the University of Leiden. This is also corroborated by the French translation, in which La Grue states that A.W. is a 'well-known professor at the University of Leiden', even if La Grue's knowledge on the topic might have been spurious and calling him a professor may very well have been an exaggeration. Whilst this does not provide conclusive evidence for establishing A.W.'s link with the University, it does give us the best point for further investigation into his identity.

A.W.'s profile is therefore somewhat narrower: a University laureate in law, active at the University of Leiden in the 1640s and 1650s, proficient in Greek and Hebrew and having a close familiarity with the literature on Asia, including both philosophical and theological treatises as well as a broad range of travel accounts. Two more features of the annotator make him stand out. First are his antiquarian interests which also show themselves in his deep familiarity with classical learning and history. This is also attested by Sceperus, who identifies A.W. as a 'Lief-hebber der Outheyt', a lover of antiquity. A.W. is very familiar with classical jurisprudence, further solidifying him as a law graduate, and has a very wide knowledge of history, enabling him to create the sort of universal history treatise we see in the notes. The second peculiarity of A.W. are his religious interests and frames of reference. We see that A.W. shows a keen knowledge and interest in Neoplatonic monism and Hermeticism. These feature will be discussed

[38] Christian Gottlieb Jöcher et al., *Allgemeines Gelehrten-Lexicon - Theil 4: S-Z*, vol. 4 (Leipzig: Friedrich Gleditsch, 1751), 2024.
[39] De Groot, 'Wissowatius (Wiszowaty), Andreas (Andrzej)'.

in depth in the main part of this work, for now it suffices to establish them as markers setting the annotator apart.

This provides us with quite a few identifiers, yet there simply is no perfect match. The initials that the annotator provides do not match any law professor or professor with a degree in law, nor any well-known law graduate affiliated with the University of Leiden during the period between the death of Rogerius and the publication of the *Open Deure* (1649-1651). In my efforts to identify the annotator I therefore widened the search to include scholars who did not completely match the A.W. initials.[40] Another point to consider in this context is why the annotator even chose to only provide his initials and title in the first place instead of his full name. A very obvious first candidate would be Arnold Vinnius, yet there is nothing to suggest that the well-known jurist had any antiquarian nor oriental interests, nor a fascination with travel literature, hermetic philosophy and Neoplatonism. Vinnius, too, therefore seems an unlikely candidate, and his fame would have made it very likely for such interests to be known or discovered in his writings.

The best candidate I have found to date is Antonius Thysius the Younger (1603-1665), son of the more well-known Antonius Thysius the Elder who was a theologian and associate of Walaeus at the University of Leiden.[41] Thysius the Younger studied classical and oriental languages and later also acquired a law degree at the University of Leiden. He stayed on in Leiden with appointments to teach poetry (1635-1639), public law (1639-1648) and rhetoric (from 1648). He followed Daniel Heinsius as university librarian in 1655 and was named historian of the States of Holland in 1658, the same year he was also named rector magnificus. From 1663 to his death in 1668 he was named professor of law.[42] Whilst Thysius had a successful academic career and was a prolific writer he is hardly known today.

His background in classical and oriental languages fits the identity of A.W. perfectly, as do his historiographical exploits. Thysius's father was also additionally a close associate of Walaeus, the teacher of Rogerius, providing a link between the two men, if

[40] One scholar at the University of Leiden who matched the initials would have of course been Rogerius's teacher Antonius Walaeus. Whilst the teacher-pupil association would make him an obvious candidate, Walaeus simply could not have composed the notes for several reasons. Walaeus was a theologian, not a lawyer, and had died in 1639. It is unlikely that Rogerius's writings were sent to the Netherlands prior to that time, if they had even been composed before 1639. Furthermore, we can find references in the annotations to works more recent than 1639, making Walaeus an impossible candidate.

[41] I want to thank Willem Otterspeer and especially Margreet Ashmann for steering me in the direction of Thysius, whom I probably would not have found otherwise.

[42] Karl Enenkel, 'Anthonius Thysius', in *Bio-bibliografie van Nederlandse Humanisten*, ed. Jan Bloemendal and Chris Heesakkers (URL = `https://www.dwc.knaw.nl/thysius-antonius-1613-1665`, Deen Haag: Huygens Instituut KNAW, 2009). See also `https://hoogleraren.leidenuniv.nl/id/2463`.

a tentative one. Thysius the Younger wrote on many different subjects and a look at his publications provides us with further hints that he indeed could be the annotator.[43] Thysius wrote multiple histories, most notable among them a history of the Netherlands named *Compendium historiae Batavicae* (Leiden 1645) which was also translated into German in 1674, and his *Historia navalis* (Leiden 1657), translated into Dutch more than a hundred years later, in 1783. This publication is of special interest: while Thysius is primarily concerned with Dutch naval battles, he also does cover the Dutch expeditions and presence in India.[44] Thysius's *Historia navalis* is what we could call a global maritime history of Dutch achievements at sea, covering Europe, the Americas and Asia. He also wrote a panegyric in honour of Johan Maurits's return from Brazil in 1647, revealing an earlier involvement with Dutch naval exploits.[45] As an expert on Dutch seafaring, Thysius would have been among the first to be approached to annotate the *Open Deure*.

In Thysius's publications we also see distinct antiquarian, philological and theological interests. The *Discursus iuridico-theologicus* (Leiden 1640) and the *Sondaghse Uren, Ofte Poetische bedenckingen over eenighe Historien uyt de H. Schriftuyr genomen* (Leiden 1646) both reveal a preoccupation with theological topics. He was also very active in philology, bringing out many editions of classical authors, mainly variorum editions with the Hackes publisher family who also published the *Open Deure*. Even if Thysius's philological comments in these editions may not have made his own contribution stand out, the range of authors is very interesting.[46] On the one hand we see a deep knowledge of ancient historians, with editions on Sallust, Valerius Maximus, Velleius Paterculus, Justin and the humanist scholar and historian Polydore Vergil. A further interest in humanism and philology is also showcased by editions of Erasmus's letters and Lipsius's *Roma Illustrata*. Thysius also authored editions of Seneca's tragedies and a posthumously published commentary on Aulus Gellius's *Attic Nights*, a very important text for Vossius and other authors cited regularly in the annotations of the *Open Deure*. Lastly, Thysius also published two editions of patristic authors, namely Lactantius and Arnobius. Both are referenced in the *Open Deure*, and Lactantius, one of A.W.'s most referenced patristic

[43] A full list of Thysius's publications can be found in Margreet Ahsmann and Robert Feenstra, *Bibliografie van Hoogleraren in de Rechten Aan de Leidse Universiteit Tot 1811* (Amsterdam, Oxford and New York: B.V. Noord-Hollandsche Uitgevers Maatschappij, 1984), 241-254.

[44] Antonius Thysius, *Historia navalis: sive, celeberrimorum prœliorum, quæ mari ab antiquissimis temporibus usque ad pacem Hispanicam Batavi, Fœderatiq ; Belgæ, utplurimum victores gesserunt, luculenta descriptio* (Leiden: Ex officina Joannis Maire, 1657).

[45] On this American aspect of the *Historia navalis* see Michiel van Groesen, 'Heroic Memories', in *The Legacy of Dutch Brazil*, ed. Michiel van Groesen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 215-217.

[46] On the philological aspect see Enenkel, 'Anthonius Thysius'.

authors, takes on an especially important role in the annotations.

We thus see that Thysius fulfils all the various scholarly characteristics that I have attributed to the annotator. Thysius had a law degree, but was at his core a historian, an expert on Dutch naval history and deeply interested and involved in philology, with an intense antiquarian interest being visible from the numerous editions that he authored. Additionally, he also was well acquainted with patristic literature, a very important range of sources in the annotations of the *Open Deure*. All of this is still insufficient to definitively identify him with A.W.; nevertheless, Thysius does present the best match for the annotator to date and fulfils all the necessary requirements, apart from his own initials diverging from 'A.W.' The question remains why Thysius would have chosen to sign only with his initials.

1.4 Theoretical Approaches and Structure

My thesis builds on recent developments in the fields of global intellectual history and the history of religion. While the focus on political theory inherent to the Cambridge School has led most intellectual history in the last decades to focus on a political history of ideas which is inherently European, the stress on contextualism remains a contemporary concern and is integral to my own work.[47] The specific lens of the Cambridge School has unfortunately also led intellectual history as a field to have a very Eurocentrist or Western focus, largely ignoring developments of ideas on other continents as well as the latter's contribution to global structures and intellectual processes such as the Enlightenment.[48] In the last decade *global* intellectual history has sought to remedy this situation by using the approaches of its parent field global history, in turn trying to distance itself from the perceived 'older' field of world history. Thus global intellectual history seeks to abandon spatial containers and to turn the focal point toward global processes and transnational exchanges, as well as looking into synchronous developments and the re-appropriation of ideas rather than earlier dispersion models, highlighting the importance above all of local agents. Nevertheless, global intellectual history very often remains Eurocentric in its foci and frameworks and still reliant on the Skinnerian

[47] On Skinner's basis for intellectual history see Quentin Skinner, 'Meaning and Understanding in the History of Ideas', *History and Theory* 8, no. 1 (1969): 3–53; Kenneth R. Minogue, 'Method in Intellectual History: Quentin Skinner's Foundations', *Philosophy* 56, no. 218 (1981): 533–552.

[48] On the Historiography of the Enlightenment and newer developments within global intellectual history in this notoriously Eurocentric field of research, see Sebastian Conrad, 'Enlightenment in Global History: A Historiographical Critique', *The American Historical Review* 117, no. 4 (2012): 999–1027.

fixation with European political theory.[49]

Overcoming Eurocentrism is a key goal of global history and its intellectual sub-field, as a global history should, by definition, not be Eurocentric. This is not always an easy task, as Europe looms large in the history of ideas. I myself will focus on a European text, with the annotations forming probably the most European element of the *Open Deure*. I will attempt, however, to integrate the *Open Deure* in larger, boundary-crossing spaces, applying what Sanjay Subrahmanyam has coined *Connected Histories* - a departure from focussing on specific nation states or 'civilisations', and instead shifting the point of view to actors and connections.[50] An inherent danger of a global intellectual history is one which the 'older' world history framework exemplifies, namely a purely macro-analytical approach. Its most extreme form is exemplified in total history, with the aim of being a 'history of everything'; such works have enjoyed an uninterrupted popularity, with recent monographs on global histories ranging from commodities like cotton to concepts such as war.[51] Whilst such grand narratives seem to enjoy wide popular success, the bulk of historical scholarship should and, from a practical perspective need remain on a smaller frame. Global does not automatically mean planetary, especially, as Moyn and Sartori remind us, since the *truly* global has never existed in the first place, neither in modernity nor in a pre-modern setting.[52] How then should we understand *global*? Instead of taking a grand scale of analysis as a given we need to understand global (intellectual) history within the framework of a general spatial turn, which seeks to overcome older container-thinking, rooted primarily in the nation state, but also extending to conceptions such as civilisation.[53] Big therefore need

[49] For a good example of this see Samuel Moyn and Andrew Sartori, 'A Framework for Debate', in *Global Intellectual History*, ed. Samuel Moyn and Andrew Sartori (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), and most of the articles in this volume which merely continues the Cambridge School style intellectual history on a larger spatial level. For critiques of this methodological framework see Sanjay Subrahmanyam, 'Global Intellectual History Beyond Hegel and Marx', *History and Theory* 54, no. 1 (2015): 126–137; and more broadly Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009).

[50] The theoretical outlines are found in Sanjay Subrahmanyam, 'Connected Histories: Notes Towards a Reconfiguration of Early Modern Eurasia', *Modern Asian Studies* 31, no. 3 (1997): 735–762; practical examples of Subrahmanyam's framework, in my opinion fully compatible with a global intellectual history approach, can found in Sanjay Subrahmanyam, 'Intertwined Histories: Crónica and Tārīkh in the Sixteenth-Century Indian Ocean World', *History and Theory* 49, no. 4 (2010): 118–145; and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, 'On World Historians in the Sixteenth Century', *Representations* 91, no. 1 (2005): 26–57.

[51] Sebastian Conrad, *What Is Global History?* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2016), 117; c.f. Sven Beckert, *Empire of Cotton: A Global History* (New York: Vintage, 2015); Gérard Chaliand, *A Global History of War: From Assyria to the Twenty-First Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014).

[52] Moyn and Sartori, 'A Framework for Debate', 21.

[53] Conrad, *What Is Global History?*, 115.

not be the agenda; rather the goal is to overcome the boundary of the nation state as the arena of historical research and, whilst not abandoning Europe, to have Europe and the 'West' to be equals with what in older scholarship usually remained as the 'Rest'.[54] In this thesis I aim to use a micro-historical source, namely the annotations of the *Open Deure*, to illustrate the larger connections of the *Open Deure* and of the kind of antiquarian scholarship that A.W. engages in. While this is *a priori* a European history, there are, as we shall see, connected histories that span continents and go from Europe to India and back to Europe again, just as Rogerius himself did. I will pick this thread up again in the last part of this work.

The thesis is structured in a three-tier manner. After the introduction I will move onto a discussion of pertinent literature on the topics which will be of interest throughout the work. The main analysis then follows in a three part structure. I will begin with an overview of the annotations of the *Open Deure* and a survey of the various elements and discussed literature we find in the footnotes of Rogerius's text. As A.W.'s erudition shows itself throughout the annotations, this is a good way to introduce the most important elements and texts he makes use of. I will then discuss the main framework of A.W.'s analysis, which follows the early modern academic genre of 'history of idolatry' which scholars such as Gerhard Vossius or John Selden also engaged in.[55] In a third and last step I will focus on how A.W., in key chapters and footnotes, outlines a Brahmin version of Perennial Philosophy compatible with Christianity. In the concluding chapter I will try to return to the questions I have raised here, find, if possible, an overarching strategy or leitmotif in the annotations, and integrate the *Open Deure* in the larger intellectual spheres of the seventeenth century. Before moving onto the analysis I will now first give a quick survey of the relevant literature.

[54] The classic example of such a narrative is of course William H. McNeill, *The Rise of the West: A History of the Human Community* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1991); Yet newer scholarship by renowned intellectual historians is not free from such West vs. Rest or West vs. East frameworks as the example of Anthony Pagden shows, even if he sees the limits of such a narrative himself at time, see Anthony Pagden, *Worlds at War: The 2,500-Year Struggle Between East and West* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

[55] Dmitri Levitin, 'From Sacred History to the History of Religion: Paganism, Judaism, and Christianity in European Historiography from Reformation to "Enlightenment"', *The Historical Journal* 55, no. 4 (2012): 1132f.

2 State of Research

2.1 Rogerius, the *Open Deure* and A.W.

As probably is already quite clear from the above considerations, research on Rogerius is quite scarce and basically non-existent on A.W.[56] The lack of research regarding the contribution of A.W. is likely to be traced back to Caland himself, who ironically is still the source of the best information gathered on the annotator. For Caland's indological purposes the annotations, which were meant for a seventeenth-century reading public, were clearly outdated and not at all pertinent to the accurate portrayal of southern Indian Hinduism which Rogerius was famous for up to Caland's day. As such it was a rational decision for him to substitute those notes with his own, which instead elucidate on parts of Rogerius's treatise, clarifying names, sectarian affiliations and the like, things which are often confusing in the original. As Caland's critical edition became the standard version of the *Open Deure* to be consulted rather than the original of 1651, this also meant that the annotations were largely disregarded by scholars in the last one hundred years. A few exceptions do occur in recent scholarship which shall be explored below. In general the old error of identifying A.W. with Wissowatius, even though it had been disproved by Caland, persists until today and the annotations are rarely mentioned at all when discussing the *Open Deure*.

The lack of scholarship on Rogerius himself and the *Open Deure* is actually rather surprising, as the impact of this work was profound, especially in its German and French translations. Moreover, this impact has not gone unnoticed by historians and most scholarship concerning itself with early portrayals of India and Indian religious traditions mentions the work, though mostly only in passing. This is equally true for modern scholarship as well as older works: in the nineteenth century Rogerius was regularly cited as a source for South Indian Hinduism itself and the *Open Deure* remained an important frame of reference past the turn of the century, which also explains Caland's critical edition of 1915.[57] In the twentieth century the focus shifted more and more to his

[56] The only exception for the latter is Bettina Noak's article on A.W., yet since she follows the interpretation that A.W. actually refers to the Unitarian Wissowatius, this is of little use to my analysis. I hope to have sufficiently proven that A.W. was in fact not Wissowatius, and shall prove below that he was no Unitarian either, but followed different religious interests. C.f. Noak, 'Glossaries and Knowledge-Transfer'; this is unfortunately also taken up by Charles H. Parker, 'The Seduction of Idols: Dutch Calvinist Readings of Worship and Society in Seventeenth-Century Asia', in *Semper Reformanda* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2018), 172ff., who nevertheless recognises the *Open Deure's* collaborative nature as being relevant for its universalistic tendencies and discusses the philological-historical character of the annotations.

[57] See further Willem Caland, 'De ontdekkingsgeschiedenis van den Veda', *Verslagen en mededeelingen der Koninklijke Akademie van Wetenschappen Afdeeling Letterkunde* 5, no. 3 (1918): 261–334.

role in the early scholarship on Hinduism.[58] Rogerius is thus still most often presented in line with similar early European writers such as Henry Lord, Phillip Baldaeus or François Bernier, or often merely noted for authoring the first publication which included a translation from a Sanskrit text, sometimes specifically noted also for the text itself (namely Bhartrhari).[59]

In Raymond Schwab's classic *The Oriental Renaissance*, Rogerius is thus accordingly put into the 'doctrinal stages', along with Lord, Bernier and the Jesuits' *Lettres édifiantes*, as well as, more uncommonly, Athanasius Kircher.[60] Whilst Schwab therefore puts Rogerius in a common chronology of growing knowledge of Hinduism, he also mentions some peculiar and interesting aspects of the *Open Deure*: he stresses Rogerius's insistence on the Brahmins' monotheism and the monistic undertone present in the work.[61] As I aim to show, this monistic leitmotif is more of a feature of the notes, rather than the main text, but the annotations are not discussed by Schwab.[62]

In the extensive work of Donald Lach, Rogerius is mentioned for Bhartrhari and the references to the Mahabharata in the *Open Deure*, but Lach also stresses the importance of the Brahmin pandits for Rogerius's writings.[63] Lach gives a very good summary of the content of the *Open Deure* and explains the significance of the work in the history of scholarship on Hinduism. Most of his long treatment on Rogerius is actually a translated extract of the *Open Deure*; Lach picks what he considers the most relevant points from across the two parts of Rogerius's treatise and translates these into modern English, giving the Sanskrit terms for Rogerius's often confused names of gods, traditions and the like. As such his translation is a useful tool to understand the content of the *Open*

[58] A work at the crossroads is Ernst Windisch, *Geschichte Der Sanskrit-Philologie Und Indischen Altertumskunde* (Strasbourg: Karl Trübner, 1917), 1-3; A work which fits in neither category but discusses Rogerius briefly and is also subsequently cited by later scholars is Heert Terpstra, *De Nederlanders in Voor-Indie* (Amsterdam: P.N. van Kampen & Zoon, 1947), 183-188. Terpstra gives a short overview of Rogerius's life, including mentioning that he was a student of Walaeus, and a very superficial account of the *Open Deure*. Caland's introduction remains more in-depth and Terpstra adds nothing to his discussion of the *Open Deure* nor Rogerius.

[59] See for example Peter James Marshall, *The British Discovery of Hinduism in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 18.

[60] See Raymond Schwab, *The Oriental Renaissance: Europe's Rediscovery of India and the East: 1680-1880*, trans. Gene Patterson-Black and Victor Reinking (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), 138-140; This list of seventeenth- and early-eighteenth-century pioneers on the study of India and Indian religion has been very common in the literature, see for instance Sweetman, *Mapping Hinduism*.

[61] Schwab, *The Oriental Renaissance*, 140.

[62] The same argument could also be made for Schwab's claim that Rogerius identifies the 'hidden paganism' alluded to in the title with non-Christian mysteries (and also the Indian traditions). Schwab here sees Rogerius as an antiquarian, whilst this role clearly falls to A.W. See ibid., 138.

[63] Donald Frederick Lach and Edwin J. Van Kley, *Asia in the Making of Europe: A Century of Advance. Volume III* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 1029f.

Deure, especially as Lach further expands on the discussed material in the footnotes and refers the reader to similar primary sources as well as secondary literature.[64] Whilst Lach therefore gives a good impression of Rogerius' writing, presenting these extracts over twenty-five pages, he does not attempt to analyse the work apart from superficial comments such as saying that the separation in a religious and non-religious treatise does not do justice to Hinduism, a topic which I shall return to later on.[65] Even more than Schwab, Lach therefore sees Rogerius exclusively in the light of a chronology of scholarship on Hinduism. Lach nevertheless stresses the importance of Rogerius's Brahmin informers as well as his surprisingly value-free descriptions.[66]

2.2 Newer Research into the Influence of European Activities in Asia

The works I have discussed, as well as the numerous other older scholarship mentioning Rogerius only in passing, therefore definitely acknowledge Rogerius's importance in the development of indology as a discipline and his pioneering status of publishing a work translated from Sanskrit. Above all, it is clear how accurate and factual his descriptions of the various religious traditions in South India are in comparison with contemporary travellers' accounts. Nevertheless, this scholarship tends to view Rogerius from an ahistorical perspective by seeing the *Open Deure* solely as part of the tradition of scholarship on Hinduism; beyond recounting the relative accuracy and value-free judgements of Rogerius, such scholarship does not assess the work in the context of its meaning and influence in Europe.[67]

Even though Rogerius and the *Open Deure* still take on this same role in most current research, some newer scholarship has begun to investigate the *Open Deure* within the context of European intellectual history and the influence of travel accounts on intellectual developments in the European Republic of Letters and during the early Enlightenment.[68]

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[64] This is much like Caland's footnotes, in which he explains ambiguous terminology and refers to secondary literature when needed. See the notes in Rogerius and Caland, *Open Deure 1915*.

[65] See Lach and Kley, *A Century of Advance*, 1030 for this comment. The extracts are to be found 1031-1055.

[66] Ibid., 1056.

[67] Another monograph which acknowledges Rogerius's importance and discusses him briefly is Neill, *A History of Christianity in India*, 379-380, 419.

[68] A popular topic in which Rogerius is often mentioned in passim is Sati, see for instance Andrea Major, '"Pious Flames": European Encounters with Sati Before 1805', *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies* 27, no. 2 (2004): 158; Meenakshi Jain, *Sati: Evangelicals, Baptist Missionaries, and the Changing Colonial Discourse* (New Delhi: Aryan Books International, 2016); The Open Deure also served as an inspiration in regards to Sati especially for John Locke, see Daniel Carey, 'The Problem

Will Sweetman's *Mapping Hinduism* retraces the classic narrative of growing knowledge on Hinduism, and besides Rogerius and the *Open Deure*, discusses Henry Lord, Bartholomäus Ziegenbalg and the *Lettres édifiantes et curieuses* of the Jesuits.[69] Sweetman does follow a traditional narrative, but makes it a part of the analysis itself: instead of viewing these authors and their writings from an indological perspective, Sweetman investigates them from the point of view of the development of the academic study of religion in Europe and how this manifested in their descriptions of what would become known as Hinduism. One of Sweetman's main arguments is that early modern travellers did not see a unitary Hinduism, neither as a single heathenism nor as a pan-Indian religion like later eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Europeans.[70] He convincingly shows how the definition of 'religion' in Europe itself led the writers to describe traditions in India in a certain way.[71]

In this context Rogerius takes on a primary role: the development of the conceptualisation and reconceptualisation of the term 'religion' had not yet been completed and Rogerius himself only uses 'religion' (*religie*) four times, instead preferring the term *Gods-dienst*, which applies to actual worship rather than a modern abstract concept of religion.[72] Lach had critiqued that Rogerius had not done justice to Hinduism by dividing the book into 'Manners' and 'Beliefs and Worship' sections. Sweetman shows this to be ahistorical as such a conception was not yet natural in Europe at the time either and is instead evidence of the shift in the conception of religion happening at the time.[73] Sweetman also acknowledges that it may not have been Rogerius himself who was responsible for the final structure of the *Open Deure*.[74] Apart from this the

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of Sati: John Locke's Moral Anthropology and the Foundations of Natural Law', *Journal of Early Modern History* 18, nos. 1-2 (2014): 69–100.

[69] Sweetman's treatment of Rogerius is the most in-depth to be found in newer scholarship and apart from Caland in general, as Lach confines himself to translating parts of the *Open Deure*. Sweetman, *Mapping Hinduism*, 89-103.

[70] 154-156 Sweetman, *Mapping Hinduism*; see also Raf Gelder's longue durée studies on the European view of Indian traditions, which also stress the role of the Renaissance: Raf Gelders, 'Genealogy of Colonial Discourse: Hindu Traditions and the Limits of European Representation', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 51, no. 3 (2009): 563–589; Raf Gelders and S. N. Balagangadhara, 'Rethinking Orientalism: Colonialism and the Study of Indian Traditions', *History of Religions* 51, no. 2 (2011): 101–128.

[71] 'India' itself was another term which had only started developing, and Sweetman shows how this, together with the emerging concept of 'religion' meant that early modern writers described Indian beliefs in a very different way than later travellers and scholars. Sweetman, *Mapping Hinduism*, 162-163.

[72] Ibid., 93, also 160. As I will discuss below, A.W. uses *religie* a lot more frequently and of course also uses 'religion' as a more or less closed off and defined entity, so that comparative religion actually becomes possible, something not attempted by Rogerius himself.

[73] Ibid., 93.

[74] Ibid., 91 and 99.

annotator is not discussed. Sweetman therefore shows convincingly how Rogerius's descriptions of Indian religion were bound up with evolving concepts of religion.[75] The coeval developments in the missionary sphere in India are discussed in the work of Ines Županov, who shows that the Jesuit method of accommodation not only meant an effectual division between religion and culture, but that the conception of religion was also shifting in the course of accommodation.[76]

There has been a more general historiographical trend in which the broad category of travel accounts has been increasingly viewed as formative of the intellectual landscape of the European Republic of Letters and the early Enlightenment.[77] Within this context Rogerius, the *Open Deure* and A.W. play an important role which few historians have as of yet looked into. A study in which Rogerius is of pivotal importance is Urs App's *Birth of Orientalism*, in which the *Open Deure* is presented as a pioneering work with a long reception history.[78] In this monograph App traces the development of the encounter with and scholarship on Asian religions through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and shows the impact of this encounter on key thinkers of the Enlightenment. Even though Rogerius is not treated as a case study by App, the *Open Deure* is relevant as one of the foundational texts for the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century discourse on Oriental religion(s) and its importance for the intellectual developments in Europe. App shows, in a chronological manner, how early information, especially from the seventeenth century, was still deeply influential and formative for great high Enlightenment thinkers; the *Open Deure* is important through its impact on Bernier, John Zephenia Holwell, Diderot and Anquetil-Duperron.[79].

[75] 'Far from the religious beliefs and practices of India being forced into a preconceived mould of an objectified heathen "religion", the concept "religion", and the concept which will later be named "Hinduism", are coeval. Works such as Roger's played a crucial role in the contemporaneous formation of both *concepts*.' Sweetman, *Mapping Hinduism*, 102.

[76] See Ines G. Županov, '"One Civility, but Multiple Religions": Jesuit Mission among St. Thomas Christians in India (16th -17th Centuries).', *Journal of Early Modern History* 9, nos. 3-4 (2005): 284–325; Ines G. Županov, *Missionary Tropics: The Catholic Frontier in India (16th-17th Centuries)* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005).

[77] For an overview on this see especially Joan-Pau Rubiés, *Travellers and Cosmographers: Studies in the History of Early Modern Travel and Ethnology* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2007); Anthony Grafton, *New Worlds, Ancient Texts: The Power of Tradition and the Shock of Discovery* (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995); Jürgen Osterhammel, *Unfabling the East: The Enlightenments Encounter with Asia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018); Anthony Pagden, *European Encounters with the New World: From Renaissance to Romanticism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993).

[78] Urs App, *The Birth of Orientalism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010).

[79] See ibid., 159 and 166; 330; 411; 416-417 respectively. App arranges the most important thinkers and their primary work into separate chapters, whilst recounting the influences that played the largest role in these works. Apart from Voltaire and Diderot there are chapters on Ziegenbald and La Croze, De Guignes, Ramsay, Holwell Anquetil-Dupperon and Volney.

Lastly, in the work of Joan-Pau Rubiès, Rogerius is often mentioned as an important early contributor of reliable information on India and its religious traditions, however Rubiès also stresses Rogerius's reliance on native informers and his own admission of the contribution of Padmanabha and the other Brahmins with whom he conversed.[80] Rubiès discusses the *Open Deure* in various articles only in passing; it is noteworthy, though, that in these instances he also discusses the annotator A.W. and his role in the monograph. Rubiès points out the underlying idea of hidden monotheism in A.W.'s treatise and its close doctrinal proximity to Nobili's approach of accommodationism which led to the Malabarian rites controversy.[81] He goes as far as to say:

> The fascinating anonymous preface to Rogerius's *De open-deure tot het verborhegen heydendom* (1651), published in French in 1670 as *La porte ouverte pour parvenir à la connoissance du paganisme caché* to become the key pre-Enlightenment work on Indian gentilism, turned back on the strict Calvinist tendency to disregard all pagan traditions as worthless idolatry and espoused the more liberal thesis of a hidden philosophical elite monotheism, which (as we have seen) was also central to the Jesuit strategy, and which, with small modifications, would provide the basis for Voltaire's libertine Deism. (It was also the thesis adopted by many antiquarian scholars, like Ralph Cudworth or William Warburton in England, to solve the riddle of pre-Mosaic Egypt and its hieroglyphs).[82]

2.3 The History of Religion and its Place in Enlightenment Narratives

Rogerius's *Open Deure* can be viewed as a travel account and the ethnological writing typical of its time, yet the it differs quite strongly from other such treatises in respects of detail, approach and scholarly expertise, the latter mostly due to A.W.'s contribution. As already very briefly outlined, the importance of such writing for the European Republic of Letters and the early Enlightenment was profound. The rise of Baconian science during the early modern crisis of Aristotelianism led to a changing framework of epistemology, knowledge and the sciences, in which empirical observations took on a primary function. Travel accounts, being first-hand observations which often

[80] See Rubiés, 'Reassessing 'the Discovery of Hinduism': Jesuit Discourse on Gentile Idolatry and the European Republic of Letters', 126, for the importance of the *Open Deure* 124, 133, 135, 144.
[81] Ibid., 130.
[82] Joan-Pau Rubiés, 'From Antiquarianism to Philosophical History: India, China and the World History of Religion in European Thought (1600–1770)', in *Antiquarianism and Intellectual Life in Early Modern Europe and China*, ed. Peter N. Miller and François Louis (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000), 341.

contradicted ancient authors' writings, had an important role to play within the early modern turn toward the empirical.[83] Moreover, ethnological and ethnographic works proved to be a crucial weapon of those trying to criticise European colonisation or the political and religious *status quo* in Europe itself.[84] The experiences with American and Asian cultures and their histories and beliefs threw open a Pandora's box on the authority of biblical chronology and ancient knowledge and questioned the very foundations of the European intellectual tradition; libertines and enlightened philosophers readily used the non-European *other* for radical agendas, be it for religious tolerance, deism or to criticise kings and governmental affairs.[85]

Nevertheless, most of the scholarship within the fields of the history of ideas and intellectual history remains conservative in the way it portrays the Enlightenment, following in the footsteps of nineteenth-century scholars and their ideological view of the Enlightenment as a movement solely made up of elite freethinkers and deists, who supposedly championed rationality and secularism. The focus of the historiography on topics such as the 'radical Enlightenment' shows the continuing popularity of this narrative.[86] Moreover, actively or passively, Enlightenment scholarship also remains very Eurocentric, insisting and investigating the Enlightenment as a purely European development, usually limited to a few Western European states whilst espousing its characteristically 'European' nature.

The global turn has also reached the domain of intellectual history, yet a large part of global intellectual history relies on Marxist-Weberian frameworks and looks at the nineteenth century which is politically-economically dominated by the West - therefore remaining Eurocentric in its approach and subject matter if not in its

[83] The classic study cited for this nowadays is Paul Hazard, *La Crise de La Conscience Européenne, 1680-1715* (Paris: Boivin, 1935). Hazard is nevertheless a continuation of older nineteenth-century English scholarship promoting the idea of a secular and rational Enlightenment, which should be viewed very critically. Joan-Pau Rubiés has published extensively on this subject, see especially Rubiés, 'Instructions for Travellers' and Rubiés, 'Travel Writing as a Genre: Facts, Fictions and the Invention of a Scientific Discourse in Early Modern Europe'.

[84] For an introduction on both travel writing more generally, as well as accounts regarding ethnography, ethnology and early anthropology, see Osterhammel, *Unfabling the East*; Justin Stagl, *A History of Curiosity: The Theory of Travel 1550-1800* (London: Routledge, 1995).

[85] Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, *How to Write the History of the New World: Histories, Epistemologies, and Identities in the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic World* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001); Hunt et al., *The Book that Changed Europe*; App, *The Birth of Orientalism*; Joan-Pau Rubiés, 'The Jesuit Discovery of Hinduism: Antonio Rubino's Account of the History and Religion of Vijayanagara (1608)', *Archiv für Religionsgeschichte* 3, no. 1 (2001): 210–256.

[86] See both Margaret C Jacob, *The Radical Enlightenment: Pantheists, Freemasons, and Republicans*, vol. 3 (Abingdon-on-Thames: Taylor & Francis, 1981); and of course the highly polemical works of Jonathan Israel, who nevertheless excels in the breadth if not necessarily depth of his research Jonathan I Israel, *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity 1650-1750* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

geographical scope.[87] At the same time, scholars such as App, Rubiès and Sweetman have demonstrated the impact of the encounter within Asian traditions on the history of religion and its reach into antiquarian scholarship and the foundations of Enlightenment thought.[88]

Another important area of research has started to develop in the last two decades which aims to re-evaluate the position of religion and the scholarship on Christianity and other religions during the early modern period. Such scholarship tries to deconstruct the Weberian narrative of *Entzauberung*, secularisation and reason which is commonly associated with the long Enlightenment.[89] One avenue of research has shown that, if only seen as a purely deist or pantheist movement, an important albeit small part of the intellectual developments of the age, the Enlightenment is severely misrepresented: the period needs to instead be understood within a still dominant Christian framework.[90] This has lead some to call the more conservative or moderate wing of Enlightenment thinking 'religious' Enlightenment or Catholic Enlightenment, in contrast to a binary presentation of Enlightenment on one side and Counter-Enlightenment on the other.[91]

The last historiographical sub-field I need mention is certainly the most niche and most recent development, namely the scholarship on the history of idolatry.[92] Still a little explored subject within historiography, scholarship on idolatry was an enormously important field during the seventeenth century, driven by earlier chronological debates and new philological approaches towards the Bible, especially the Old Testament.[93]

[87] See Moyn and Sartori, 'A Framework for Debate'; as well as the justified critique by Sanjay Subrahmanyam Subrahmanyam, 'Global Intellectual History Beyond Hegel and Marx'.

[88] A very good overview of newer scholarship which tries to break with the Eurocentric narrative as well as suggestions for new approaches can be found in Conrad, 'Enlightenment in Global History'.

[89] See Jonathan Sheehan, 'Enlightenment, Religion, and the Enigma of Secularization: A Review Essay', *The American Historical Review* 108, no. 4 (2003): 1061–1080; Jonathan Sheehan, 'When Was Disenchantment? History and the Secular Age', in *Varieties of Secularism in a Secular Age*, ed. Michael Warner et al. (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2010), 217–242.

[90] There is a vast availability of good scholarship on this, for a good starting point see, Stephen J. Barnett, *The Enlightenment and Religion: The Myths of Modernity* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003); William J. Bulman and Robert G. Ingram, eds., *God in the Enlightenment* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016); Mark Curran, *Atheism, Religion and Enlightenment in Pre-Revolutionary Europe* (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer Ltd, 2012).

[91] David Sorkin, *The Religious Enlightenment: Protestants, Jews, and Catholics from London to Vienna* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011); Ulrich L. Lehner, *The Catholic Enlightenment: The Forgotten History of a Global Movement* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016); for the Counter-Enlightenment see Darrin M McMahon, *Enemies of the Enlightenment: The French Counter-Enlightenment and the Making of Modernity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

[92] See for this Levitin, 'From Sacred History to the History of Religion', 1132f. As well as again the work of Jonathan Sheehan: Jonathan Sheehan, 'Sacred and Profane: Idolatry, Antiquarianism and the Polemics of Distinction in the Seventeenth Century', *Past and Present* 192, no. 1 (2006): 35–66; Jonathan Sheehan, 'The Altars of the Idols: Religion, Sacrifice, and the Early Modern Polity', *Journal of the History of Ideas* 67, no. 4 (2006): 649–674.

[93] Levitin, 'From Sacred History to the History of Religion', 1129-1130; On the chronological scholarship

Important names within this antiquarian field include John Selden, Samuel Bochart and arguably most importantly Gerhard Vossius and his work *De theologia gentili* (Amsterdam 1641). For Vossius understanding idolatry was necessary for understanding religion, as idolatry was what religion was *not*.[94]

It is into this framework of antiquarian scholarship on the history of idolatry that we have to place the annotator of the *Open Deure*. A.W. references Vossius and Selden regularly and participates in the same debate on the history of idolatry, trying not only to expand the focus to India and the religion of the Brahmins, but to effectively pen a universal treatise.[95] This addition to the dry and factual work of Rogerius was probably the most interesting element for contemporary readers of the *Open Deure* as it contextualised Rogerius's text and gave it relevance. The annotations gave the monograph a justified purpose, lacking from purely ethnological accounts by other Protestants such as Ziegenbalg, whose work was not published with the argument that since it did not further missionary objectives there was no reason to do so. The additions of the French and German translations build on the scholarship of A.W. and as such already prove the key role of the annotations for the reception of the monograph. It is to the *Open Deure* and more especially to its antiquarian annotations that I will now turn.

which was foundational for this development see especially the work by Anthony Grafton, for instance Anthony Grafton, 'Dating History: The Renaissance & the Reformation of Chronology', *Daedalus* 132, no. 2 (2003): 74–85; and his monumental study of Scaliger: Anthony Grafton, *Joseph Scaliger: A Study in the History of Classical Scholarship: Historical Chronology*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983–1993).

[94] 'Put more succinctly, to understand "religion" we must understand idolatry: it was only by showing what religion was not, that religion could be defined. Vossius's 1,500-page treatise on the "not", on all the deviations from religion known to early modern scholarship, tried to crystallize the distinction between pious religion and impious error. In his terms, then, "false religion" was a meaningless idea. Either religion is true, or it is not religion.' Sheehan, 'Sacred and Profane', 51-52.

[95] See also Parker, 'The Seduction of Idols', 171-175.

3 An Outline of the Annotations and A.W.'s Sources

To tackle the comprehensive treatise that the annotator created it is necessary to first outline A.W.'s sources and the various scholarly frameworks he works in, before going into detail on the main points he tries to make. The annotations can broadly be seen in two ways. On the one hand, they are scholarly footnotes because they refer the reader to relevant literature on a topic which is discussed in the main body of the text, namely Rogerius's writing. The referenced material consists of ancient and moderns sources as well as the Old and New Testament. Within the antiquarian field that A.W. was working in his style and references follow familiar patterns and do not stand out.

On the other hand, though, the annotations are much more than mere references and can be seen as a treatise by themselves, only taking the broadest inspiration from Rogerius's discourse and also using considerable space, at times covering the majority of the page. In this A.W. widely differs from the majority of antiquarian scholarship which he refers to and serves as his own inspiration, and also differs from the travel literature and ethnographic writing in which we must place Rogerius's text. Even very erudite scholars working on topics similar to what A.W. is talking about usually limited themselves to marginal notes or, as in the case of John Selden, short footnotes.[96] The annotations of the *Open Deure* are made up of common shorthand references to the Bible, classical sources or humanist works. Very often A.W. is not happy with merely referencing and many footnotes are extensive treatments of topics Rogerius discusses or themes merely touched upon tangentially by Rogerius and used as an excuse by A.W. to discuss what he considers relevant, regularly even without any references. In their totality the annotations are not a clearly structured text, but they are nevertheless a *text* with scattered 'chapters'. A.W. also often refers the reader back to key chapters of the *Open Deure* where he writes on what *he*, and not Rogerius, is trying to tell the reader. I have therefore treated the annotations more as a narrative of itself, rather than analysing them as footnotes in a historiographical sense or as para-text.[97]

The annotations comprise an array of topics which I will outline here. It is not easily manageable to quantify the ratio of the notes to the main body of the *Open Deure* without exact word counts, but a rough estimation would be that in most chapters the notes take up about a third of the total text and that this would also be a good

[96] John Selden, *De diis Syris Syntagmata II. Adversaria nempe de Numinibus commentitiis in vetere Instrumento memoratis. Accedunt fere quae sunt reliqua Syrorum. Prisca porro Arabum, Aegyptiorum, Persarum, Afrorum, Europaeorum item Theologia, subinde illustratur* (London: Stansbeius, 1617).

[97] See on this respectively Anthony Grafton, *The Footnote: A Curious History* (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999); Gerard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, trans. Jane E. Lewin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

supposition for the monograph as a whole; the exact ratio of course varies, and in some chapters one finds virtually no footnotes at all, whereas other chapters are almost entirely made up of footnotes.[98]

As it is impossible to discuss the annotator's footnotes without also discussing the implications of him citing specific works and people, I will here establish an outline of the themes and scholarly frameworks that the notes are written in, providing a contextual basis for the annotations. A.W. considers some topics as very important and merely touches on others; the ones outlined here are all recurrent throughout the annotations. He also references a vast amount of ancient, Renaissance humanist and contemporary scholarship, which I will discuss separately for each thematic group, even though they do occasionally breach this superimposed structure of mine.

3.1 Classical Sources and Humanism

The works and authors cited in the *Open Deure* reveal the close familiarity A.W. had with Renaissance humanism and classical scholarship, as such works make up the bulk of references. A.W. would be difficult to place within the *querelle des Anciens et des Modernes*, as he relies heavily on classical sources, but often uses humanist writings as well as travel literature to prove the inaccuracy of classical scholarship. Much like Gerhard Vossius and Athanasius Kircher, the annotator can very much be seen as a remnant from the Renaissance, one of the very last scholars who attempted universality in his scope and sources. At his core A.W. is a humanist scholar who is equally familiar with the Old and New Testament as he is with Greek and Roman sources. Moreover, Renaissance scholarship is the most important modern basis for A.W.'s own work. Except for contemporary scholarship which discusses idolatry, on which he is also very well informed, A.W. prefers to cite sixteenth-century sources. As the history of idolatry scholarship forms the theoretical blueprint for the annotations as a whole I will discuss them separately below, focussing here entirely on classical sources and humanist bodies of work.

The Role of Sacred History and the Bible

The annotations are written within an antiquarian and historical framework much informed by sacred and universal historical scholarship. This kind of scholarship, which,

[98] Example chapters with very little footnote text include 2.19 and 2.20 (Rogerius, *Open Deure*, 202-209). Every chapter has at least one footnote. Examples where the annotations make up the bulk of the text are especially prominent in the first half of the second part, especially chapter 2.1 (103-112), which includes a footnotes spanning three pages and completely taking up page 106, and chapter 2.6 (140-144), which was cut from four pages to just a bit more than one page in Caland's edition without A.W.'s notes, c.f. Rogerius and Caland, *Open Deure 1915*, 108-109.

following Dmitri Levitin, I have called 'history of idolatry', stands at the crossroads between an older form of sacred history and more modern models of comparative religion.[99] The Bible, and especially the Old Testament is therefore a prominent source in the annotations, more numerous than any other reference. The Old Testament does not primarily function as scripture in these instances, even though a secondary role can be ascribed to this function, and on occasion the annotator does call on the scriptural truth of the Old Testament. The Old Testament features primarily as a *historical* text, informing the reader on corresponding practices common among the ancient Hebrews.[100] This could take on the form of seemingly factual and value-free comparisons with the Hebrews, yet the overall treatment of the Old Testament Hebrews is telling of the seventeenth-century obsession with Jewish idolatry.[101] Much like we can observe with the Egyptians and Egyptian rituals, Jewish idolatry often plays an important role in a dispersion model, where the Brahmins took over certain practices from the Jews.

Major Sources: Ancient Historians and Geographers

Besides the Old Testament, which is cited most frequently for comparisons with ancient Hebrew practices or when stating religious beliefs, Herodotus forms one of the annotators most important sources. Together with the ancient Hebrews, the Egyptians formed a very important case for comparison for A.W., similar in many ways to Kircher's sophisticated antiquarian scholarship. Herodotus is A.W.'s most important source on Egypt. As such, when a certain ritual or belief seems similar to an Egyptian one, for instance cow or oxen worship (a seventeenth-century favourite), A.W. refers the reader to Herodotus's descriptions of Egypt. The annotator also takes full advantage of Herodotus's wide range of surveyed peoples and uses him as a reference for various other ancient peoples known to the classical world such as the Scythians. Moreover, Herodotus is a major source on the ancient peoples populating India, the infamous *Brachmanes* of the classical world.[102] The reach of Herodotus is widened by Strabo, who together

[99] Levitin, 'From Sacred History to the History of Religion', 1132; Unfortunately I do not have the space here to discuss the development of ecclesiastical history and the role it played in the scholarly developments of the seventeenth century. See for this Anthony Grafton, 'Past Belief: The Fall and Rise of Ecclesiastical History in Early Modern Europe', in *Formations of Belief: Historical Approaches to Religion and the Secular*, ed. Philip Nord et al. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019), 13–40, 244–254.

[100] See on this for instance Guy Stroumsa, 'John Spencer and the Roots of Idolatry', *History of Religions* 41, no. 1 (2001): 1–23; Guy Stroumsa, 'Jewish Myth and Ritual and the Beginnings of Comparative Religion: The Case of Richard Simon', *The Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy* 6, no. 1 (1997): 19–35.

[101] See Sheehan, 'Sacred and Profane', esp. 37.

[102] The very first footnote discussing the etymological connections and the ancient *Brachmanes*. Rogerius, *Open Deure*, [De Zeden der Bramines] 1-2.

with the former is undoubtedly the most important ancient source on other peoples, including the ancient Indians. Strabo is used by A.W. as an authority on many ancient peoples such as Assyrians or Arabs, but even more than Herodotus Strabo features as the ancient authority on the *Brachmanes*. Pausanias takes on a complementary role on ancient geographical knowledge, mostly being cited together with Strabo.

Whilst Herodotus and Strabo are the chief authorities that A.W. uses when it comes to comparisons of practices with the ancient inhabitants of India, he uses a greater host of classical sources for comparisons with the classical world, most especially with Greece and Rome. The most cited of these is Plutarch, who is used as an authority on both Roman and Greek practices and of course as a source on specific individuals. One particular text which is cited multiple times and takes on a larger importance in the annotations is *On the Worship of Isis & Osiris* from the *Moralia*, a text describing the ritual practices of the ancient Egyptians.[103] We see such a dual focus on Greece and Rome on the one hand and Egypt on the other hand also through the references to Diodorus Siculus, the first century BCE Greek historian. Among the remaining most cited authors is Pliny the Elder, whom A.W. cites primarily for Roman customs; we see that A.W. is also familiar with more natural-scientific matters in an episode where he talks about the surface of the moon and compares Pliny with modern assessments on the matter.[104] Lastly there is Cicero, who is referenced for philosophy and, on one occasion, law.[105] These are the authors which feature most dominantly in the annotations; Herodotus is referenced seventeen, Strabo twenty, Plutarch twenty-three, Diodorus Siculus sixteen and Pliny and Cicero each fourteen times. The most important authors for A.W., Steuco and Vossius, are within a similar count with sixteen and twenty-five references respectively.

These authors are the most-cited due to their reach and approach. In addition A.W. uses a vast number of other sources, showing the extent of his humanist learning. The major Greek and Roman poets, namely Homer, Hesiod, Ovid and Vergil, are all referenced in multiple footnotes, at times with quotations.[106] These minor sources often appear in lists of references to a certain topic; when Rogerius writes about ritual washing of dead bodies, for instance, A.W. refers the reader to similar practices outlined in Homer, Ovid, Plutarch and Sueton. The poets are used for ancient mythology, but as

[103] Plutarch, *Plutarch's Moralia*, trans. Frank Cole Babbitt (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press; London: William Heinemann, 1957), 351-383.

[104] Pliny's thesis of vapour is rejected by A.W., but Kepler does not convince him either. Rogerius, *Open Deure*, [Soo vol vlecken is] 115.

[105] Ibid., [Verlaet hy alles] 15.

[106] Apart from Vergil all are quoted five to eight times, Vergil is mentioned four times. Pindar is mentioned only once.

with all the classical sources this is within a comparative framework with the Brahmins. The remaining authors which he references at least three times, namely Xenophon, Diogenes Laertius, Varro, Julius Caesar and Euripides, all play an essential supporting role to the major sources in this framework. One exception that is worth mentioning is Aulus Gellius, who is only referenced one time in the annotations.[107] Nevertheless, Gellius's *Attic Nights* (*Noctes Atticae*) forms the basis for Macrobius's *Saturnalia* as well as being the model for both the *Dies geniales* of Alessandri and Vossius's *De theologia gentili*, therefore taking on a large role in the secondary literature used in the annotations.[108]

Egypt and Hieroglyphs

As is already clear from the usage of classical sources, Egypt was prominent in A.W.'s annotations. Egypt is at the heart of both the history of idolatry framework that the annotator is working in, as well as being of great importance for the kind of ancient wisdom narrative that A.W. defends, based on Agostino Steuco's *De perenni philosophia*. Between these two conceptual structures Egypt and the Egyptian mysteries take on a similar role as the religion of the Brahmins and the ancient Jews. The references to Egypt in the footnotes are consequently vast: apart from the classical sources already discussed above, A.W. cites a great number of other sources, including Patristic, Neo-Platonic and Renaissance concordist works, which will be discussed separately below.[109]

Scholarship has increasingly shown that the Renaissance humanist rediscovery of Egypt was majorly driven by two books seeking to untangle ancient Egyptian wisdom.[110] One was the *Corpus Hermeticum*, on which I will say more shortly. The other was Horapollo's *Hieroglyphica*, a supposedly ancient text, spuriously explaining Egyptian hieroglyphs.[111] In the annotations we find Horapollo only a single time, yet Horapollo is the major inspiration and source for another work which A.W. uses as a key source on Egypt, namely Pierio Valeriano's *Hieroglyphica, sive, De sacris Aegyptiorvm literis*

[107] Rogerius, *Open Deure*, [Tot een Opper-kleet]47.

[108] See Cornelis S. M. Rademaker, *Life and Work of Gerardus Joannes Vossius (1577-1649)*, in collab. with Herman Paul Doezema, Respublica Literaria Neerlandica 5 (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1981), 291.

[109] Following Constance Blackwell, I will use the term 'concordism' in place of 'syncretism', as the latter term was used mainly as a derogatory identifier by its detractors. See Constance Blackwell, 'Neo-Platonic Modes Of Concordism Versus Definitions Of Difference: Simplicius, Augustinus Steuco And Ralph Cudworth Versus Marco Antonio Zimara And Benedictus Pererius', in *Laus Platonici Philosophi: Marsilio Ficino and His Influence* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 317–342.

[110] Jan Assmann, *Moses the Egyptian: The Memory of Egypt in Western Monotheism* (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998), 55.

[111] On Horapollo and the reception of the *Hieroglyphica* see Erik Iversen, *The Myth of Egypt and Its Hieroglyphs in European Tradition* (Copenhagen: G. E. C. Gad., 1961); and again Assmann, *Moses the Egyptian*.

commentarii (Basel 1556).[112] The *Hieroglyphica* is a collection of contemporary interpretations about hieroglyphs including the use of symbols, with Valeriano attempting a decipherment himself. Moreover, Valeriano follows his contemporaries in reviving the ancient Greek interpretation of hieroglyphs literally being holy symbols containing ancient wisdom, and tries to accommodate this with Christianity; the text therefore serves A.W. as an important source on Egyptian religion as well as its Neo-Platonic accommodation. The annotator in this way continues the Renaissance fascination with Egypt which was also so integral to the work of Athanasius Kircher.[113]

Before moving onto the topic of Neoplatonism and its sources in the annotations, I will introduce the authors and texts which are the most important in A.W.'s attempt at creating his own history of idolatry. These do not only include antiquarian works and their interpretations of the ancients, but also early modern travel literature.

3.2 Travel Literature and Jesuit Writings

Whilst A.W. primarily works within an antiquarian framework, he does not neglect the findings of travel literature on the topics he writes on. As such he is not content with blindly trusting the ancients and often uses contemporary travel literature to illustrate not only where he finds confirmation of ancient writing, but also where he finds disagreement - in which cases he sides with the eye witness reports of his contemporaries.[114] The usage of travel literature also enhances the *Open Deure's* own character as a travel report, as the annotator uses other writers to expand on places and peoples mentioned by Rogerius. The annotator for instance explains what kind of fruit coconuts are or where and what the kingdom of Pegu is.[115] Possibly more importantly, on a theoretical level A.W. strengthens the universal agenda of his framework, otherwise limited in geographical scope and accuracy to the ancient sources he uses. Travel reports allow A.W. to make comparisons with other Brahmins or the famous *Benjans* in Gujarat,

[112] Pierio Valeriano, *Hieroglyphica Sive De Sacris Aegyptiorvm Literis Commentarii Ioannis Pierii Valeriani Bolzanii Bellvnensis* (Basel: Michael Isengrin, 1556); On Valeriano see Julia Haig Gaisser, *Pierio Valeriano on the Ill Fortune of Learned Men: A Renaissance Humanist and His World* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999); the footnote mentioning Horapollo is Rogerius, *Open Deure*, [Half Vrouvv half Man ghevvorden] 116.

[113] See Brian Anthony Curran, *The Egyptian Renaissance: The Afterlife of Ancient Egypt in Early Modern Italy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).

[114] This also extends to disproving Rogerius himself. In a poignant section where Rogerius claims that no people on Earth are free from worship and belief in God, A.W. responds to Rogerius's statement by saying that he is being too optimistic in his evaluation. He goes on to cite a number of ancient atheist as well as van Linschoten for the contemporary existence of atheists. Rogerius, *Open Deure*, [Heest oock eenen Gods-dienst] 103-104.

[115] Ibid., [Cocos] 8, [Bysonder in Pegu] 8.

but also with the Sri Lankans, Chinese, the Japanese and Southeast Asians.[116]

The travel reports the annotator cites reveal a deep knowledge of primarily Dutch travel literature. The most referenced authors are Jan Huygen van Linschoten and the shortly before published works by the merchant Johan van Twist and VOC Admiral Paulus van Caerden.[117] Most of these references do not attempt to discuss practices or beliefs in detail, and especially van Linschoten is mainly used as a reference for fruits or woods unfamiliar to Europeans. Most of the comparisons with other peoples also remain superficial and short and only rarely does A.W. paraphrase the authors in support of his arguments or to expand on Rogerius.[118] If anything, A.W. uses travel literature in combination with ancient sources or antiquarian scholarship to prove dispersion ideas of idolatry; in one example he presents minor gods who are in charge of specific things as essential for all pagans at all times in history. As such Romans have gods for everything, for whom Giraldi is referenced, and this is equally valid for the pagans in the East and West Indies and China and other places, citing Cornelis Matelief de Jonge, Paulus van Caerden and Seyger van Rechteren.[119] Pieter van den Broecke, Joris van Spilbergen and Steven van der Hagen are other Dutch authors referenced by A.W. for their experiences in Asia.[120]

We find very few travel reports in the *Open Deure* that are not Dutch, the most prominent among them being the late sixteenth-century Venetian merchant Gasparo Balbi and his *Viaggio dell'Indie Orientali* (Venice 1590), used as an authority on Pegu, and Francoys Caron, a French Huguenot serving in the VOC and governor of Formosa (Taiwan), whose exotic stories about Japan A.W. is all too happy to repeat.[121]

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[116] On Gujarat, see Rogerius, *Open Deure*, [Na de vvijse der Bramines] 31, [Zijn de Avadoutas] 22-23, [Met de nieuvve Maen in April] 57-58.

[117] Van Twist is referenced for Gujarat, see Johan van Twist, *Beschrijving van Guseratte, dat is: Cort verhael van de regering, ceremoni ën, handel, vruchten en gelegentheyt van 't coninckrijck van Guseratte, staende onder de beheersching van ... coninck Chanziahan, anders genaemt den grooten Magoll, wt verscheyde autheuren en eyghen ondervindingh vergadert, ende by een ghestelt* (Amsterdam: Henderick Doncker, 1647); Paulus van Caerden, *Kort verhael ofte journael van de reyse gedaen naer de Oost-Indien met 4 Schepen, Nederlandt, Vereenigde Landen, Nassou, ende Hoff van Hollandt, onder den admirael Pieter Both* (Amsterdam: Joannes Janssonius, 1645); Jan Huygen van Linschoten, *Itinerario: Voyage Ofte Schipvaert van Jan Huygen van Linschoten Naer Dost Ofte Portugaels Indien* (Amsterdam: Cornelis Claesz, 1596), although A.W. might also have had access to the more recent Dutch edition of 1644.

[118] An example for this is when he references van Twist for the Brahmins in Gujarat who let converts go through rigorous trials and penance before letting them convert. Rogerius, *Open Deure*, [Na de vvijse der Bramines] 31.

[119] Ibid., [Eenighe bysondere saken te laste] 111-112.

[120] An overview over all these authors is neither feasible nor useful here, see instead Lach and Kley, *A Century of Advance*, 435-508.

[121] Caron later served in the French East India Company but wrote his travel account during his time with the VOC and in Dutch, so he could also be counted among the Dutch authors. Accordingly he is mentioned among the Dutch literature by Lach, see ibid., 458.

Most prominent are therefore without a doubt the Dutch travel reports which serve to broaden the ethnographic survey that A.W. attempts through his grand comparison of peoples both ancient and contemporary. Another smaller corpus of sources that is at times related to travel literature are works by Jesuit authors; while these do not take on a prominent role, a number of different Jesuit works appear in the annotations of the *Open Deure*. This includes José de Acosta who, while only cited twice, is of some interest in the context of cited travel literature, as he is the only author referenced for a comparison with the Americas.[122] De Acosta's descriptions of the beliefs of the Peruvians are compared with those of the Brahmins and more broadly also with those of other Asian peoples.[123]

The annotator's familiarity with Jesuit writing is not limited to travel reports: two Spanish Jesuits which were known primarily as exegetes are often cited in a complementary manner with the authors associated with the history of idolatry. The first is John de Pineda, a consultant for the Spanish Inquisition. A.W. references de Pineda's *Commentariorum in Job libri tredecim* (Madrid 1597–1601), an extensive commentary of the book of Job; it remained a much used source for exegetes and is interesting in the context of this study as it displays a keen sense of textual criticism, as well as comparing different interpretations and the usage of non-Christian authors as sources, anticipating the philological textual criticism the Bible was analysed through in the following decades.[124] The second author is Benedict Pereira, whose *Commentariorum et disputationum in Genesim tomi quattuor* (Rome 1591–1599) has to be understood in a very similar way. In this commentary on the book of Genesis Pereira discusses the Flood, Noah's Ark and examines them from a textual critical point of view, succeeding to such a degree that it was praised by Richard Simon.[125] Pereira was also a big critic of heterodox interpretations of Christianity such as Neoplatonism.[126] The use of these works exemplifies that A.W., much like the other authors working on the history of idolatry, is not confining himself to working within his own confessional boundaries, but

[122] Assuming A.W. should indeed be Thysius, one might ask why the travel literature on the New World is almost not mentioned at all in the annotations of the *Open Deure*. Considering however that A.W. uses travel literature to provide further information on Rogerius's descriptions of Palicut and the Brahmins and their connections to the South and Southeast Asia, this need not surprise us and does not undermine the association of A.W. with Thysius. Unlike the *Historia navalis*, the annotations of the *Open Deure* do not have a global scope in mind.

[123] Rogerius, *Open Deure*, [Ende heylighe Bergen] 71, and especially [Aen andere Goddelijcke eere] 180-181.

[124] Walter Drum, 'Pineda, John De', in *Catholic Encyclopedia*, ed. Charles G. Herbermann et al., vol. 12 (New York: The Encyclopedia Press, 1913), 101–102.

[125] Walter Drum, 'Pereira, Benedict', in *Catholic Encyclopedia*, ed. Charles G. Herbermann et al., vol. 11 (New York: The Encyclopedia Press, 1913), 664.

[126] See Blackwell, 'Neo-Platonic Modes Of Concordism'.

also makes heavy use of catholic exegetical writing.

3.3 Antiquarian Scholarship and the History of Idolatry

The annotator writes in a style resembling the antiquarian scholarship of Gerhard Vossius and other similar seventeenth-century scholars. Whilst A.W. does refer greatly to this literature, another backbone of his antiquarian scholarship is sixteenth-century humanism, most especially two works. The first is Giglio (or Lilio) Gregorio Giraldi's *Historia de deis gentium* (Basel 1548).[127] Giraldi was a scholar from Ferrara active across the Italian peninsula over the course of his life, among other things being engaged as the tutor to Gianfrancesco Pico della Mirandola's son.[128] The *Historia* is a work that aims towards a complete portrayal of the Roman and Greek panthea, including all the aspects of the gods as well as rituals.[129] Building on a comparative framework much like A.W. and his contemporaries a hundred years later, Giraldi sees many similarities between different religions and religious leaders. His other works, not cited in the *Open Deure*, focussed on Pythagoras and Pythagoreanism and were much informed by Neoplatonism.[130] Giraldi remained a very important source for antiquarianism and comparative ethnography as a reference for Roman and Greek gods and ritual worship well into the seventeenth century.[131]

The second work is the *Dies geniales* (Rome 1522) by Alessandro d'Alessandro, a Neapolitan lawyer.[132] As has already been mentioned, the *Dies geniales* was based structurally on Aulus Gellius's *Attic Nights*, already evident in Alessandro's choice of title; as such there was a conscious lack of specific structure to the text.[133] The *Dies geniales* is a collection of material on antiquity on a broad range of topics and covering the entirety of the ancient world, albeit focussing on Rome. What was interesting for A.W., and what he cites Alessandro for exclusively, are the latter's discussions of rituals and religious laws, especially the juridical background and administration of religious

[127] Giglio Gregorio Giraldi, *De deis gentium varia multiplex Historia, in qua simul de eorum imaginib. & cognominib agitur, vbi plurima etia[m] hactenus multis ignora explicantur, & pleraque clarius tractantur* (Basel: Joannes Oporinus, 1548).

[128] Christopher S. Celenza, *Piety and Pythagoras in Renaissance Florence: The Symbolum Nesianum* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 72.

[129] Ibid., 73.

[130] Ibid., 76-80.

[131] Peter N. Miller, 'Taking Paganism Seriously: Anthropology and Antiquarianism in Early Seventeenth-Century Histories of Religion', *Archiv für Religionsgeschichte* 3, no. 1 (2001): 183–209.

[132] Alessandro d'Alessandro, *Dies geniales* (Rome: in aedibus I. Mazochii, 1522), The work went through many editions, the last being published in Leiden in 1675. Alessandro is found under his Latin name Alexander ab Alexander in a citation form in the annotations, namely Alex ab Alex.

[133] Domenico Maffei, *Alessandro d'Alessandro, giureconsulto umanista (1461 - 1523)* (Milan: Giuffré, 1956), 77, 80-82.

customs.[134] André Tiraqueau, who wrote a commentary of the *Dies geniales*, also appears in the annotations, albeit being only referenced twice for his *De legibus connubialibus* (Paris 1513). A wide range of other sixteenth-century authors are mentioned, yet never cited more than twice; for example the theologians Peter Martyr Vermigli and André Rivet or the scholars Julius Scaliger and Caelius Rhodiginus. This stands in stark contrast to Giraldi and Allessandro, who are referenced twenty-two and fourteen times respectively.

As I shall discuss in the next chapter, A.W. attempts to contribute to the contemporary debate on pagan religions by means of a universal comparative framework. Without a doubt his biggest inspiration for this was Gerhard Vossius and the latter's monograph *De theologia gentili* (Amsterdam 1641).[135] With twenty-five references Vossius's is the most-cited work, and I will argue that the *De theologia gentili* serves as the basis itself for the annotations of the *Open Deure*. The *De theologia gentili* begins with the Latin translation of Moses Maimonides's *De idolatria liber* by Vossius's son Dionysus.[136] Maimonides was a much read authority on the topic of idolatry for antiquarian scholars in the seventeenth century, as he had discussed the origin of idolatry and the survival of idolatry in Jewish customs. Maybe most importantly, though, Maimonides interpreted the customs of the ancient Hebrews to have been given to them by God to differentiate them from the pagan Egyptians and wane them off idolatry, giving Jewish rites a functional historicised role.[137]

Vossius was not content merely publishing a commented version of his son's translation, though, and made the *De theologia gentili* into a major study of the entire world's known forms of what had classically been labelled as 'idolatry'. In the final edition of 1668 Vossius systematically presents worship based on what is being worshipped: spirits such as demons (book 1), celestial objects and the elements (book 2), men and animals (books 3 and 4) and plants and stones (books 5 and 6).[138] In the last three books he outlines the worship of the spiritual substance of the world (book 7) as well as bodily affectations (book 8), culminating in a study of the *cultus symbolicus* present in the

[134] On the legal research in Alessandro see Maffei, *Alessandro d'Alessandro, giureconsulto umanista (1461 - 1523)*, 113-174; A shorter overview of the *Dies geniales* can be found in Mauro De Nichilo, 'Un'enciclopedia Umanistica: I Geniales Dies Di Alessandro d'Alessandro', in *La Naturalis Historia Di Plinio Nella Tradizione Medievale e Umanistica*, ed. Vanna Maraglino (Bari: Cacucci Editore, 2012), 207–235.

[135] Gerhard Vossius, *De theologia gentili et physiologia christiana: sive, De origine ac progressu idololatriae* (Amsterdam: Johannes & Cornelius Blaeu, 1641), A.W. refers to this work as 'de idolol'.

[136] Rademaker, *Life and Work of Gerardus Joannes Vossius (1577-1649)*, 338.

[137] Sheehan, 'Sacred and Profane', 54-57; Florian Ebeling, *The Secret History of Hermes Trismegistus: Hermeticism from Ancient to Modern Times* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2007).

[138] The 1641 edition only included books 1-4.

rites of the world's religions.[139] What sets Vossius apart from earlier works by scholars such as Giraldi, is that Vossius is able to integrate the new philological tools developed by the likes of Casaubon and Scaliger into his portrayal of idolatry. What emerges is a systematic analysis of the function and practices of different idolatrous religions; this enables the possibility of seeing past the category of idolatry as one large profane group and identifying different religions based on ritual in a comparative framework.[140]

Vossius clearly is the most important contemporary source associated with the scholarship on the history of idolatry for A.W., yet the very influential writings of John Selden and Samuel Bochart also figure prominently in the annotations. With John Selden we return to the beginning of this genre, as his *De diis Syris* (London 1617) was one of the foundational works of this type and also majorly influenced Vossius.[141] In this early work of John Selden's long writing career he is one of the very first to look at the ancient idolaters, in this case the Syrians, from a scholarly perspective by using philology and the at the time growing textual-critical approaches to the Bible and Jewish history.[142] Much like Vossius's, Selden's work has to be understood from a perspective of earlier Bible exegesis and commentaries on the Old Testament, in which the Jewish rituals are historicised and analysed from a perspective of Jewish idolatry.[143] For Selden it was the Syrians with whom idolatry started and eventually spread to all parts of the globe.[144] Even less known than Selden's is a another work which builds on *De diis Syris* but casts the spotlight on the Germanic panthea. *De diis Germanis* (Amsterdam 1648) was written by the young Elias Schedius and published posthumously by his father.[145] Schedius attempts to trace etymologies and to explain the Nordic beliefs and rituals through mostly classical sources.[146]

Another scholar who is both considered a major contributor to the history of idolatry genre and is also cited by A.W., if not as frequently as Selden nor Vossius, is Samuel

[139] Ralph Häfner, *Götter im Exil, Frühneuzeitliches Dichtungsverständnis im Spannungsfeld christlicher Apologetik und philologischer Kritik (ca. 1590-1736)* (Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter, 2012), 231.

[140] Häfner, *Götter im Exil*, 232-233; see also Richard H. Popkin, 'The Crisis of Polytheism and the Answers of Vossius, Cudworth, and Newton', in *Essays on the Context, Nature, and Influence of Isaac Newton's Theology*, ed. James E. Force and Richard H. Popkin (Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 1990), 9–25.

[141] Selden, *De diis Syris*; On Selden see especially Gerald J. Toomer, *John Selden: A Life in Scholarship*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

[142] Martin Mulsow, 'John Seldens De Diis Syris: Idolatriekritik Und Vergleichende Religionsgeschichte Im 17. Jahrhundert', *Archiv der Religionsgeschichte* 3, no. 1 (2001): 5-6.

[143] Ibid., 8.

[144] Sheehan, 'Sacred and Profane', 42.

[145] Elias Schedius, *De diis Germanis, sive Veteri Germanorum, Gallorum, Britannorum, Vandalorum religione syngrammata quatuor* (Amsterdam: apud Ludovicum Elzevirium, 1648).

[146] There is no study of Schedius or his monograph to date; see Johannes Bolte, 'Schedius, Elias', in *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*, vol. 30 (Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot, 1890), 662–663.

Bochart. Bochart was an antiquarian and orientalist, as well as the teacher of Pierre Daniel Huet. Whilst studying in Leiden he profited in his theological studies from Andre Rivet, actually an uncle of Bochart's, who was teaching in Leiden at the time; Bochart defended a thesis on idolatry which reflects an early occupation with both philological and antiquarian research as well as oriental subjects and languages.[147] He was not merely interested, but indeed proficient in oriental languages, knowing Hebrew, Syriac, and Arabic. Much like Vossius and Selden, he combined biblical exegesis with antiquarian scholarship; unlike Selden, though, he saw the spread of idolatry to be rooted with the Phoenicians in his *Geographica sacra* (Caen 1646).[148] Bochart applies antiquarian scholarship to trace the post-Noachic dispersion through sacred geography, whilst at the same time arguing for the pivotal role of Phoenician navigation.[149]

3.4 Neoplatonism, Patristic Sources and Perennial Philosophy

In this section I have lumped together three interconnected groups of sources which A.W. utilises in his most extensive footnotes, most of which can be found in the second part of the book; this is not surprising, as A.W. is integrating this source material with the details of Brahminic belief outlined by Rogerius, which are especially prominent at the beginning of the second part. The Church Fathers are themselves used chiefly for their closeness to Neoplatonic ideas and are often cited together with the Neoplatonist, which makes this association a rather clear one. Some explanation however is required for why I have above all stressed 'perennial philosophy', rather than 'prisca theologia' or even 'Hermeticism', as these three concepts, especially the first two, are sometimes used interchangeably and are all found in some way in the annotations.[150]

[147] Zur Shalev, *Sacred Words and Worlds: Geography, Religion, and Scholarship, 1550-1700* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2012), 152.

[148] Samuel Bochart, *Geographica sacra pars prior: Phaleg, seu de dispersione gentium et terrarum divisione facta in ædificatione turris Babel* (Caen: Typis Petri Cardonelli, 1646); On Bochart in general and especially on the *Geographica sacra* see the corresponding chapter in Shalev, *Sacred Words and Worlds*, 141-203.

[149] 'Bochart deciphered Genesis 10 and identified the location of each of Noah's descendents. In Chanaan (both titles were borrowed from Montano) Bochart proceeded to explain the impact of Phoenician navigation on the ancient world. This two-tiered model allowed Bochart to chart human "prehistory", for which Mosaic geography was the only source, and to link it to the classical tradition of geography.' Shalev, *Sacred Words and Worlds*, 19.

[150] Still a good reference point for the Hermetic tradition is Frances Yates, *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1968); For an excellent narrative of the reception of Hermeticism and prisca theologia from Ficino and Pico della Mirandola to the seventeenth century and the Enlightenment, see Wouter Hanegraaff, *Esotericism and the Academy: Rejected Knowledge in Western Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Specifically on perennial philosophy an excellent summary is given in Charles B. Schmitt, 'Perrenial Philosophy: From Agostino Steuco to Leibniz', *Journal of the History of Ideas* 27, no. 4 (1966): 505–532; a longer

Perennial Philosophy and Agostino Steuco

The Renaissance saw a revival of Neoplatonic philosophy and its incorporation into a Christian theology which since Frances Yates's classic study *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition* has been strongly associated with the term Hermeticism, as Renaissance Hermeticism and Neoplatonism strongly influenced one another.[151] Hermeticism refers to a tradition which has the *Corpus Hermeticum*, the texts which were attributed to Hermes Trismegistus, as its foundation, with strongly concordist views. A.W. uses the *Corpus*, yet without the philological critique we find in Vossius's use of the Hermetic source, which had been proven to be apocryphal by Isaac Casaubon in 1614.[152] The annotator must have been aware of the philological critique surrounding the text, at the very least through his careful study of Vossius, who makes it very clear that this was not a source of the greatest antiquity as the Hermeticists claimed.[153] Prisca theologia, as it was formulated and developed by Marsilio Ficino and Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, also features in the annotations of the *Open Deure*. Neither of the two take on a big role in A.W.'s treatise though; Ficino is not even mentioned and Pico is referenced merely twice in passing for astrology, citing the unfinished *Disputationes adversus astrologiam divinitricem* (Bologna 1493).[154] A somewhat more used source is Francesco Giorgi, who built on Pico but integrated Jewish kabbalism into his prisca theologia.[155] Cited by A.W. is *In scripturam sacram problemata* (Venice 1536) in which Giorgi discusses the Old Testament, analysing it through kabbalistic exegesis.[156] Nevertheless, Giorgi does not feature prominently in the annotations by A.W., and the latter claims Giorgi has 'very singular ideas'.[157]

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and more technical discussion, including the theological considerations serving as its foundations, is provided in Wilhelm Schmidt-Biggemann, *Philosophia Perennis: Historical Outlines of Western Spirituality in Ancient, Medieval and Early Modern Thought* (Dordrecht: Springer Science & Business Media, 2007).

[151] Yates, *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition*.

[152] On Vossius's usage of Hermes Trismegistus see Häfner, *Götter im Exil*, 232; On the importance of Casaubon for Hugo Grotius and Gerhard Vossius see Häfner, *Götter im Exil*, 175-248; On Casaubon's critique of the *Corpus Hermeticum*, see also Ebeling, *The Secret History of Hermes Trismegistus*, 91ff.

[153] Vossius, *De theologia gentili*, 40.

[154] On Pico's astrology see Sheila J. Rabin, 'Pico on Magic and Astrology', in *Pico Della Mirandola: New Essays*, by M. V. Dougherty (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 152–178.

[155] Frances Yates, *The Occult Philosophy in the Elizabethan Age* (London: Routledge, 1979), 33-42.

[156] 'It is no surprise that in this book the most subtle theological and dogmatic arguments, subjected to kabbalistic analysis, alternate with prophetic, messianic, and eschatological themes aimed at the expectation of the necessary renovatio of man and the world.' Cesare Vasoli, 'Giorgio [Zorzi], Francesco', in *Dictionary of Gnosis & Western Esotericism*, ed. Wouter J. Hanegraaf (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 398.

[157] 'Maer alsoo desen Autheur in verscheyden opinien seer singulier is, ende in velen seer verabuseert, soo en hoeft den Leser oock dit voor geen Euangelium aen te nemen.' Rogerius, *Open Deure*, [Soo sonde VVistnou-douta] 91.

Of much greater importance is another sixteenth-century Italian associated with prisca theologia, namely Agostino Steuco.[158] He forms one of A.W.'s most important sources - not merely in a quantitative sense, though with fifteen references Steuco does outnumber most 'moderns' - as the annotator references Steuco's works mostly in his lengthy footnotes, predominantly in the second part of the *Open Deure*. Two works penned by Steuco are found in the annotations, the *Cosmopeia* and *De perenni philosophia*. The *Cosmopeia* (Lyon 1535) is the earlier of the two works but includes many elements of the later more well known work. A commentary on Genesis, it is a work of exegesis which makes use of much Platonic-concordist thought.[159] The *Cosmopeia* was even put on the *Index*, which nevertheless did not prevent Steuco to be appointed as librarian of the Vatican library by Pope Paul III. He played an important role in papal efforts during the Counter-Reformation, where he attempted to counter humanist critics by using historical-philological analyses to prove the justified need of the papacy as a temporal as well as spiritual power. Steuco was consequently also sent to the council of Trent. Steuco's sophisticated use of philology and historical analysis heavily influenced the reaction of Italian humanists in matters of reform.[160]

In *De perenni philosophia* (Lyon 1540) Steuco devotes a book-length study to the topic of prisca theologia, yet diverging substantially from the kind of Hermetic doctrine of Ficino and Pico, who are tellingly not often mentioned by name in his monograph.[161] Steuco uses the term prisca theologia more than philosophia perennis, which primarily features in the title, yet from a modern analytical point of view he clearly is an adherent of the latter rather than the former. Prisca theologia, the older term which was already used in antiquity, emphasises a lost wisdom, neglected or forgotten through the passage of time, which should now be recovered - in turn implying a degeneration of knowledge which Christianity itself was unable to stop or recover. Perennial philosophy is in this sense more orthodox: it stresses the continuity of truth, claiming that true wisdom has always been available throughout the ages, yet that since the coming of Christ the Christian Church has been its guardian. True wisdom accordingly includes all the elements of Christianity, such as a Creation by God, monotheism and the Trinity.[162]

[158] On Steuco see Maria Muccillo, 'La "prisca theologia" nel "De perenni philosophia" di Agostino Steuco', *Rinascimento; Firenze* 28 (1988): 41–111; Hanegraaff, *Esotericism and the Academy*, 68-73; Schmidt-Biggemann, *Philosophia Perennis*, 428-435; Schmitt, 'Perrenial Philosophy'.

[159] Schmitt, 'Perrenial Philosophy', 525; Theobald Freudenberger, *Augustinus Steuchus aus Gubbio, Augustinerchorherr und päpstlicher Bibliothekar (1497-1547) und sein literarisches Lebenswerk* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1935), 201-219.

[160] Ronald K. Delph, 'Polishing the Papal Image in the Counter-Reformation: The Case of Agostino Steuco', *Sixteenth Century Journal* 23, no. 1 (1992): 35–47.

[161] Hanegraaff, *Esotericism and the Academy*, 70.

[162] Wouter Hanegraaff, 'Tradition', in *Dictionary of Gnosis & Western Esotericism*, ed. Wouter

Steuco furthermore distances himself from the magical and kabbalistic interpretations of perennial philosophy, stripping these unorthodox elements from his own theology, and instead opts for a universal frame of Neoplatonic philosophical religion at a time of turmoil in Christendom.[163] In this way he makes Pico's concordism into a system of itself, a perennial philosophy in which everyone essentially has always agreed with one another on the same basic theology.[164] The result is a view of history informed by a narrative of ancient wisdom where truth can show itself in key pagan individuals such as Plato or Hermes Trismegistus; truth has always been available and the Christian Church has been it's representative since the birth of Christ. Even philosophers like Parmenides and Xenophanes were 'theologians', worshipping the same one God.[165] But delving into ancient or kabbalistic sources serves no purpose for exactly this reasons: Christians will find nothing new there, only the same truth that is preserved in its most perfect form in Christianity.[166] It is this form of Neoplatonism which serves as the primary philosophical inspiration for A.W., which is why I have chosen the term perennial philosophy instead of any other terminology. Such a universal-monistic, yet non-magical view also extends to the reading of Neoplatonic source material, of which the annotator makes ample use.

Plato Everywhere: Neoplatonism and the Church Fathers

Plato himself is undoubtedly one of the most cited and most important authors quoted in the annotations, referenced for numerous of his works such as the *Politics*, *Phaedo* or *Critias*. The amount of different works that are referenced is in itself astonishing. A.W. does not, however, rely primarily on a specific work of thought of Plato and instead uses Platonism, and especially Neoplatonism, as a school of philosophy, so that the references to Plato from other authors are equally important as references to Plato himself.

The annotations are accordingly full of references to ancient Neoplatonists as well as the early Christian Church fathers who reacted and incorporated much of Neoplatonic thought. The very concept of Neoplatonism is somewhat of a controversial term; the fact that it was coined in the nineteenth century means we are not dealing with an actor category at all here, but rather with a imposed categorisation. Both the ancient Neoplatonists as well as the humanists and their successors in early modern Europe would have simply referred to themselves as Platonists, as their philosophical basis lay, at least in their own understanding, with Plato himself. This does not mean that we

Hanegraaff (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 1126.

[163] Muccillo sees in this an attempt to reconcile the Catholic and Protestant Churches in a reunified Christendom at the eve of the council of Trent. Muccillo, 'La "prisca theologia"', esp. 45-47.

[164] Blackwell, 'Neo-Platonic Modes Of Concordism', 327f.

[165] Ibid., 328.

[166] Hanegraaff, *Esotericism and the Academy*, 70-72.

need to abandon the concept as an anachronistic invention; rather it can serve us as a tool of distinction. Without going into a discussion which is better left to the history of philosophy, this is the avenue I myself have chosen. The concept of Neoplatonism was created to differentiate new developments within Platonism - yet Neoplatonism attempted a synthesis with other Hellenic traditions of philosophy, a synthesis usually seen to originate with Plotinus.[167] Plotinus as well as his near contemporaries in the third century Porphyry and Iamblichus are among the most important Neoplatonic sources cited, and usually appear together. Whilst Plotinus is referenced relatively few times in the annotations (four), his conceptualisation of 'the One' does play role in A.W.'s thoughts as a Neoplatonic basis for A.W.'s own monism.[168] The annotator follows Plotinus in associating Plato's 'Idea of the Good' with 'the One' and also uses Macrobius and Proclus, both fifth-century Neoplatonists, to support this idea.[169] With the exception of Macrobius, who with his *Saturnalia* is also used as a source on Roman customs themselves, these Neoplatonist thinkers are used exclusively for their own philosophical-religious thought and not as secondary literature on ancient religious traditions.

We need to understand the references to the Neoplatonists along the more numerous references to Patristic sources. These are by far the most important Christian authors used in the annotations of *Open Deure*, with later Christian theology hardly being mentioned at all - Thomas Aquinas for instance is mentioned only once in passing.[170] A vast number of Church Fathers and Christian apologists are referenced, many of them used mainly as sources on customs, much like the other ancient writers. These include Clement of Alexandria, Cyprian, Arnobius, Jerome (referenced as Hieronymus) and John Chrysostom, all of them not referenced more than three times. Origen is mentioned four times, yet he is one of the few patristic writers towards whom A.W. shows scepticism and disagreement.[171] The more important, and in fact most cited early Christian authors are three in number: Lactantius, Epiphanius and Augustine.

The references to Epiphanius are the most superficial, as A.W. references him mainly

[167] On Plotinus and the outlined origin of Neoplatonism, both as a methodological as well as a heuristic concept, see Lloyd Gerson, 'Plotinus', in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Fall 2018, ed. Edward N. Zalta (URL = `https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2018/entries/plotinus/`, Stanford: Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University, 2018); Christian Wildberg, 'Neoplatonism', in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta (URL = `https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2019/entries/neoplatonism/`, Stanford: Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University, 2019).

[168] Gerson, 'Plotinus'.

[169] Rogerius, *Open Deure*, [In forma van een Ey] 134.

[170] Ibid., [De Son, de Maen] 143-144.

[171] See ibid., [Tot straffe harer sonden] 147-148.

as a source on early heterodox Christian sects such as the Manicheans. The fact that Epiphanius was a large critic of Origen might also have played a role in his prominence in the annotations, as A.W. uses him as a way to disprove Origen.[172] References to Lactantius are especially common when A.W. discusses the nature of multitudes of gods in the pantheon of the Indians and its relation to the status of angels within Christianity. In general all three of these early Christian authors are also accorded a role of authority on ancient customs and religiosity, much like all the Christian authors, Neoplatonist and ancient writers in general; all of these are used within the framework of A.W.'s discourse on the history of idolatry. But the Christian writers also appear in a Neoplatonic vein - most prominently of all Augustine. He is one of the most cited sources in general, and appears, much like Lactantius and to a lesser degree the other Christian authors, together with the Neoplatonists in the most elaborate and lengthy annotations. Augustine is the prime link between the pagan Neoplatonists and the early Christian apologists: A.W. cites him for thinking that 'the whole beginning of the gospel of John could be gotten out of the books of the Platonists, if not with the same words, nevertheless with the same meaning'.[173]

Both the early Christian authors as well as the Neoplatonists are thus to be seen as sources for A.W.'s reception of perennial philosophy in the vein of Steuco, yet also as important points of reference on ancient religiosity, be it pagan, Jewish or Christian. These two themes dominate the annotations of the *Open Deure*: the larger superstructure of a treatise on the history of Brahminical religion within the larger frame of 'idolatry' - the relation of the Brahmins to other pagans - with a smaller yet more extensive set of footnotes dedicated to perennial philosophy - the relation of the Brahmins to Christians. Vossius's ideal of the history of idolatry presupposes the abandonment of prisca theologia and perennial philosophy; whilst he retains references to Neoplatonic material, he does not appear as a Neoplatonist himself, clearly distinguishing himself from this literature. The annotations of the *Open Deure* are different: A.W. tries to craft a history of idolatry on the basis of Vossius, yet retaining a perennial philosophy. In the remainder of this thesis I will show how A.W. builds up his discourse on the history of idolatry and how he attempts to argue for his own perennial philosophy.

[172] Rogerius, *Open Deure*, [De kinderen van Aditi] 142 and [Tot straffe harer sonden] 147-148 respectively.

[173] 'Den Outvader Augustinus lib. 3. confess. meynt oock datmen het gantsche beginsel van het Euangelium Iohannis uyt de Boecken der Platonisten soude konnen uyt vinden, so niet met de selve woorden, immers na den volkomen sin: 't Is seker dat Plato seght, dat alles door het vvoort ghemaeckt is: ende Plotinus, dat den Sone Godts den Schepper zy; ende dierghelijcke spreucken by andere meer te vinden zijn.' ibid., [Wien sy het bevvint ende bestier] 55.

4 The History of the Brahmins' Idolatry

To understand how A.W. constructs his treatise on the history of idolatry of the Brahmins and its relation to the ancient world's religious traditions, we first need to take a step back and look at the development of antiquarianism and the genesis of the genre of history of idolatry which I so far have merely touched upon in my discussion of Selden, Bochart and Vossius. As the overview of the annotations' sources shows, the roots of this have to be sought in antiquity and the Renaissance, as well as the confrontation of classical scholarship with the discovery of new worlds, both in America and in Asia.

The ancient basis of proto-ethnography of the likes of Strabo and Herodotus has already been discussed; yet it is important to go back to the reception of ancient historians and geographers in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and the birth of philology, which combined with the discovery of new religious traditions in both America and Asia provided the basis for the seventeenth-century discourse on the history of idolatry. As Guy Stroumsa has stressed, both of these factors as well as the wars of religion in Europe were necessary conditions for the foundation of comparative religion in the scholarly endeavour of the history of idolatry.[174]

To trace the changes that led to the new comparative method and a new understanding of religion it is thus worth looking back to the situation of these topoi as it presented itself in the first half of the sixteenth century. World religions were still understood within a fourfold structure of Christianity, Islam, Judaism and 'idolatry'; it is naturally the last category into which all new religious traditions discovered in America and Asia were lumped.[175] The discovery of America posed new problems for the authority of ancient texts: how could the ancients be authoritative without having known about these newly discovered continents? This remained a crucial problem for scholarship and ecclesiastical history, and endeavours to include the Americas into a sacred history narrative persisted well into the seventeenth century and beyond, with attempts to show that the newly discovered lands could be found in the Bible all along or the different stance of Isaac La Peryère with his theory of polygenesis.[176] In the seventeenth century we see a true craze to explain the origin of peoples of all parts of the globe within the model of sacred history, including the Noachic dispersion, creating elaborate models to explain the origin of the American peoples.[177]

[174] Guy Stroumsa, *A New Science: The Discovery of Religion in the Age of Reason* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2010), 11.
[175] See for instance ibid., 1, 14, 28.
[176] See respectively Grafton, *New Worlds, Ancient Texts*, 149; Levitin, 'From Sacred History to the History of Religion', 1127-1128.
[177] See e.g. Grafton, *New Worlds, Ancient Texts*, 207-212.

The shock of discovery therefore did not immediately lead to the rethinking of traditional classifications. The rediscovery of Greek and Roman religion which had been brought to light by the humanists is crucial in this regard as well. Systematic surveys of rituals and beliefs of the ancients had been written by humanists such as Giraldi, who looked at the Romans, Greeks or Egyptians in minute detail. The encounter with the new followed the encounter with the past which had been pioneered by the humanist antiquarians, and so Amerindians and Asians were naturally compared with their pagan counterparts in ancient Rome and Greece. As Peter Miller has stressed, 'the quality of the questions these men asked about Indian life in the Americas was so good in part because the questions were those that antiquaries had been asking of the ancient world'.[178] The Asian and American peoples that were suddenly within the horizon of European scholars could be mined for information on their customs and rituals much more abundantly than their ancient counterparts, but it was within this same framework that early 'ethnologists' such as Bartholomé de Las Casas or José de Acosta looked at the peoples they described.[179] Las Casas, who had read and was much influenced by Giraldi, saw in America similarities with Greco-Roman as well as Egyptian religion, yet he used this to the defence of the Amerindians. Las Casas was crucial in the formation of a narrative which claimed a degeneration from natural law to idolatry, representing the ideal situation to welcome Christianity, much like the ancient Europeans they were being compared to when they were evangelised.[180]

Yet through the work of missionaries the Europeans were confronted with societies that did not neatly fit their expectations of heathens, as was especially the case in Asia. The Jesuits adopted a form of accommodation in order to more easily convert societies that were both 'idolatrous' and civilised, something which had not seemed possible from a European point of view; they allowed certain customs to coexist with Christianity and in the process the Augustinian divide between true and false religion which had hitherto defined Christianity was gradually discarded.[181] In order to justify their method of permitting certain Chinese or Indian practices, these were declared to be civil practices rather than religious ones, giving for instance Confucianism a similar role that Stoicism had in Europe.[182] The presentation of Confucianism as non-idolatrous or even as a form of ur-monotheism compatible with Christianity dislodged the idea of Christianity as the

[178] Miller, 'Taking Paganism Seriously', 186.
[179] See more broadly Anthony Pagden, *The Fall of Natural Man: The American Indian and the Origins of Comparative Ethnology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).
[180] Miller, 'Taking Paganism Seriously', 190-193; Stroumsa, *New Science*, 18.
[181] Stroumsa, *New Science*, 22.
[182] Joan-Pau Rubiés, 'The Concept of Cultural Dialogue and the Jesuit Method of Accommodation: Between Idolatry and Civilization', *Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu* 74, no. 147 (2005): 257.

universal faith in favour of a presentation of 'a civilisation in which faith was part of a system of laws, customs and arts'.[183] This laid important groundwork for the systematic comparison of different religions outside of the domain of true versus false.

In Europe itself it is important to acknowledge the importance of the antiquarianisation and historicisation of the Bible which, as Dmitri Levitin has discussed, has to be backdated to the sixteenth century, rather than to be situated with a Hazardian crisis in the late seventeenth century.[184] Within the new chronological framework set forth by Joseph Scaliger, the Bible could be contextualised, using the philological methods developed during the Renaissance. Much like ancient history, the Bible was analysed with the same textual-critical tools and shown to be written in a specific time for a specific audience.[185] This contextualism saw the identification of the Old Testament as a document created by Jews for a specific Jewish authorship, rather than as a whole perfect text.[186] The perception of the Bible at the beginning of the seventeenth century therefore had 'shifted from viewing the Bible as a miraculously perfect whole, authenticated either by itself or by the Church, to the view that "the veracity of the historical parts of the text could be defended (not weakened) by treating them as eye-witness reports, on the same basis as any other direct account of human experience"'.[187]

The ancient Hebrews came to be seen alongside the ancient Egyptians, Greeks and Romans as a historical people in a historical setting - and the same questions started being asked about them that the antiquarians had been asking about the ancients and the ethnologists were writing about newly discovered peoples.[188] In this light it might not seem so surprising that the seventeenth century saw an explosion of scholarship into the ancient idolatry of the Jewish people.[189] There was a distinct political dimension to this, as the investigation of Jewish idolatry was largely a Protestant undertaking in response to what was seen as Catholic idolatry, namely the veneration of saints or images.[190] With the example of the ancient Israelites the Calvinist scholars could show

[183] Rubiés, 'The Concept of Cultural Dialogue and the Jesuit Method of Accommodation: Between Idolatry and Civilization', 259.
[184] Levitin, 'From Sacred History to the History of Religion', 1124; See also Peter N. Miller, 'The "Antiquarianization" of Biblical Scholarship and the London Polyglot Bible (1653-57)', *Journal of the History of Ideas* 62, no. 3 (2001): 463–482.
[185] Levitin, 'From Sacred History to the History of Religion', 1126-1129.
[186] Ibid.
[187] Ibid., 1126-1127.
[188] Miller, 'Taking Paganism Seriously', 198-199.
[189] See Sheehan, 'Sacred and Profane', 40; Mulsow, 'John Seldens De Diis Syris'; On the perception of Jews and the ancient Hebrews more broadly in the seventeenth century see Richard H. Popkin, 'The Image of Judaism in Seventeenth Century Europe', in *Religion, Reason and Nature in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Robert Crocker (Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 2001), 181–197.
[190] Sheehan, 'Sacred and Profane', 42-46; Stroumsa, *New Science*, 31.

that monotheism was by no means a guarantee for not backsliding into idolatry - which was exactly what they accused their fellow Christian Catholics of doing.[191]

It would nevertheless be wrong to only see a political dimension to this form of scholarship as the intellectual and academic dimensions of this exegetical revolution should not be underestimated. Men like Selden, Pignoria and Bochart expanded the philological methods of the antiquarians to the study of Hebrew or Syriac to investigate the origins of pagan rites from sacred ones, or to trace the development of Jewish idolatry from Egyptian practices.[192] This widened the possibility to study all of the world's 'gentile' religions within one common framework, culminating in grand studies such as those by Athanasius Kircher, whose *China illustrata* (Rome 1669) argued for an Egyptian origin of Chinese idolatry. None of this implied a rejection of Christianity, but rather the opposite, as the example of Gerhard Vossius shows. His massive survey of all different forms of idolatry found on Earth was a distinct effort to juxtapose the error of idolatry to the truth of Christianity.[193] Yet on a more theoretical level this early form of comparative religion, in which different religious traditions were examined against one another and common threads were investigated, meant that a modern idea of the term 'religion' was being created in order to be able to compare all these different traditions. By focussing on ritual instead of belief, the Augustinian difference between true and false religion was also abandoned by the historians of idolatry, albeit in a different process than for the Jesuits who supplied a majority of the knowledge on foreign peoples being incorporated into this new scholarship.[194] The detailed analyses into the origins of what had traditionally been cast as the profane, namely idolatry in all of its different forms, reformed the relationship between what constituted the sacred and profane: in their projects of comparative religion idolatry was sacralised *into* a religion, elevated to the same level of Christianity.[195] The profane could now be relegated to the sphere of the non-religious, just like the Jesuits in their efforts of accommodation relegated certain practices to the civil arena, thus partaking in the same process of secularisation of everyday life.[196]

[191] 'The monotheistic, yet backsliding, Jews thus repeatedly showed that belief in God in no way ensured orthopraxis. What looked like an expression of antiquarian interests, in other words, was also the expression of highly confessional ones. If pious intentions could have idolatrous results, then the Catholic separation of veneration (dulia) and worship (latria) collapsed. Here as elsewhere, scholarship was working in the service of theological polemics: the idolatry of the Jews offered ostensibly definitive proof that only through the rigorous exclusion of images, could worship pay its due to God.' Sheehan, 'Sacred and Profane', 46.

[192] Miller, 'Taking Paganism Seriously', 198-199; Sheehan, 'Altars of the Idols', 655-656.

[193] Sheehan, 'Sacred and Profane', 52-53.

[194] Stroumsa, *New Science*, 30; Sheehan, 'Sacred and Profane', 51.

[195] Sheehan, 'Sacred and Profane', 51.

[196] This connection has been sorely ignored by scholarship. See Rubiés, 'The Concept of Cultural

As we have seen A.W. models his own treatise on the writings of the historians of idolatry who are among his major sources. Essentially all of his references function in one way or another to tell the reader about ritual practices, informed by eye-witness accounts. The Bible is a major source on the ancient Hebrews and also the Church Fathers are mostly referenced for their knowledge on both heathen and Christian practices and beliefs. Like Vossius, A.W. attempts a universal survey of all the diverse idolatries that he knows of, yet of course his focus is on the Brahmins and the relationship between their practices and numerous other idolatries.

4.1 A Systematic Survey of Brahminical Idolatry and its Origins

The *Open Deure* is a peculiar monograph: a travel account, in which first-hand knowledge on a religious tradition is presented, is combined with the armchair academic scholarship characteristic of the history of idolatry. Even though A.W. uses footnotes to construct his scholarly commentary of Rogerius's description of the Brahmins, he does attempt universality and a systematic approach in his own version of a historiography of idolatry. His agenda becomes clear in the very first footnote which comments on the term *Bramines*. The annotation gives the reader an overview of the Brahmins, the term *Bramines* being used for both the Brahmin *varna* and the Hindu population at large, whilst the first, as we will see, is the main point of interest for both Rogerius and A.W., especially regarding matters of belief and ritual. We already have a small history of idolatry in this very first footnote: A.W. makes the connection with the *Brachmanes* known to the ancient Greeks and Romans and refers to recent travel literature which calls them by similar names, citing João de Barros and Johan van Twist. Lastly, A.W. asserts that 'many think that they are descended from the children of Abraham' due to the phonetic similarity of Abraham to Brahman.[197] The annotator is here referring to popular etymological studies which saw links with the classical world everywhere.[198] More importantly, at the very beginning of the *Open Deure* there is a connection between the peoples of India with the tribes of Israel in a dispersion model of West to East, picking up the popular topic of Jewish idolatry.

Dialogue and the Jesuit Method of Accommodation: Between Idolatry and Civilization', 244, although Rubiès makes a connection with the Enlightenment instead of the contemporary scholarship in Europe; the only major study to link the Jesuit activities with the history of idolatry scholarship in Europe that I know of is Guy Stroumsa's excellent *New Science*, which treats exactly this topic, especially from the perspective of a new understanding of religion. See Stroumsa, *New Science*.

[197] Rogerius, *Open Deure*, [De Zeden der Bramines] 1-2.

[198] On the etymological studies, see e.g. Grafton, *New Worlds, Ancient Texts*, 153.

This spectre of Jewish idolatry indeed haunts the *Open Deure* to a large extent. The most common form of referring to the ancient Hebrews is through basic comparison; the Old Testament Hebrews are the familiar ground with which the Brahmins can be assessed. A.W. sees many aspect and practices of the South Indian Brahmins reflected in those of the Jews of the Old Testament. The fact that the Brahmins are considered to be the highest *varna*, above nobles and kings, is readily compared to the role of the Jewish priests; in both cases A.W. notes the hereditary nature of priesthood.[199] The 'Life and Manners' of the Brahmins and the broader South Indian populace is a mirror of ancient people known to A.W, with the Hebrews taking a primary role. One particular sphere where he sees connections to the Hebrews is in their family structure and marriage practices.[200] The practice of polygamy is naturally discussed by Rogerius and the annotations make comparisons to multiple ancient peoples, among them the Jews. Interestingly, in the footnotes, which also discuss polyandry and its presence in the ancient world, having multiple wives is said to be an 'Eastern' affliction which the Jews only abandoned when forced to do so by the 'Western' Greeks and Romans.[201] Many other customs are readily compared to Jewish ones such as washing or funeral rites.[202]

Following the distinction between 'civil' and 'religious' that is made in the *Open Deure*, we not only see many societal aspects compared to ancient Jewish ones but also mythological narratives and beliefs. Some of these footnotes merely touch on apparent similarities in mythology, such as the wifes of Aditi and Adam's possible marriage to both Eve and Lilith, or the commonality between the Jewish Leviathan and the Nagaraja.[203] It is also naturally here where we see the actual aspect of Jewish idolatry. Some of the connections rely on older European narratives such as Devil worship which, while not taking on a large role in Rogerius's text, still makes an appearance; in the annotations A.W. makes it clear that the Isrealites committed this same sin and says that 'whether the Jews now are free from this is also questionable'.[204] The Devil is not the only object of false worship that the Brahmins share with the ancient Israelites: the moon and the sun are identified as being worshipped by both the Brahmins and ancient Hebrews as well as numerous other peoples.[205]

[199] Rogerius, *Open Deure*, [In macht ende ansien] 27, [Ende en kan oock gheen vverden] 31.
[200] Ibid., [En nemen hier in 't minste] 42, [Sijn handen vol Rijst] 44-45, [De Man van huys vertreckt] 89.
[201] Ibid., [Meer Vrouvven dan een] 50, [Soo veel Vrouvven te trouvven] 51.
[202] Ibid., [VVasschen sy haer aensicht, haer handen] 70, [Het Lichaem vvaschen] 92, [Op lange Basuynen blasen] 94.
[203] See respectively ibid., [De kinderen van Aditi] 142, [Sesja ghenoemt] 38.
[204] 'Ende of de huydendaeghse *Ioden* daer noch gheheel vry van zijn, soude zijn bedencken hebben.' ibid., [De Duyvelen dienen] 184-186.
[205] Ibid., [Op't hooft van Esvvara] 158, [Oock de Sonne aen] 179-180.

In many instances we see mere comparison make way for actively promoted models of dispersion. We already see some instances of this with the above mentioned customs regarding family and marriage, which A.W. thinks 'were taken over' from or 'seem to have been preserved from the Jews'.[206] Such theorisation as to the origin of Indian customs in those of the ancient Hebrews is especially common with ritual and image worship. Often A.W. mentions such Jewish origin connections only in passing by referencing verses in the Old Testament with comments such as 'from where they seem to have this is seen in Numbers 1.50 and Deuteronomy 10.8'.[207] When talking about ritual feasts, to make an example, A.W. says that 'to hold feasts when sacrificing to their gods was very common. See Exodus 32.6 and Numbers 25.2; this they seem to have learnt from the Jews, who did the same'.[208] The annotator seems hesitant to properly advance this as a fully fledged idea, very often adding qualifiers such as 'probably' or 'maybe'.[209] This careful wording is not to say that A.W. does not attempt to promote a West-East (or East-Far East) model of dispersion - rather it seems he is not completely certain whether the Indian customs, civil or religious, originated only with the Jews. The origin of the Brahmins' idolatrous practices, and idolatry as a phenomenon itself, have a complicated role in the annotations of the *Open Deure* which is possibly best illustrated by the example of bull and cow worship. The annotator could not fail to see a connection between the honour given to cows as described by Rogerius and the examples of adoration of bulls and oxen in the ancient world:

> To erect images for the oxen and to honour them as Gods, these *Bramines*, and different other *Indians*, have without a doubt learnt from the *Egyptians*: for *Strabo lib.* 17. *Plin. lib.* 18 *cap.* 46. and many other authors more, tell stories that those of *Egypt* always had two oxen who they considered Gods; and that the one they called *Mnevis*, and the other *Apis*, *Sarapis*, or *Serapis*; after this *Apis* the *Israelites* themselves formed the image of the golden *calf* in the desert (Exod. 32). See D. *Hieronym. Cap.* 4. *Hofea*, and *Lactant. de vera Sapient. cap.* 10. *Ambros. Tertull.* and others. *Vossius de Idolol. lib.* I. *cap.* 29. considers it certain that with this *Apis*, or *Serapis*, the Patriarch *Joseph* is meant; and this he proves with *Suida in voce Σαραπις, Rufin. lib.* 2. *Historia Eccles.* cap. 33. *Julio Materno*, and others. *Augustin. lib. the*

[206] I am referencing two passages which discuss marriage customs, see Rogerius, *Open Deure*, [Met Vrouvvs-persoonen die te vooren] 42 and [Noch ander-mael trouvven] 98 respectively.

[207] Waer uyt sy dit schijnen te hebben, siet *Numer.* I. *vers.* 50. ende *Deut.* 10. *vers.* 8. ibid., [Die Pagode bevvaren] 155.

[208] Eenige Feesten te houden, soo wanneer sy hare Goden offerden, was seer ghebruyckelijck. Siet *Exod.* 32. *vers.* 6. ende *Numer.* 25. *vers.* 2. dit schijnen sy vande *Ioden* geleert te hebben, dewelcke oock het selfde deden. ibid., 25.

[209] Ibid., [Veel Lampen] 156, [Een gheheelen dagh ende nacht vasten] 170.

> *mirabil. script.* also says very explicitly that those of *Egypt* had an image of an *ox* by the grave of the Patriach *Joseph.* [...] So also God our Lord himself intended seven fruitful years with seven fat *oxen* and seven unfruitful years with seven meagre *oxen.* There is also no evidence that those of *Egypt*, nor any other pagans, worshipped *oxen* before the time of Joseph. So that the opinion of *Vossius*, in my opinion, is not ill-formed. See *Pierium in Hieroglyph. lib.* 3. *cap.* 12. and it should be easy to understood from this why these *Brahmins* add an *ox* to *Shiva.*[210]

The extent of this footnote's length, erudition and references reveals the centrality of the issue of the golden calf and its origin in European discourse, into which A.W. neatly inserts the cow-worshipping Brahmins.[211] This footnote in fact tries to explain idolatry and its relation to the Hebrews from two different facets. One is the more obvious, namely that the Hebrews with their image of the golden calf and the Brahmins' idolatry were both inspired by the Egyptian bull worship which formed the basis of their own idolatrous practice. This was not an innovation on the part of A.W. but goes back at least to John Selden, who also saw the golden calf as a variation of Apis, even though he saw the ultimate origin for it - and for idolatry *in toto* - with the Chaldeans in Syria.[212]

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[210] Full footnote: 'Voor de Ossen Beelden op te rechten, ende de selve Goddelijcke eere aen te doen, hebben dese *Bramines*, ende verscheyden andere *Indianen*, buyten twijfel van de *AEgyptenaers* geleert: want *Strabo lib.* 17. *Plin. lib.* 18 *cap.* 46. ende ontallijcke andere Autheuren meer, verhalen dat die van *AEgypten* altijt twee Ossen hadden die sy voor Goden hielden; ende dat sy den eenen *Mnevis*, ende den anderen *Apis*, *Sarapis*, ofte *Serapis* noemden; naer welcken *Apis* oock selfs de *Israeliten* in VVoestijne Exod. 32. haer vergulden *Calf* geformeert hadden. Siet D. *Hieronym.* over het *vierde Cap. Hofea*, ende *Lactant. de vera Sapient. cap.* 10. *Ambros. Tertull.* ende andere. *Vossius de Idolol. lib.* I. *cap.* 29. hout het voor seker datse met desen *Apis*, ofte *Serapis*, den Patriarch *Ioseph* hebben willen beteyckenen; ende dit bewijst hy met *Suida in voce Σαραπις, Rufin. lib.* 2. *Historia Eccles.* cap. 33. *Iulio Materno*, ende andere. *Augustin. lib. de mirabil. script.* seght oock wel uytdruckelijck dat die van *AEgypten* by het graf van den Patriach *Ioseph* een Beelt van een *Os* ghestelt hadden. VVaer noch by komt dat den voor-noemden Patriarch *Deut.* 33. *vers.* 17. selfs en *Os* genoemt, ten minsten daer by vergheleecken wort. De redenen die sy daer toe hebben ghehadt, is buyten twijfel gheweest de weldat die sy door sijn verstant ende wijsheyt in het uytlegghen van den droom *Pharaonis*, ende den voor-ract van Kooren door hem versorght, sonder welcke sy alle van honger souden hebben moeten vergaen, bekomen hadden: want behalven dat de Heyden de vruchtbaerheyt van Koren, ende andere Dinghen, doorgaens door een *Os* beteyckenden, *Pier. Hierogly. lib.* 3. *cap.* 13. & 15. Waerom oock de Romeynen L. Minnucium met een vergulden *Os* vereerden, soo wanneer hy de ghemeynte van Koren versorght hadd, *Liv. lib.* 4. soo heeft oock Godt de Heere selfs door seven vette *Ossen*, seven vruchtbare Iaren willen beduyden; ende door seven maghere *Ossen*, seven onvruchtbare Iaren. Men vint oock niet dat die van *AEgypten*, ofte eenige andere Heydenen, voor de tijden Iosephi eenighe Ossen ghedient hevven. So dat dese opinie *Vossii* mijns oordeels, niet vreemt en is. Siet *Pierium in Hieroglyph. lib.* 3. *cap.* 12. ende soude hier uyt licktelijck konnen verstaen werden waerom dese *Bramines Esvvara* en *Os* toe-voegen.' Rogerius, *Open Deure*, [Dese is een Os] 132-133.

[211] Another example of a passage in which the Egyptian extent of cow worship is compared to the Brahmins is ibid., 212, where A.W. says that the Egyptians felt such pain at the death of a cow as if it had been the loss of a child and that the funeral of cow was more noble than that of a human.

[212] Sheehan, 'Sacred and Profane', 42; Mulsow, 'John Seldens De Diis Syris', 8-10, 15.

The Brahmins' form of cow worship thus had its origin in the same Egyptian practices from which also the Jews drew their idolatrous practices. Jewish idolatry here is cast as influenced by the Israelites' time in Egypt which emerges as one of the chief places of origin for idolatry, much like it does in the contemporary work of Athanasius Kircher.

On the other hand the Egyptian practice itself goes back to a degeneration of Judaism: the idolatrous worship of an ox erected by the Egyptians on the site of the grave of the Jewish patriarch Joseph, who was responsible for the presence of the Israelites in Egypt according to the narrative in Genesis. It is Joseph who formulated the prophecy of fruitful and unfruitful years, which the Egyptians make into an idolatrous practice by erecting the symbol of fruitfulness in connection with Joseph, namely the ox. Whilst according to A.W. the golden calf and the worship of bovines goes back to the Egyptians, the ultimate origin of idolatry is the true religion of the Israelites, which degenerates into paganism at the hands of the Egyptians. This degeneration model - not dissimilar to older Neoplatonic narratives of prisca theologia which see primarily loss rather than progress in history and thus a golden age of Adamic wisdom - was also readily employed in the same manner by A.W.'s fellow historians of idolatry.[213] Once more Selden forms an important starting point, as he himself saw the origin of many Egyptian rituals in those of the Israelite's sacred religion.[214] We see this conclusion also with other antiquarian historians of idolatry such as Theophilus Gale, who in the epigraph to his *Court of the Gentiles* (1660) proclaims that 'paganism is nothing else but Judaisme degenerated'.[215] Also Samuel Bochart traced the same lines as A.W. and believed calf worship to be rooted in the Egyptian worship of Typhon, but to ultimately go back to Moses.[216]

The issue of bull worship, in its connection to the controversy about the golden calf, reveal the historians' of idolatry's uncertainty and perceived drive to understand where the origins of idolatry lay. Unlike later eighteenth-century scholars, A.W. does not even propose India as one of the most ancient civilisations, but the question for him lies whether the ultimate origin of the Brahmins' ritual lay with the Egyptians or the Israelites.[217] The annotator in these instances uses his commentaries on the Brahmins and the origin of their rituals to participate in the ongoing debate on the origins of idolatry which defined the history of idolatry scholarship. Even though he cites for

[213] Sheehan, 'Sacred and Profane', 53.
[214] Miller, 'Taking Paganism Seriously', 198.
[215] Gale cited in Sheehan, 'Altars of the Idols', 655.
[216] Ibid.
[217] The literature on the eighteenth-century debate concerning the extreme antiquity of India is vast. For a starting point from different angles see for instance App, *The Birth of Orientalism*; Partha Mitter, *Much Maligned Monsters: A History of European Reactions to Indian Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992); Ludo Rocher, *Ezourvedam: A French Veda of the Eighteenth Century* (Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing, 1984).

instance Selden and Bochart in support of an Egyptian origin of Brahmin rites, as I have discussed above, they saw the origins of idolatry in Syria or with the Phoenicians, respectively.

For A.W. on the other hand Egypt takes on a primary role - together with the Israelites - while the relationship between these two peoples and their ritual practices remains more obscure. Unlike with the comparisons to the Israelites we hardly see any perceived commonalities in the sphere of civil life between the Brahmins and the Egyptians in the annotations. One notable exception concerns the Brahmin conception of purity and pollution described by Rogerius, to which A.W. sees similarities in ancient Egypt. He thus compares the role of the Paraiyars on the Coromandel Coast to those of Egyptians who ate pork. According to Herodotus the latter were not allowed to enter temples nor would anyone marry their daughters to people of their descent.[218] A similar comparison is made concerning the impurity of seawater common among both the Brahmins and the ancient Egyptians.[219] Such conceptions of purity we also see compared to the Israelites and are of itself a prime example of the uncertainty of the origins of customs that are inherent to A.W.'s footnotes.[220] The vast majority of comparisons to Egypt are of a different nature, though, and concern ritual, mythology and beliefs.

Ritual is one of the main preoccupations within the genre of history of idolatry. Mostly a Protestant scholarly endeavour, the opposition which was also felt towards Catholicism was not one of orthodoxy, but of orthopraxis, with the Protestants criticising the Catholic ritual as idolatrous.[221] The controversy of the calf is an especially prominent example of this exact tension, as the orthodox beliefs of the Israelites did not shield them from committing idolatry; seeing a parallel in the Indian Brahmins therefore made this a natural point of focus. But A.W. sees many more ritual similarities between the Brahmins and the Egyptians, albeit largely within the same framework of idolatrous worship. Rogerius details offerings to a goddess that he calls Ganga or Gournatha and describes the specific *puja* devoted to her.[222] The bloody sacrifice involved is said to be similar to that of the Egyptians, and all peoples who took this ritual from the Egyptians such as the Greeks and Romans.[223] A.W. also believes the Egyptians to be

[218] Rogerius, *Open Deure*, [Inganck vanden Tempel] 10.
[219] Ibid., [In sich selfs onreyn is] 200.
[220] Ibid., [Voor onreyn vverden ghehouden] 10, [Ende oock den Tempel] 11, [Thien dagen voor onreyn] 31.
[221] Sheehan, 'Sacred and Profane', 46.
[222] Caland is uncertain as to the identity of the God but does propose Gauri and Durga (as Kali). See Rogerius and Caland, *Open Deure 1915*, 141.
[223] Rogerius, *Open Deure*, [Eenighe bloedighe Offerhande] 188-189.

the originators of phallic worship and that the Brahmins, 'like the Greeks and Romans, apparently learnt this from the Egyptians'.[224] He sees the origin in the mythology surrounding Osiris and the reassembly of his body by his sister Isis, who, unable to find his manhood, decided to have phallic images installed in temples.[225]

Connections such as this one between mythology and idolatry are what underlies the annotations' history of idolatry. A.W. shows a keen interest in the origins of rituals in mythology and how beliefs influenced other cultures' own ritual and belief structures. The same is true for the annotations of the *Open Deure* which Peter Miller has stated for the historians of idolatry in general: 'where the history of religion stops and the history of culture starts is, therefore, not always easy to discern'.[226] Many very short footnotes reveal that A.W. saw Egypt as the main origin of the Brahmins' mythology. When Rogerius discusses Garuda in great detail, A.W. implies that the Egyptians worshipped the same being by saying 'this one is called Epies by the Egyptians'.[227] Another example emerges when Rogerius discusses the wives of gods, where he goes into quite some detail on the mythology behind Lakshmi and Parvati.[228] He tells the reader about *Ardhanarishvara*, the composite androgynous form of Shiva and Parvati symbolising both the duality and unity of male and female. This in turn elicits a response by A.W. on this latter subject, already picked up at the beginning of the chapter when discussing the fact that deities like Shiva and Vishnu have wifes.[229] In this earlier footnote he had already discussed the dispersion of worshipping androgynous gods in antiquity calling it 'utriusque naturae', that is a double nature, a term also used in Christian theology to refer to Jesus's dual nature of humanity and divinity.[230] The ultimate origin of this worship of female and male unity in one god A.W. ascribes to the Egyptians, or at least he speculates that the Brahmins 'apparently learnt this from the Egyptians'.[231]

[224] 'Dit hebben dese *Bramines*, met de *Griecken*, ende *Romeynen*, apparentelijck van de AEgyptenaers gheleert.' Rogerius, *Open Deure*, 118.
[225] Ibid.
[226] Miller, 'Taking Paganism Seriously', 185.
[227] 'Desen wiert van den *AEgyptenaers Epies* ghenoemt.' He also references Giraldi. Rogerius, *Open Deure*, [Als oock Garrouda] 156; see also [In grooter eere ende achtinghe] 157.
[228] Ibid., 112-118.
[229] Ibid., [Een schoone Vrouvve] 112.
[230] See for instance Aquinas's discussion in *de incarnatione*, question 16, St Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Tertia Pars, 1-59* (Steubenville: Emmaus Academic, 2012), Q. 16.
[231] 'Dese Bramines hebben dit apparentelijck van de AEgyptenaers geleert Rogerius, *Open Deure*, [Half Vrouvv half Man ghevvorden] 116.

4.2 The Origin of Idolatry and Concepts of Universal Idolatry

In A.W.'s attempt to identify the origins of the customs of the Brahmins, then, both the ancient Hebrews and the Egyptians emerge as potential candidates for a people of origin. While there are more references to civil practices originating with the Hebrews and more to religious practices with the Egyptians, both remain clear candidates and sometimes are mentioned together. There is thus no definitive dispersion model which explains the origin of idolatry in India present in the annotations and it remains unclear whether A.W. advocated a clear origin of Brahminical idolatry with a specific people, whether he saw a more general dispersion from the Judeo-Egyptian Middle East, or whether he just advocated whatever he saw the greatest connection with *ad hoc*. If we return to the question of the *ultimate* origins of idolatry we once more see uncertainty:

> When the pagans began to worship images is not certain. Some say that *Prometheus* was the first to honour images; others say *Hercules*; others *Janus*. But it is beyond doubt that the first has not been found, as most nations claim they learnt this from others. The *Latins* say that they have it from the *Greeks* (*Clement of Alexandria Strom. lib.* I. says that in the first 160 years there were also no images to be found in *Rome*), the *Greeks* from the *Phoenicians* and the *Egyptians*. The oldest proof of images that can be found is from *Gen.* 31.19. I know well that there are those, especially among the *Jews*, who believe that images were worshipped before the flood, that is in the time of *Enoch*, but those [opinions] are without a doubt very abused. It is not even certain that in those times idolatry [Afgoderye] was committed, far less so that images were worshipped: for it is certain that the sun, the moon etc. were believed to be gods, at least to be given godly honour, much before images were acknowledged as such. See for this *Schedius de Diis German. syngr.* I. *cap.* 3. and *Dionys. Vossium in not. ad R. Mos. Maimon. de Idololat. cap.* I. The *Persians*, the *Seres* and other peoples have with the *Jews* never wanted to honour images. That is also why *Diagoras Melitus*, as he put the image of *Hercules* onto the fire, said in a mocking way: *in hoc decimotertio agone, ut quondam Eurystheo, mihi servias oportet* [in this thirteenth labour, like once Eurystheus, I must be a slave].[232]

[232] 'Wanneer de Heydenen eerst begonnen hebben de Beelden eere aen te doen, en is niet seker. Sommiger seggen dat *Prometheus* de eerst gheweest is, de welcke de Beelden geeert heeft: andere *Hercules*; andere *Ianus*. Maer het is buyten twijfel dat den eersten noch niet uyt gevonden en is, nadien meest alle Natien bekennen datse dat van andere gheleert hebben. De *Latijnen* segghen dat sy het van de *Griecken* hebben: (want in de eerste hondert-en-seventigh jaren, na het ghetuygenisse *Clement. Alexandr. Strom. lib.* I. en waren oock binnen *Roomen* gheen Beelden te vinden) de *Griecken* van de *Phoenices*, ende *AEgyptenaers*. De outste gheheughenissen die men van de Beelden vint, is *Genes.* 31. *vers.* 19. Ick weet wel datter verscheyden zijn, voornamentlijck onder de *Ioden*, de welcke meynen dat de Beelden al voor de Sunt-vloet, ten tijde *Enoch*, gedient zijn gheworden, maer dese zijn buyten twijfel seer verabuseert. Selfs en is het niet seker datter in die tijden eenighe

It thus emerges that A.W. is indeed self-professedly very uncertain to the origins of idolatry in the sense of worshipping images. The Egyptians, which we have seen to be a central source for Brahminical idolatry in the opinion of A.W., are the 'teachers' of others, but the annotator does not claim them to be the inventors of image worship. A.W. takes a definitive stance only in the negative sense: he argues against those who believe idolatry to have emerged before the flood. This is a specific attack on the tradition of the medieval Jewish philosopher Maimonides; Maimonides was an important figure for the historians of idolatry for both his systematic study of the Talmud as well as his philosophical defense of the ritual commands given to the Jews by God, who had given seemingly irrational commands in order to distance the Hebrews from the idolatry both within and surrounding them.[233] It is Maimonides who sees the origin of idolatry with Enoch and whose authority is referenced by A.W. above. Like many historians of idolatry A.W. thus seems to side with Lactantius, who in the seventeenth century was the other great authority for dating the emergence of idolatry, who argues that idolatry originated with the sons of Ham. Ss Jonathan Sheehan deftly observes Lactantius was more appealing for the historians of idolatry:

> If idolatry was a pre-diluvial phenomenon, then it had always shadowed true religion: out-side of Eden, truth had been free of error for a mere two centuries. If idolatry was a post-diluvial phenomenon, however, scholars could embrace the time before the Flood as a period of unbroken religious devotion, a Christianity avant la lettre or what Eusebius called the "most ancient organisation for holiness".[234]

Older than image worship, according to A.W., was another form of a broader conceptualised idolatry: the worship of the sun, moon and stars. This was another type of worship which the Europeans had come across in the new world. Las Casas, whom we have already met, explained that the sun was an obvious object of worship for natural man, as it was responsible for the greatest things; for Las Casas solar worship was as close as natural man could come to the truth, with actual idolatry only persisting due to

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Afgoderye soude zijn ghepleeght, veel min den Beelden eenighe eere bewesen: want het is seker dat de Son, de Maen, &c. veel eerder voor Goden zijn ghehouden, ten minsten Goddelijcke eere bewesen, dan de Beelden bekent zijn gheworden. Siet hier van *Schedium de Diis German. syngr.* I. *cap.* 3. ende *Dionys. Vossium in not. ad R. Mos. Maimon. de Idololat. cap.* I. De *Persen*, de *Seres*, ende andere Volckeren, en hebben met de *Ioden* noyt den Beelden eenighe eere willen aendoen. Daerom seyde oock *Diagoras Melitus*, als hy het Beelt van *Hercules* op het vyer leyde, met het selve spottende *in hoc decimotertio agone, ut quondam Eurystheo, mihi servias oportet.*' Rogerius, *Open Deure*, [Aen sijn Beelden eere bevvijsen] 150.

[233] Levitin, 'From Sacred History to the History of Religion', 1130.

[234] Sheehan, 'Sacred and Profane', 74.

deception by priests.[235] This narrative of the worship of celestial lights being the most natural was also supported by Selden and Vossius and can be traced back to Moses Maimonides.[236] A.W. supports this idea wholeheartedly and we see multiple references to the universality and antiquity of this form of worship next to the above quotation. When Rogerius mentions sun worship among the Indians, A.W. asserts in a footnote that to list all nations and peoples who pray to the sun would take too long.[237] In the same place he adds that God expressively forbade sun worship - thus firmly establishing celestial worship as a form of idolatry. He even lists it among the reasons for the fall of the Jewish kingdom, as recounted in the second book of kings.[238] Nevertheless, he does not stray too far from Las Casas's point of view by also adding a reference to Plutarch's *Isis & Osiris*, where Plutarch 'spoke splendidly' in calling the celestial objects mirrors in which one could feel the 'presence of the Creator of the heavens and its emblazonments'.[239] A few chapters later Rogerius briefly mentions the worship of sun and moon once more, which elicits another footnote from the annotator. It is worth quoting this in part as well:

> These two lights [the sun and the moon] were the cause of the very first offence of humankind and the source of the first idolatry which was committed. It is apparent that the *Brahmins* have this from the *Assyrians*, from whom all idolatry [Afgoderije] and superstition sprouted and was dispersed to the whole world, who worshipped them [the sun and moon] most especially, and from whom the *Brahmins* also kept other elements of their worship [Godsdienst]. Exactly like the *Phoenicians* and those of *Cyprus* learnt the same from the *Assyrians*; and from those the *Greeks* and the whole of *Africa*; from there again the *Romans*, the *old Germans* and the *Scythians*. And so this error took over the whole Earth.[240]

[235] Miller, 'Taking Paganism Seriously', 188-189.

[236] Martin Mulsow and Robert Folger, 'Idolatry and Science: Against Nature Worship from Boyle to Rüdiger, 1680-1720', *Journal of the History of Ideas* 67, no. 4 (2006): 702.

[237] He instead refers the reader to Vossius, like on many other occasions. Rogerius, *Open Deure*, [De Son, de Maen] 143-144.

[238] Which is repeated at ibid., [Oock de Sonne aen] 179-180.

[239] The referenced part of the footnote is as follows: 'Soo dat wy sien dat *Plutarchus*, al-hoewel hy een *Heyden* was, desen aengaende in *lib. de Iside & Osiride* seer treffelijck gesproken heeft, soo wanneer hy seyde, dat men de Elementen, den Hemel, de Son, ende de Maen niet en behoorde aen te bidden; maer dat die alleenlijck Spieghels waren, in de welcke men die bysondere wijsheyt, ende kunst van die ghene, die den Hemel gheschappen, ende soo uytnemende verciert hadde, bespeuren konde.' ibid., [De Son, de Maen] 143-144.

[240] Full footnote: 'Datse evenwel de seleve eenighe eere bewijsen, ende in weerdigheyt ehnoeghsaem benessens de Son stellen, schijnt buyten twijfel te zijn. Aen dese twee lichten hebben de Menschen haer alder-eerst vergrepen, ende omtrent de selve Afgoderije ghepleeght. Ende alsoo die van *Assyrien*, van welcken alle Afgoderije ende Superstitien voort-gesproten, ende over de gansche VVerelt verspreyt zijn, dese voor al aenghebeden hebben, soo is her apparent dat dese *Bramines*, die oock benessens

A.W. here seems to once again invoke Selden, who, as we have seen, argued for a Syrian origin of idolatry - yet unlike the Egyptians and ancient Hebrews the Assyrians do not make a big appearance in the annotations, further cementing A.W.'s uncertainty toward the origins of idolatry rather than making them his prime suspects. We do however once more have a theory of dispersion which now includes the entirety of the old world; America and the idolatry found there is not fully within A.W.'s horizon except for some brief remarks where he references de Acosta.[241] In this way the annotator universalises the worship of celestial objects as a common feature among the traditional fourth religious group of idolatry, but only at the expense of effectually getting rid of the category in the process. Each of these religious traditions stand for themselves as they are compared by A.W. in his search for commonalities. Such a systematic comparison of different religious traditions and customs is very common in the annotations of the *Open Deure* and exemplifies that A.W. is not only looking for a specific model of dispersion for the Brahmins, but attempts a universal survey of religion.

Such a global survey of religion is another feature of the annotations that is actually there from the very start. The second footnote of the monograph comments on Rogerius's outline of the four *varnas*; A.W. says that originally there were seven among the Indians and compares it to the seven 'tribes' of Egypt, the four of Athens, the three of ancient Arabia and the two distinctions found among the Romans and Thespians.[242] Statements such as this one are the most numerous of the entirety of the footnotes, making up a large proportion of the total. Rather than seeing commonalities with only one culture or a more thought-out theory of dispersion for certain customs, these footnotes see similarities across a wide range of distance and cultures. These comparisons can be of a very simple nature such as when he argues that the Assyrians, Arabs and almost all Asian peoples used to fight on war chariots,[243] or when he says that living off of alms is an old and very common practice also found with the Egyptians, Greeks, Romans and in

verscheyden andere dinghen den Godsdienst betreffende, van haer behouden hebben; gelijck oock de *Phoenices*, ende die van *Cypers* het selve van de *Assyriers* geleert hebben; ende van dese de *Griecken*, ende gantsch *Africa*; van haer wederom de *Romeynen, Oude Duytschen*, ende de *Scythen*. Ende sii heeft dese dwalinghe den ganschen Aertbodem inghenoomen. Soo hebben de *Phoenices*, die van *Syrien*, ende andere Volckeren daer ontrent, de Maen ghedient onder den Naem van *Astarte* (dese is *Astaroth* in het *Boeck der Rechteren Cap.* 2. *vers.* 19 ende het *tvvede Boeck der Coningen Cap.* 23. *vers.* 13) Die van *Babylonien*, ende *Assyrien* noemdense Πυλιτζα [Pillar]. De *Persen, Anaitis*: ghelijck oock de *Meden* ende *Parthen*. De *Arabiers, Abilat*, ofte *Alitta*. Die van *AEgypten, Isis*. Die van *Africa, Coelestis*. De *Romeynen, Diana*. De *Griecken, Αρτεμις*, ende soo voort. Siet *Lucian. de Dea Syria. Herod. lib. I. Strabo lib. II. Pausan. in Laconicis. Diodor. in primo Bibloth.* ende *Cicer. 2. de natur. Deor.*' Rogerius, *Open Deure*, [Schendra, de Maen, en heeft] 157-158.

[241] Ibid., [Ende heylighe Bergen] 71, [Aen andere Goddelijcke eere] 180-181. See also above, footnote 120.

[242] Ibid., [Vier generale Stammen] 2.

[243] Ibid., [Vochtense op VVagens] 83.

Pegu.[244] A.W. is aso not content merely with comparing the Brahmins to other ancient pagans he knows, but many comparisons involve also neigbouring cultures in Asia, such as when he universalises the practice of Sati by saying that this does not only happen on the Coromandel Coast, 'but also in different other powerful kingdoms and lands in the Indies, such as Pegu, Siam, Ceylon, Bali, Gujaratte and more'.[245] Commonality of course also does not exclude difference, it merely calls for a common framework of comparison; we often see A.W. argue for differences of a type of custom among different peoples, such as how many days are usually reserved after birth before naming a child.[246] Such broad commonality does however often tend towards universality of customs. According to the annotator, marriage ceremonies, for instance, have been common among almost all peoples at all times.[247]

Such perceived universality is also common when it comes to ritual and belief. Giving many names to gods is therefore for instance made into a universal pagan practice which has 'always been common amongst the pagans'.[248]The actual act of idolatry is itself a topic here: carrying idols on shoulders during festivities is described to be common among many pagans, including the Isrealites when they carried around the image of Moloch.[249] Sacrifice holds a special interest for the annotator as an integral part of religion. We see that A.W. goes beyond a mere history of idolatry here, even if he also attempts to describe universal features of idolatrous religious traditions. In this vein we see the topic of human sacrifice, a shocking practice known to Europeans from travel reports of Central America. Rogerius mentions that in previous times people used to be sacrificed to the deity known to him as Ganga.[250] The annotator in turn supplies a footnote saying that this indeed should not shock us, as this is a practice common among many peoples in older times, such as the Carthaginians, the Danes and Normans, the old Swedes, Germans and Goths as well as the druids.[251]

What is more relevant from the perspective of changing conceptions of religion and the history of religion, is when A.W. goes beyond the history of idolatry into something akin to a universal history of religious developments. Unlike Rogerius, who prefers the more praxis-driven terminology of *Gods-dienst*, A.W. actually also uses the term religion

[244] Rogerius, *Open Deure*, [Van almoessen leven] 21.
[245] '[...] maer oock in verscheyden andere machtige Rijcken ende Landen in de Indien, als Pegu, Siam, Seylon, Bali, Gujaratte, ende andere meer.' ibid., [In't vyer te springhen] 87.
[246] Ibid., [Op den thienden dagh] 31-32.
[247] Ibid., [Te pleghen de Ceremonien] 44.
[248] ''t Is t'allen tijden by de Heydene ghebruyckelijck geweest hare Goden veel namen te gheven' ibid., [Met duysent andere namen] 104.
[249] Ibid., [Op de schouderen] 164.
[250] Ibid., 188.
[251] Ibid., [Iaerlijcks een Mensch] 188.

(*religie*), both as a category in itself, as well as for the Brahmins' beliefs and rituals.[252] The annotator uses this term in a distinctly modern way and functionalises the practice of sacrifice:

> Sacrifices [Offerhanden] have at all times originated with Religion, also at the beginning of Creation, as one sees from the story of Cain and Abel. God had himself set several sacrifices in the Old Testament, about which Moses talks throughout. They were proofs of proper invocation [aenroepinghe] and thanksgiving for the received benefaction; there were also some sacrifices of forgiveness, which saw on [towards] Christ. But of these the pagans knew little; they always sacrificed to those they considered gods as well, yet only, as Eustathius says, to prove their gratitude and to petition the continuation of benefits. See Macrobius. With the coming of Christ all these bloody sacrifices have taken an end, even though the Christians also have their own sacrifices.[253]

In this relatively short footnote we see numerous things. First of all we see that the annotator does not stop his search for commonalities within what is considered idolatrous traditions, but attempts to formulate a universal development at the core of religion as an element of human society. Not only does he in this way participate in the sacralisation of idolatrous religions, he also takes the next step by putting Christianity side by side with all other religions. A.W. by no means abandons sacred history completely; but he does formulate sacrifice as an integral part of any religion and originating with religion. Christianity, moreover, has sacrifices just as much as the ancient Hebrews, or any other religion as a matter of fact. Christianity is no longer the sacred tradition with idolatry as its exact opposite. Even though the truth of Christianity is at no point questioned, the various forms of idolatry, all with their own systems of belief and ritual, are elevated to the same level as Christianity by becoming the sacred sphere of a culture. After all,

[252] Note for instance Rogerius, *Open Deure*, [De Iastra] 27, where he specifically talks about the 'books of their religion'.

[253] The full footnotes features additional references: 'De Offerhanden hebben t'allen tijden haren oorspronck met de Religie ghenomen, oock selfs in den beginne der Scheppinghe, als blijckt uyt de Historie van *Cain* ende *Abel*. Godt hadde inden ouden Testamente selfs verscheyden Offerhanden inghestelt, vande welcke *Moses* doorgaens handelt; 't warten bewijs-teeckenen van een oprechte aenroepinghe, ende dankseggінghe voor de ghenooten weldaden: daer waren oock eenige Versoen-offerhanden, dewelcke op *Christum* saghen. Doch van dese en hebben de *Heydenen* weynigh gheweten; sy hebben wel altijt den ghenen dewelcke sy voor Goden aenghenomen hadden, oock met Offerhanden gedient, maer alleenlijck, ghelijck *Eustathius* seght, om deselve daer mede danckbaerheyt te bewijsen, ende continuatie vande weldaden te versocken. Siet *Macrob. lib.* 3. *cap.* I.2. & *seqq.* met de komste *Christi* hebben alle dese bloedighe Offerhanden een eynde ghenomen, alhoewel dat de Christenen oock noch hare Offerhanden hebben. Siet den *Seyntbr. tot den Hebr. Cap.* 7. *vers.* 27. ende 9. *vers.* 11. *Ephes.* 5. vers. 2. *Luc.* 11. *vers.* 13.14. ende 24. *vers. ult. Philipp.* 4. *vers.* 18. ende andere plaetsen meer.' ibid., ['t VVelck gheoffert moet vvorden] 24.

as already the division of the *Open Deure* into two parts evidences, in the view of the collaborators on the book there are distinct spheres of sacred and profane in the culture of the Brahmins.

Secondly, and this is tightly interwoven with the above, sacrifice has been functionalised: the Hebrews had been ordered by God to perform offerings in order to show gratitude towards their deity. The annotator here mirrors the greater scholarship on the history of idolatry, as the treatises of Selden or Vossius do exactly the same. Rites were interpreted as utilitarian in nature and serving a social function. The Jews are thus able to distinguish themselves from the pagan Egyptians through their rituals - as Jonathan Sheehan has remarked, this is a decidedly anthropologist way of analysing religion which also had repercussions in the status of theology in late-seventeenth-century scholarship and politics.[254]

This then also allows A.W. to look at Christians in essentially the same way as the Brahmins and the Hebrews, by analysing all of them from an outside perspective. As such we see certain heterodox Christian groups included in comparisons: primarily the Gnostics and Manicheans but also more marginally the Tatians, Eucratites, Marcionists, Valentinians, Carpocratians, Archontics and Cerdonians.[255] A controversial topic which comes up in this regard is the issue of rebirth or transmigration: A.W. hypothesises that the decision to not eat meat is based on the belief of transmigration, functionalising this widespread custom which he says was common among the Egyptians, Greeks, certain Jews and some Christians such as the Manicheans.[256] I will return to the issue of transmigration shortly; for now it suffices to summarise that 'religion' as a category was therefore by no means restricted to be used as a tool for othering, but comprised *all* religions, including Christianity. Another aspect of the annotations however reveals that as much A.W. distinguishes between different religions and makes them all a member of the same sacred family, he also sees elements of Christianity within the very religion of the Brahmins that he constructs in the process. This narrative of a Christianised ur-monotheism is the topic of the remainder of this thesis.

[254] Sheehan, 'Sacred and Profane', 58; Sheehan, 'Altars of the Idols', 669-673.
[255] Rogerius, *Open Deure*, [Dat leven oyt ghehadt heeft] 6, [Vande op-standinghe der doo-den] 19 and [De kinderen van Aditi] 142.
[256] Ibid., [Dat leven oyt ghehadt heeft] 6.

5 Hidden Monotheism among the Brahmins

> Herein seems to lie hidden a shadow of the truth, that of which Christ said "I and the Father are one". See the notes on the tenth chapter of this [first] part. The wisest [verstandichste] among the pagans have at all times judged there to be only one God, at least surely one with the highest power. To lessen my own burden in proving this any further I shall redirect the reader to Mr. Vossius, who in his first book *de idolol, cap. 2* has, by referring to the oldest and best authors, done this in a most excellent manner. Yet it is not enough to reject multiple gods and recognise only one unitary god, unless one knows him as he is. In this most pagans have erred; in this the Muhammadans and Jews still err; who may well recognise one God, creator of the Heavens and the Earth, but not as he really is; namely Father, Son and Holy Ghost.[257]

This footnote serves as a good introduction to the annotator's interpretation and adaptation of perennial philosophy to the case of the South Indian Brahmins. Any discussion of the deeper meaning of Brahmin religion cannot be understood as separate from the endeavour of writing a universal history of idolatry, as I have outlined in the previous chapter; as we shall see, all of A.W.'s discussions of Brahmin religion are indeed a part of this larger framework which characterises the annotations of the *Open Deure*. This is immediately clear from both the reference to Gerhard Vossius, as well as the statement that 'the wisest among the pagans' have always recognised some form of monotheism. Clearly, then, the discussion of the Brahmins' monotheist religion has to be structured in the same comparative framework as the discussion of their idolatrous practices. At the same time, this is somewhat counter-intuitive: how is it that 'most pagans' have always been monotheists, if A.W. is so preoccupied throughout his footnotes to show the various forms of idolatry among the Brahmins and how these forms of worship relate to those of other peoples? Moreover, if we read the passage attentively we see that *only* 'most pagans' have erred in recognising the holy trinity of God - leaving space for some orthoprax and orthodox pagans, a sacred assignment even

[257] 'Hier onder schijnt verborgen te zijn een schaduwe der waerheyt en van het ghene Christus seyde, Ick ende Vader zijn een. Siet de Aenteyckeningen op het 10. Cap. van dit Deel. De verstandichste onder de Heydenen hebben t'allen tijden geordeelt datter maern eenen Godt en was, immers maer eenen die het opperste ghebiedt hadde. Om mijn selven te onlasten van dit wijt-loopigher te bewijsen, sal den Leser senden tot d'Heer Vossium, dewelcke 'tselve in sijn eerste boeck de idolol cap. 2 seer treffelijck, verscheyden vande outste, ende beste Autheuren allegerende, ghedaen heeft. Doch evenwel en ist niet genoegh de veelheyt der Goden te verwerpen, ende eenen eenigen Godt te erkennen, ten zy datmen hem kenne ghelijck hy is. Hier in hebben meest alle Heydenen ghedwaelt: hier in dwalen noch de Ioden ende Machometamen; dewelcke wel eenen Godt, Schepper des Hemels ende der Aerden, erkennen, maer evenwel niet ghelijck hy is; te weten Vader, Soon, ende H. Geest.' Rogerius, *Open Deure*, [VVistnou ende Esvvara een zijn] 17-18.

the Jews and Muslims are excluded from. To tackle how A.W. accommodates this with his portrayal of idolatrous pagans and how this is related to the Brahmins, it is worth first looking at a seemingly unimportant element of the quote above, namely when the annotator references his own notes on chapter 1.10 in the book.

5.1 In-References to Direct the Reader

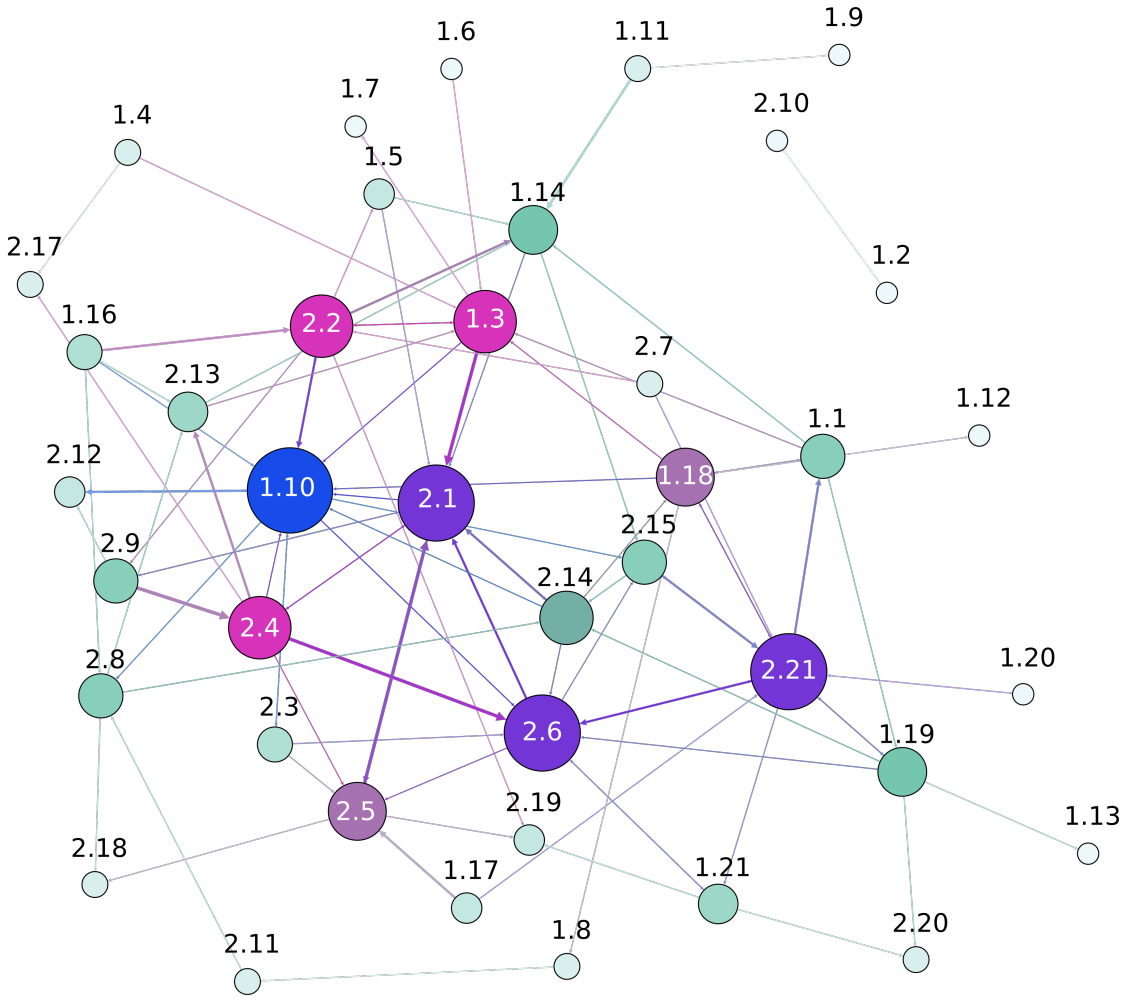
References to other parts of the book such as the one above are themselves a common element of the annotations. References to other footnotes are rarer, yet still readily found: out of 485 footnotes in total, 123, more than a fourth, contain general references to other chapters in the book, out of which again 35 are specifically references to the annotations of a given chapter.[258] These in-references thus make up a fourth of all footnotes and a prominent part of the annotations. If one breaks down which chapters are referenced and when A.W. redirects the reader specifically to his own notes, a number of interesting details emerge.

In the network graph (figure 2) the footnote references from one chapter to another chapter of the *Open Deure* are shown. The larger the node of a given chapter, the more references are made to it. In the middle we see that those chapters which are referenced the most by A.W., the ones which are coloured in darker and are the largest, reference one another heavily, resulting in a tight network. Multiple references from the same chapter are visible in the graph through thicker edges. I have considered the amount of references from different chapters as the most important variable, even when there are multiple citations from one chapter to another. For instance, 2.1 has the highest total number of references (fourteen), yet many of those are multiple citations from the same chapter, often in short succession (e.g. three references from 1.3). Chapter 1.10 therefore emerges as the most quoted with a total of ten references, all of them from different chapters.

The importance of these in-references to A.W.'s discourse should not be overstated and I do not want to dwell on this aspect for long, but I deem this relevant mainly for two points. First of all these references tie together the annotations with the main text, and A.W.'s intention seems to be to give the *Open Deure* somewhat of an encyclopaedic character. In this way he attempts to bring more order to Rogerius' narrative, scattered as it is throughout the forced structure in two parts, and refer the reader to other chapters where topics, practices or deities that are mentioned in a specific passage of the main text are explained in more detail. This is certainly the case for the majority of the

[258] There are two occasions in which the annotator references a specific page for his own footnotes, in which case I have taken the chapter as the defining feature.

Figure 2: Network Graph of references to specific chapters within the *Open Deure*. Node size and colour based on in-degree (larger and darker means higher count); multiple references from one chapter to another are represented by edge thickness.



The Four Most Referenced Chapters

1.10 - Of the Philosophical Knowledge Which Can Be Found Among the Brahmins

2.1 - About God

2.6 - Of the Angels and Devils

2.21 - Of the State of Men after Death

in-references and may well stem from the fact that the publication was not based on a definitive manuscript written by Rogerius, but on whatever writings he had left behind.

Beyond such rather trivial reading directions we can discover another aspect. If we look at the four most referenced chapters in particular, we notice that the annotator might also want to direct the reader to his own discourse in the footnotes and specifically to the annotations in these key chapters. These chapter references are also those which contain the highest number of direct references to the annotations: out of the ten references to chapter ten in the first part, seven are references to the annotations. The three most referenced chapters in the second part also follow suit: the footnotes in chapter 2.1 are referenced six times, those in 2.6 and 2.2 three times each. No other chapter annotations are referenced more than these four.[259]

I intend to argue that A.W. consciously attempts to swerve the reader's attention to these key chapters and, especially, to his own discourse in these chapters. It is in there that we see the annotator adapt a perennial philosophy in the tradition of Steuco to the specifics of the South Indian Brahmins' philosophy and religion, to use A.W.'s own terms. It makes sense that A.W. would choose these chapters, because of the chapter's titles and content: chapter 1.10 concerns the 'Philosophical Knowledge which Can Be Found among the Bramines'.[260] Chapter 2.1 is called 'About God', 2.6 'Of the Angels and Devils' and chapter 2.21, the very last chapter of the *Open Deure*, is 'Of the State of Men After Death', with a strong focus on the idea of rebirth and the connection with the classical concept of the transmigration of souls. As A.W. himself attempts to direct the reader to his annotations in these chapters, they present the ideal basis for an analysis of his own philosophical-religious viewpoint and its relationship to the Brahmins.

5.2 Pythagoras in India: the Transmigration of Souls

The topic of rebirth described in Rogerius's description of the South Indians' religious beliefs draws A.W. naturally to ancient portrayals of the transmigration of souls, a tradition which is closely linked to the person of Pythagoras. This makes this topic especially interesting within the current study, as it links the history of idolatry framework inherent to A.W.'s discourse to his fascination with perennial philosophy.

Throughout the entirety of the book we see the theory of metempsychosis or trans-

[259] Chapter 2.14 is also referenced thrice, the remaining thirteen references to the annotations do not reference any chapter annotations more than twice.

[260] The complete title is 'Of the Philosophical Knowledge which Can Be Found among the Bramines'. A table with all original chapter titles and an English translation can be found in the Appendix.

migration being described within a universal religious scheme, rather than being bound to its dedicated section in the last chapter of the book. We have already seen hints of this when A.W. theorises that vegetarianism as a socio-cultural practice most probably has its origin with the theory of transmigration. He explicitly states this to be true for the ancient Brahmins, the Egyptian Priests and Greeks: the ancient Hebrews and Christian sects, such as the Manicheans, are also mentioned, even if in this instance A.W. is careful to not associate the Abrahamic religions with metempsychosis.[261] If we turn to chapter 2.21, the section which Rogerius dedicates to a discussion of the concept of rebirth, we notice that A.W. uses the exact same comparative approach we have already seen in the above section on the history of idolatry. An example of this is when Rogerius details a Brahmin belief that some people, upon death, turn into 'devils [who] roam the sky', hungry lost souls who are forced to atone for their sins in this manner.[262] The annotator in turn compares this to the beliefs of the Stoics, who, in A.W.'s account, imagined the afterlife of those who had lived a virtuous life to be pleasantly spent near the moon overlooking 'heavenly affairs', while those who had acted according to their wants would have to 'fly around until they would learn to be better and therefore be cleansed of their sins, and so would be lighter and could fly higher'.[263]

Conspicuous is how often A.W. makes a connection between transmigration and Plato and Platonism, rather than mentioning only Pythagoras, whose name does not turn up as often as expected.[264] At the very beginning of 2.21 Rogerius himself makes a brief foray into comparative philosophy and religion and mentions how the Brahmins 'agree with Plato, who thought that the soul of one man would migrate to another; and not only into the body of another human, but also into the bodies of beasts'.[265] On the next page he says that not only Plato believed this, but also his disciple Plotinus, whereas

[261] Rogerius, *Open Deure*, [Dat leven oyt ghehadt heeft] 6.

[262] Ibid., 212.

[263] Full footnote: 'De *Stoici* ghelijck sy ghevoelden dat eenighe Zielen der ghener, de welcke haer leven hier op der Aerden na de reden gheschickt, ende wel gheleeft hadden, na eenige plaetsen ontrent de Maen wierden op ghenomen, alwaer sy haer door het aenschouwen der Hemelscher dinghen vermaeckten: alsoo gheloofden sy oock dat de Zielen derghener, dewelcke hier op der Aerden na den drift harer affecten gheleeft hadden, by aldiender maer eenighe hope uyt haer vorighe leven konde gheschept werden, datse haer in toekomende tot beterschap souden konnen begheven, ontrent de Aerde moesten swerven, tot datse beter gheleert, ende van hare vorighe sonden ghereynight zijnde, oock hoogher konden op-vlieghen. Maer daer gantsch gheen beterschap in te verwachten en was, wierden na hare opinie, in de Helle ghesmeten.' ibid., [Door de Lucht svverven] 212-213.

[264] Unfortunately I do not have space to go into more detail on this topic here. It should be noted that of course Plato was indeed also a defender of the theory of transmigration, building on Empedocles. See Carl. A. Keller, 'Reincarnation I: Antiquity', in *Dictionary of Gnosis & Western Esotericism* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 980–984.

[265] 'De *Heydenen* komen met *Plato* hier in over een, de welcke oock van die opinie was, dat de Zielen van den eenen Mensch verhuysen in een ander; ende niet alleen in't Lichaem van een ander Mensch, maer oock in de Lichaemen der Beesten.' Rogerius, *Open Deure*, 210.

Porphyry only believed souls to migrate to other human bodies.[266] The annotator does not let such an opportunity go by without expanding on this topic extensively, and so the majority of these pages is filled with footnotes rather than main text. On the topic of the Brahmins' belief that sin is the reason for transmigration, A.W. says:

> Of this opinion were the *Egyptians, Orpheus, Plato* and many other old pagans. *Pythagoras* also said clearly that the souls of men go into beasts due to their sins, as they were punishments for previous misdeeds, and that through this they would be cleansed. According to this the souls of those who were ireful and evil were sent to snakes; the miserly souls to wolves; the cheaters to foxes and so on. For more on this see *Agostino Steuco, De perenni philosophia.* So said also the *Jews*, that the soul of a sinner and anyone who crossed God's law would migrate to the bodies of beasts, according to the cruelty of the sin that they committed. Among the Christians also *Valentinus, Colorbasus*, all *Gnostics* and all *Manicheans* were of this opinion. See *Epiphanus contra haeres.*[267]

This footnote clearly follows the same approach we have seen when the annotator speaks of numerous different rituals and beliefs; indeed all the usual suspects are mentioned, such as the Egyptians and the Jews, who once more are said to have had similar beliefs, as well as the Greeks.[268] We see that in the previous theorising on the nature of vegetarianism in connection with transmigration the annotator most likely also had the Christian sects in mind, as here they are explicitly said to believe in the transmigration of souls. Platonic ideas concerning reincarnation were indeed considered a part of *gnosis* for early Christians as well as the concordist groups who authored the Hermetic literature.[269] What stands out in the note is the mention of Orpheus, Pythagoras and Plato: the naming of all three here seems to align with Marsilio Ficino's conception

[266] Rogerius, *Open Deure*, 211.

[267] 'Dit is het ghevoelen van die van *AEgpyten, Orpheus, Plato*, ende verscheyden andere van de oude *Heydenen* gheweest. *Pythagoras* seyde oock wel uytfruckelijck, dat de Zielen van de Menschen, om hare sonden wille in de Beesten gevaren zijnde, aldaer waren tot straffe van hare voorige misdaden, ende datse daer in oock ghesuyvert wierden. Soo wierden de Zielen van die ghene die haestigh ende quaet waren, na haer gevoelen, in Serpenten ghesonden: de gierigaerts in Wolven: de bedriegers in Vossen: ende soo voorts. Siet hier van breeder by *August. Steuch. Eugub. de peren. Philosof. lib.* 9. *cap.* 28. soo seyden oock de Ioden dat de Ziele van een yder sondaer ende overtreder van de Wet Godts, verhuysde in de (sic!) Lichamen der Beesten, ende dat da de grouwelijckheyt van de sonde die sy begaen hadde. Onder die ghene die den naem van Christenen voerden, waren oock van dese opinie *Valentinus*, *Colorbasis*, alle de *Gnostici*, ende *Manicheen.* Siet *Epiphan. contra haeres. lib.* I. *tom.* 3. *pag.* 100.' ibid., [Dat het om de sonde is] 210.

[268] The ancient Hebrews are once more mentioned in this context a few pages later, where A.W. says that there were numerous pagans as well as the Jews who believed souls to go to other places than heaven and hell. ibid., [Dat seven plaetsen] 215.

[269] Keller, 'Reincarnation I: Antiquity', 982-983.

of a tradition of ancient wisdom passed on by different pagan sages. According to this narrative Orpheus was taught by Hermes Trismegistus, Pythagoras was taught by Orpheus's pupil Aglaophemus and Plato, as a pupil of Pythagoras, is the final link, as Platonism itself then continues the teachings of these sages.[270] Accordingly, A.W. also writes that Plato is said to have believed that souls, before their return to Earth, would have to drink from the river Lethe in Hades in order to forget.[271] The belief of the Stoics which A.W. outlines is thus very similar to this Platonic teaching, which is also found in India with the Brahmins and with numerous Christian sects and the Jews, all of whom believed in some form of transmigration.

Much like many customs and beliefs we have seen in the section on the history of idolatry, the belief in the transmigration of souls is therefore given universal standing, as it is found in almost all known religions. Here we thus have an example we are already familiar with from the previous chapter, as the annotator details a pagan tradition, comparing similar manifestations of the same belief in the history of idolatry framework; the crucial difference is that A.W. integrates this into a Platonic narrative of ancient wisdom. At first this seems contradictory: why should he want to advocate a Platonic model of ancient wisdom by associating it with the theory of transmigration, which is obviously heretic in nature?[272]

To understand how A.W. accommodates metempsychosis with Christian sacred history without condemning such a belief as complete heresy, it is worth looking at one of the longest footnotes of the annotations, where he comments on the belief of transmigration of souls into animal bodies.[273] On this topic he writes that, according to Herodotus, the Egyptians were the first to believe in the immortality of the soul and to teach others of it. This belief included that souls migrate from one body to the next and, after going through animals on land, sea and air, go back into a human body, before finally ascending to heaven, in a process which takes 3000 years. It was from the Egyptians that Pythagoras, Plato and other pagans learnt this belief, which then could spread to numerous places throughout the classical world. In the remainder of this note A.W. pokes fun at the Pythagoreans and others who believed in the transmigration of souls into animals, evoking classical texts by Lucian and Hermias.[274] The ridicule,

[270] Schmitt, 'Perrenial Philosophy', 508.
[271] Rogerius, *Open Deure*, [Daer uyt gheraken] 213.
[272] On Ficino's attempts at accommodating this aspect of Platonism with Christianity see James Hankins, 'Marsilio Ficino on Reminiscentia and the Transmigration of Souls', *Rinascimento* XLV (2005): 3–17.
[273] Due to quoting Ovid, Horace and Tibullus this footnote stretches over three pages. Unlike with the footnote which takes over the entirety of page 106, this annotation always remains side by side with Rogerius's narrative. Rogerius, *Open Deure*, [Maer oock in de Lichamen der Beesten] 210-212.
[274] Ibid.

however, is clearly aimed towards this specific belief, whilst the immortality of the soul is a teaching to be lauded.

This connection between metempsychosis and the immortality of the soul can also be found in another footnote, where the annotator comments on Rogerius's statement that the Brahmins, just like Christians, believe in an immortal soul. Here A.W. states that the immortality of souls was believed by 'Hermes Trismegistus, Musaeus, Orpheus, Homer, Pindar, Pherecydes, the Druids, the Egyptians, the Thracians, the old Germans and other nations and peoples'.[275] Moreover, he says that Plato also confirmed this at different places in his writings and before him 'two bright lights and greatly renowned heroes, who laid the foundations for philosophy among the Greeks and Romans, Pythagoras and Thales'.[276] Pherecydes is often said by ancient sources to have been the first to teach metempsychosis. Mentioning him and Pythagoras would have immediately conjured up the theory of transmigration for any reader of the *Open Deure* with a decent classical education.[277]

Pythagoras, and with him the theory of transmigration, is thus closely linked to a Neoplatonic tradition of ancient wisdom handed down by one pagan sage to another, as well as to the important Christian doctrine of the immortality of the soul. The actual belief in transmigration is not condemned as idolatrous heresy either, but instead presented by A.W. to be a misunderstanding of the Last Judgement, which involves a 'rebirth and union of soul and the body'.[278] Once more the pagan is therefore derived from the sacred. The adherents of the theory of transmigration of souls acknowledge the immortality of the soul, while the doctrine of rebirth is merely a misunderstood tradition with a basis in a 'true' belief involving the union of souls at the Last Judgement. The annotator seeks to present Plato and Pythagoras as pagan sages teaching these, from a Christian perspective, *true* beliefs, which might also be found in such a manner among the Brahmins. This connection is affirmed by A.W. in another footnote, where he says that:

> These Brahmins prove throughout that they are proper Platonists. [...] Pythagoras was of the same opinion, with the addition that there is but one soul in the world, though which both humans and animals are connected

[275] Rogerius, *Open Deure*, 146.

[276] Ibid., 146. In this footnote he goes on with his historiographical approach, condemning Aristotle for not believing in the immortality of the soul and referencing Selden and Vossius for details on the belief of the Hebrews. See also [Dese is tvvee-mael] 113-114.

[277] On Pherecydes see Geoffrey S. Kirk et al., *The Presocratic Philosophers: A Critical History with a Selection of Texts*, Second Edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 50-71.

[278] Rogerius, *Open Deure*, [Met Plato] 210.

> and through which they are ruled, and that this band with which they were connected to God could not without the greatest injustice be broken.[279]

The Brahmins as well as Phythagoras are here no longer depicted to illustrate the transmigration of souls, but instead shown to follow a monist understanding of souls or soul. This might also explain why throughout the book A.W. often refrains from mentioning Pythagoras in connection with transmigration.[280] Within this understanding of Pythagoras and metempsychosis, the belief in the actual transmigration of souls into different bodies or even animals over and over again is a degeneration, based however on a true Platonic tradition of a monist union of souls at the Last Judgment. The problem for A.W. in presenting the Brahmins to a European public as monist Platonists was by no means solved through this association, as he had not only the issue to explain a large pantheon, but also a number of very powerful gods, to which great feats were attributed. As I have touched upon, Rogerius is conscientious in explicating different Brahmin traditions, especially the Vaishnavites and Shaivites. Having read in Rogerius's discussion with Padmanabha and other Brahmins that the latter themselves claim the same one God to have only varying names, these different traditions do not present a problem for the annotator. The other major, especially Brahma, and all the numerous minor gods on the other hand needed to be explained. He attempts to solve this not by merely saying that all of the various deities and 'devils' are different aspects of one god, but he goes one step further than this and represents the Brahmins essentially as concordist Neoplatonic-Christian pagans.

5.3 The Many Emanations of One God

The role that such a concordist view of the Brahmins held within A.W.'s narrative has already been illustrated to some degree by the care he takes in directing the reader to the chapters in which he formulates such a stance most clearly, namely the chapters on the philosophical knowledge of the Brahmins (1.10), the chapter on God (2.1) and

[279] 'Dese Bramines bethoonen door-gaens datse rechte *Platonisten* zijn. [...] *Pythagoras* heeft oock dese opinie seer hart ghedreven, voor reden gevende, datter maer eene Ziele der Werelt en was, waer door de Menschen ende de Beesten t'samen verbonden ende gheregeert wierden, ende dat dien band waer mede haer Godt verbonden hadde, sonder de grootste onrechtvaerdigheyt niet en konde ghebroken werden.' Rogerius, *Open Deure*, [Stellense in't Lichaem] 145-146.

[280] We have seen here the examples where he *does* mention Pythagoras, but more than once a connection to Pythagoreanism seems straightforward without A.W. pointing this out. A good example is chapter 1.18, where Rogerius hypothesises about a connection with Pythagoreanism by saying that 'it seems that the teachings of Pythagoras have been brought to these remote peoples' ('Soo dat het schijnt dat de leere van Pythagoras onder dese verre af ghelegen Volckeren gebracht is [...]'). Pythagoras is also conspicuosly missing from the annotations in 1.19. ibid.

the chapter devoted to angels and devils (2.6). The importance of these chapters is not merely illustrated by the in-references, but the key role they play is visible by the extent of the footnotes as well, which in all of these chapters take over much more than Rogerius's portion of the text. It is in the chapter devoted to the topic of 'god' in which we find the single longest footnote of the entire monograph, which comments on the creation of the world. The note extends over three pages and takes over the whole of page 106 - thus breaking here but only here with the format of paratext. This is one of the key footnotes in which the annotator presents his interpretation of the Brahmins' philosophy and religion.

Before going into detail about this specific footnote, it is necessary to first take a look at Rogerius's narrative, on which A.W. comments. Rogerius states that one should not make the mistake to think that these people, meaning the Brahmins in Pulicat, were like cattle, not knowing of a God or of worship, something that in his opinion was not the case anywhere in the world.[281] This latter statement is readily taken apart by A.W. who makes several examples of atheism, found both in the contemporary world and in antiquity.[282] Rogerius however is steadfast in this statement and goes on to say that the Brahmins accept one unitary god, the Vaishnavites saying that this was Vishnu, whereas the Shaivites claim him to be Shiva.[283] This reflects a general trend in Rogerius's narrative: whilst he is aware of multiple traditions, as he mentions their plurality himself, his focus is on the Vaishnavites and Shaivites.[284] Nevertheless, he says, they agree in the fact that Brahma is the creator and Rogerius narrates the story of Brahma emerging from the navel of Vishnu, here merely called 'God' in accordance with the previous monist equation of Vishnu and Shiva being names for the same overarching deity. God then gave Brahma the power to create the world.[285] Yet Brahma is then presented to be a human rather than a deity; he is God's 'stadt-houder' who governs the world.[286] Rogerius sums this up perfectly in one sentence: 'So that we see that in truth the feelings of these pagans is that this Brahma, who was the first human, according to what they say created the world and everything in it, with the power given to him by God.'[287]

If we turn to A.W.'s treatise, we find that the beginning of the aforementioned

[281] Rogerius, *Open Deure*, 103.
[282] Ibid., [Heest oock eenen Gods-dienst] 103-104.
[283] Ibid., 104.
[284] See ibid., 13 for the discussion of different Brahmin traditions.
[285] Ibid., 104-105.
[286] Ibid., 106-108.
[287] 'Soo dat wy sien, ende bevinden, dat dit in waerheyt het gevoelen deser Heydenen is, dat desen Bramma, welcke den eersten Mensch is gheweest, na haer seggen, de Werelt, ende alles datter in is, gheschapen heeft, door de macht die hem Godt daer toe ghegeven hadde.' ibid., 107.

footnote presents itself in the familiar guise of the history of idolatry: he states that the belief that the world was created by a human is one not easily found among pagans. Rather, he contends, those pagans who have thought that the world was created, rather than being eternal, have attributed such either to God or the son of God, the first, in his opinion also being confirmed by Thales, Pythagoras and Cicero. Others on the other hand have agreed with scripture (John 1 and other places) that God created the world through his son. By then referring to the Hermetic account of creation A.W. adopts a more direct philosophical-religious approach with distinctly Hermetic feelings instead of merely continuing with the history of idolatry framework. Hermes Trismegistus is referenced for saying that God, possessing both the power of man and woman, created another God which in the first chapter of *Pimander* (*Pimander* or *Poimandres* is the first tract of the Hermetic Corpus) is called *logos* as well as the son of God, who in turn created the world and everything in it.[288] This passage is significant for that it present a rare occurrence in which A.W. goes beyond the conservative perennial philosophy of Steuco and emphasises a mystic Hermeticism through the secrets of creation.[289]

The remainder of the footnote is then devoted to supplying further authority to the Hermetic version of creation and to assert that the Brahmins, as good Platonists, are also followers of this tradition. The Egyptians, through Plutarch's account of *Isis & Osiris*, are referenced for creation through *logos*; Anaxagoras for the origin through what he called *nous*, a term also employed by the Hermeticists. *Nous*, literally 'mind' in Greek, in Anaxagoras' philosophy denotes the ordering mind which stands above all things. This can be roughly equated with Pythagoras's conception of *logos*.[290] These ideas had a strong influence on Hermetic Literature, Gnosticism and entered non-Gnostic Christianity through Clement of Alexandria.[291] Plato (*Epinomides*) is also referenced for the creation through *logos*, the word of God, as 'every star does its loop according to the order which the most godly word has given to it. Of this opinion were

[288] This is reflected in A.W.'s account of creation here, which seems to be mainly informed by the *Poimandres*. See Roelof van den Broek, 'Hermetic Literature I: Antiquity', in *Dictionary of Gnosis & Western Esotericism* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 490; for an English translation of the Poimandres, see Brian P. Copenhaver, *Hermetica: The Greek Corpus Hermeticum and the Latin Asclepius in a New English Translation, with Notes and Introduction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 1-7.

[289] Steuco relies on the idea of creation through *logos*, which A.W. also picks up (see below). See Schmidt-Biggemann, *Philosophia Perennis*, 428.

[290] On the importance of the concept of *logos* in early Christianity and as a universal concept in antiquity see Mario Baghos, 'Hellenistic Globalisation and the Metanarrative of the Logos', *A Journal for Greek Letters*, 2012, 23–37.

[291] See Roelof van den Broek, 'Clement of Alexandria', in *Dictionary of Gnosis & Western Esotericism* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 268–269; Roelof van den Broek, 'Gnosticism I: Gnostic Religion', in *Dictionary of Gnosis & Western Esotericism* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 403–416; van den Broek, 'Hermetic Literature I: Antiquity'.

the Chaldeans, the Sibylls, Orpheus, Pletho, Philo, Numenius, Amelius, Proculus and others'.[292] Plotinus cannot be missed in this argument, and A.W. cites also him for the belief that the creation was achieved through the son of God.[293] Having thus given this Neoplatonic-Hermetic creation story enough authority, whilst at the same time focussing mostly on the Patristic theory of Christ as *logos*, A.W. proceeds to his main objective of connecting this narrative with the creation myth outlined by Rogerius. This latter part of the extensive note is worth quoting:

> That these *Brahmins* also mean the son of God with this *Brahma* seems all the more likely, as I find from the author's writings that they agree with *Plato*, *Numenius*, *Amelius*, *Plotinus*, *Iamblichus* and others in naming God *Anima mundi*, that is the soul of the world, with which they mean the Holy Ghost. [...] Justin Martyr thinks that *Plato* learnt this feeling of the three persons in the Godly being [...] from *Moses*, when he read that the spirit of God soared on the water. This is very uncertain, as he could well have had it from the *Chaldeans* or the *Egyptians* who taught the same long before him. See *Agostino Steuco de perenni philosophia*.[294]

The annotator in this way equates the Pythagorean world soul we have seen above with a Platonic understanding of *anima mundi*, a perennial-philosophic understanding he claims to be present also among the Brahmins. As A.W. is mostly informed by Steuco's reading of perennial philosophy, he does not attempt to descend into mysticism and instead offers a general Christian equivalent. In an orthodox Christian reading the world soul therefore represents the Holy Ghost, with the trinity of God being recognised not only by Plato, but also, fitting perfectly into the ancient wisdom narrative, long

[292] 'Soo seyde oock *Plato in Epinomide*: elcke Sterre volbrenght haren loop na de ordre die haer [...] het aldergoddelijckste vvort, ghetelt heeft. Van dit ghevoelen zijn oock de *Chaldeen*, de *Sibyllen*, *Orpheus, Pletho, Philo, Numenius, Amelius, Proculus*, ende andere gheweest.' Rogerius, *Open Deure*, [Soo vvel de VVererlt] 105-107, here 106.

[293] '*Quid profecerit, qui Deum contemplatus fuerit? sanè quod viderit Deum gignentem filium, & in filio omnia.* Dat is, Wat voor-deel heeft hy ghedaen, die met aendacht op Godt gelet heeft? Dit namentlijck, dat hy ghesien heeft Godt sijnen *Sone* generern, ende door hem alle andere dinghen voort-brengen' ibid.

[294] 'Dat dese *Bramines* oock door desen *Bramma* den *Sone Godts* uyt-drucken, denckt my daerom te waerschijnelijcker, om dat ick uyt des Autheurs schriften bevinde, datse oock met *Platone*, *Numenio*, *Amelio*, *Plotino*, *Iamblicho*, ende andere, Godt, *Animam mundi*, dat is, de Ziele der VVerelt noemen, waer mede sy den *H. Gheest* willen te kennen gheven. [...] *Martyr. Apol. II. pro Christianis pag.* 73. *edit. Commel.* Meynt dat *Plato* dit gevoelen van de drie persoonen in het Goddelijcke wesen (niet tegen-staende hy na het gheuyghenisse *D. Riveti in Genes. exercit.* 2. daer eenighsins in gedwaelt heeft) van *Mose* soude geleert hebben, soo wanneer hy gelesen hadde, dat den *Geest Godts* op de wateren sweefde. Dan dit is seer onseker, alsoo hy sulcks wel van de *Chaldeen*, ofte *AEgyptenaers*, die al langhe voor hem he selve gheleert hadden, heeft konnen hebben. Siet *Augustin. Steuch. Eugubin. de Perenn. Philosoph. lib.* 2. *cap.* 3. 4. ende eenighe volgende.' ibid., [Soo vvel de VVererlt] 105-107, here 106-107.

before him by the Chaldeans and the Egyptians, from whom the reader may infer the Brahmins received this wisdom - just like the many other customs and beliefs we have seen above. Brahma takes over the role of Christ within the Brahmins' understanding of 'true religion' which partially solves the problem that Rogerius had given to A.W. by identifying Brahma as a human - he could present this as the double nature of Christ. Just like Steuco, A.W. sees a general agreement of everyone in theological matters.[295] As all of this might not be a good enough explanation, A.W. helps his hypothesis with a favourite trope of the ancient wisdom narrative: degeneration. Truth has always been available, yet it has been misunderstand and turned into myth and idolatry by the pagans. In a note he therefore muses, after saying that Brahma is thought by the Brahmins to be a man with a soul and body:

> They also represent him as the middleman between God and men [...] like we will see in the second part. They tell mostly everything about him that the Holy Scripture teaches us about Christ; and they seem to have transformed the truth completely into a fable. Maybe their forefathers heard the sound of the gospel from the Apostle Thomas (also today many Thomas Christians can be found in India) and when they could not fully grasp nor comprehend, when telling their offspring, what they had heard of Christ, attributed the same to Brahma. It can also be (and that I consider almost certain) that they learnt this, like Plato and his followers, from the Chaldeans and the Egyptians; these know, according to *Agostino Steuco De perenni philosophia*, much to say on Christ, his office and whatever more there may be. The old Father Augustine also thinks that the whole beginning of the gospel of John could be gotten out of the books of the Platonists, if not with the same words, nevertheless with the same meaning: it is certain that Plato says that everything was made through the word: and Plotinus that the son of God is the creator; and that such sayings can be found among many more. See our notes on the I. chapter of the second part.[296]

[295] Blackwell, 'Neo-Platonic Modes Of Concordism', 328.

[296] 'Full footnote: Oock selfs de Scheppinge der gantscher Werelt, niet teghen-staende sy hem schijnen voor een mensch, die een ziele ende lichaem heeft, te houden. Sy stellen hem oock tot een middelaer tusschen God ende den mensche, alsoo sy oock de klachten ende versoecken der menschen voor Godt brenght, ghelijck wy in het tweede Deel dickmaels sien sullen. Sy verhalen meest alle het ghene van hem, dat de H. Schriftuere ons van Christo leert; ende schijnen de waerheyt gantsch in een fabel verandert te hebben. Misschien of hare Voor-ouders den klanck des Euangeliums gehoort hebbende van den Apostel Thomas (waer van oock noch huydendaghs veel Thomas Christenen in Indien ghevonden werden) ende het selve niet ten vollen konnende verstaen nochte begrijpen, ende hare na komelinghen overlaten, 'tgeen sy van Christo hoorden, den welcken sy niet en kenden, 'tselve hare Bramma hebben toe gheschreven. 't Kan oock zijn (ende dat soude ick by na voorseker houden) dat sy dit met Plato, ende sijne navolgers, van de Chaldeen ende AEgyptenaers geleert hebben; want dese hebben van Christo, sijn Ampt, ende wat dierghelijcke meer soude moghen zijn, na het ghetuygenisse August. Steuchi Eugubini in perenni sua Philosophia, al vrik veel weten te

This footnote cements what A.W. presents in the chapter on God even further and gives us a direct link to the discourse on the history of idolatry. The Egyptian and the Chaldeans, in that latter framework said to be the most ancient sources of idolatry and the inspiration for many Brahmin customs and beliefs, are here the sources of the wisdom of Plato, the very origins of a pagan perennial wisdom completely on par with Christianity. Christianity might even have been the origin of the Brahmins' religious knowledge through the St. Thomas Christians.[297] The comparative framework of the historiographical analysis is the very source for this conclusion in A.W.'s discourse. Not only is the pagan therefore derived from the sacred, but the sacred also was maintained by the pagan!

Having thus established that the Brahmins are essentially Platonists believing in the Christian trinity, A.W. has to only chop away the appearance of Brahmin religion as polytheistic, idolatrous and devil-worshipping. Whilst idolatry is not specificly discussed by the annotator in his perennial-philosophical discourse, for reasons to which I shall come back to at the end, the presence of devil worship and a large pantheon is indeed explained as compatible with Christian monotheism in the footnotes of the *Open Deure*, in stark contrast to the main text. In the notes on the chapter 'of the angels and devils' (2.6), a relatively short chapter were it not for the extensive notes, A.W. presents the various *devatas* Rogerius writes on as universally acknowledged good and bad angels; whilst the Christians call them angels, the Brahmins *devatas*, the ancient philosophers *damones* and *damonia* and the Peripatetics *Intelligentia*, they are indeed all one and the same.[298] The worship of celestial objects is explained in a similar matter, as they, too, are identified by A.W. to be counted among the angels by the Brahmins and indeed by many others, such as Zeno, Plato, Ovid, Philo, Origen and even Tycho Brahe.[299] Whilst A.W. does not take sides on this specific issue and ultimately lets the reader decide whether celestial objects can indeed be counted among the angels, it is in line with the Platonic message he presents that it is part of the one truth, in stark contrast to Gerhard Vossius, who argues strongly against the patristic idea of celestial objects 'with

segghen. Den Outvader Augustinus lib. 3. confess. meynt oock datmen het gantsche beginsel van het Euangelium Iohannis uyt de Boecken der Platonisten soude konnen uyt vinden, so niet met de selve woorden, immers na den volkomen sin: 't Is seker dat Plato seght, dat alles door het vvoort ghemaeckt is: ende Plotinus, dat den Sone Godts den Schepper zy; ende dierghelijcke spreucken by andere meer te vinden zijn. Siet onse Aenteyckeningen op het I. Cap. van het tweede Deel.' Rogerius, *Open Deure*, [Wien sy het bevvint ende bestier] 55.

[297] On the role of the St. Thomas Christians for the European reception of Indian traditions and the accommodationism of the Jesuits see Županov, 'One Civility'.

[298] Rogerius, *Open Deure*, [Van de Engelen ende Duyvelen] 140.

[299] Ibid., [De Son, de Maen] 143-144.

a soul'.[300] Minor gods and devils therefore did not present a great obstacle, as they could all be simply regarded as angels, created by Brahma (who of course represents Christ as *logos*). Those devils which are the spirits of passed away men are also equally recognised by Plato, Hesiod and others, just like the fact that numerous devils 'were created by God (or Christ) with the world' - including the obligatory reference to Agostino Steuco.[301] While this is never mentioned, implicitly, and ironically, A.W. could rely on the same distinction between *dulia* (veneration) and *latria* (worship) which the Catholics had long claimed and the Protestants had in turn criticised.[302]

Finally, and this brings us back to the beginning of the chapter and the reference to 1.10, A.W. had to explain a number of higher deities among the Brahmins. In this chapter, the title of which is 'Of the Philosophical Knowledge which can be found among the Bramines', Rogerius dismisses the Brahmins' knowledge of philosophy and astrology as not very developed, and instead spends the remainder of the chapter talking about mythology.[303] A.W. on the other hand steps in to defend the Brahmins against Rogerius and argues that according to Pieter van den Broecke and Admiral van Caerden they are actually excellent astrologers. He adds that 'from old times it has been beyond any doubt' that they are excellent at both philosophy and astrology.[304] In our modern understanding of the terms the annotator's main goal in this chapter is more of a theological than a philosophical nature, but of course if seen from a Neoplatonic ancient wisdom perspective this distinction falls away; a unification of philosophy and theology, including a strong focus on astrology, is especially prominent in Steuco's *De perenni philosophia*.[305]

Accordingly it is this chapter which the annotator uses to make Brahminism, as it is described by Rogerius, fully compatible with his own vision of perennial philosophy. Heretic elements of the Brahmin pantheon and mythology are purged with a conviction we find hardly anywhere else in the text. As I have already mentioned, even though Rogerius was famously conscientious in noting differences especially among Vaishnavites and Shaivites, A.W. was not much concerned with differences between traditions, as he followed Rogerius's pandits in asserting Vishnu and Shiva to be merely names for the highest God. The matter that both Shiva and Vishnu, the potential equivalents of the

[300] Vossius, *De theologia gentili*, 386; See Häfner, *Götter im Exil*, 246-247.

[301] 'Ende datter sommighe Duyvelen van Godt, ofte Christo, met de Werelt gheschapen zijn, ende oock sommighe uyt Menschen geworden, is het gevoelen van Hesiodus, Plato ende andere gheweest.' Rogerius, *Open Deure*, [Beyde van Menschen voort-gheteelt] 140.

[302] Sheehan, 'Sacred and Profane', 43.

[303] He stresses how ignorant the Brahmins are at the natural sciences and how foreign the idea of 'science' (*wetenschap*) is to them in contrast to other pagans. Rogerius, *Open Deure*, 37-41.

[304] 'Van outs ist buyten alle dispuyt' ibid., [Vande Astrologie] 37.

[305] Schmidt-Biggemann, *Philosophia Perennis*, 428.

Christian God, are told to have wives was a heretical form of equating God with humans and obviously a thorn in A.W.'s efforts to present the Brahmins as lost Christians. Once more he utilises the trope of degeneration into fables, in addition to which he claims mythology to be a parable standing for a deeper hidden truth. He thus comments that '[It is] not that they actually believe that their God Vishnu should have a wife, like men on Earth, because that is not their belief [...]'.[306] Giving their God a wife is another instance in which the 'Godly Truth' has been turned into a fable, and should rather be understood as a parable for the 'Church under the Law', and Parvati, as the wife of Shiva and the daughter of the mountain Chimmavontam (Himavan), is seen by the annotator to stand for the 'Church after the coming of the Messiah'.[307] This view is confirmed by a footnote on the previous page regarding Mount Meru (called Merouvva by Rogerius and A.W.): 'What they actually understand by this Mountain is easy to find out from this description and the following fable, in which the giving of the law, the assembly of a Church of God, and the promise of the Messiah and his role and workings, are in my judgement not described poorly.'[308]

Not only is Brahmin mythology surrounding Vishnu and Shiva, despite its superficial corruption, thus represented at its core as monotheistic, this mythology also describes, in a hidden parallel, the coming of the Christian Church! Moreover, in this instance the annotator does not distinguish between Shiva and Vishnu, much like in the long footnote on creation and indeed in most places if one reads carefully: they are in his mind clearly but two names for the same deity that he himself regards as God. This strong association of the Brahmins with Christianity and its equation with religious truth is reinforced throughout this chapter's footnotes. As such we see a repetition of one of his central arguments, namely that the minor gods (*devatas*) are actually equivalent to angels, by adding that Plato said this same thing in explaining that God has other minor gods assist him.[309] Possibly the clearest statement of this argumentation is a footnote which conveys the annotator's certainty in regard to the Brahmins' monotheism:

> It is beyond doubt that *Brahma* and *Shiva* mean one and the same and that they are names which merely distinguish the different functions and roles of

[306] Rogerius, *Open Deure*, 'Niet datse gelooven dat haren Godt *VVistnou* eygentlijck een Vrouwe soude hebben, even ghelijck de menschen hier op der Aerden, want dat en is haer ghevoelen niet [...]' [[Hebbense VVistnou toe-gheleyt] 39.

[307] Ibid., [Hebbense VVistnou toe-gheleyt] 39.

[308] 'Wat dat zij eigenlijk door dezen Berg verstaan, is uit deze beschijvinge, ende volgende fabel, waar in zy het geven der wet, de versamelinge van een Kerke Gods, ende de belofte vanden Messias, mitsgaders zijn ampt ende werkinge, mijn ordeels, niet qualijk en beschrijven, wel uit te vinden.' ibid., [Den Bergh Merouvva] 38.

[309] Ibid., [De Devvetaes] 38.

the same. This seems clear enough throughout these tracts.[310]

We have therefore seen that the annotator makes a concerted effort to direct the reader to key chapters in which his footnotes take over the majority of the text, and in which he establishes the Brahmins as Platonic monotheists who believe in the same basic elements constituting their religion as do Christians. A narrative of degeneration plays a large role in this, yet the underlying truth is nevertheless there, available in the Brahmins' religion. Everything that seems heretical to Protestants and Catholics alike A.W. chips away at throughout the annotations. Transmigration is a misunderstanding of the Last Judgement and, if understood correctly, stands for a monist world soul propagated by the person most associated with transmigration in Europe: Pythagoras. This world soul, as it can be equated with the Holy Ghost, also forms a part of a holy trinity in the perennial philosophy framework A.W. adopts to accommodate the Brahmins. Brahma forms the second element in this by representing Christ in his role as *Logos*: just as Christ was the word through which God invoked creation, Brahma, having been given the power by God, created the world and everything it contains. The theism of the Vaishnavites and the Shaivites, amply described by Rogerius, only requires A.W. to take Padmanabha and his fellow Brahmins by their word and believe them when they teach that Shiva, Vishnu and all the other names of gods are merely emanations of one God, be he called Shiva or Vishnu. Presenting all minor gods as angels and asserting the essential monotheism of the Brahmins is thus the final part in establishing the Brahmins as trinitarian monotheists believing the same tenets as good Christians. The monotheism which stands behind both religions is clear, and perfectly summarised by the last footnote: just like God and Christ are merely different emanations of the same, so it also is with Shiva (or Vishnu, for that matter) and Brahma.

[310] '[...] 't Is buyten twijfel dat *Bramma*, ende *Esvvara*, een ende deselve beteyckenen, ende dat het namen zijn, dewelcke alleenlijck onderscheyt tusschen der selver Ampten ende weckingen maken. Dit schijnt doorgaens klaer genoegh uyt dese Tractaten te blicken.' Rogerius, *Open Deure*, [Ende inghevvolgen] 39.

6 Esoteric and Exoteric: Two Faces of Brahminism

Thanks to A.W.'s contribution in the footnotes the *Open Deure* therefore appears to be much more than a travel account or an ethnological description of Brahminism in Pulicat. We have seen how the annotator adds depth to Rogerius's writing by embedding it in the scholarly culture of the early modern Republic of Letters. In the footnotes a wide range of both ancient and modern writings are referenced which contextualise the exotic and strange practices of the Brahmins as they are described by Rogerius. In addition to looking for the origins of Indian customs and rituals through models of dispersion, we see A.W. attempt a sort of universal survey of religion. Of course Rogerius's narrative is still the basis for such a commentary, yet the Brahmins are here integrated into a search for global patterns of religion and culture. It is especially in this aspect of the annotations where the previously mentioned boundary between the history of religion and the history of culture becomes distinctly blurry. At its core, then, A.W.'s treatise in the footnotes is a contribution to the scholarship on the history of idolatry, and the annotator engages in the same early form of comparative religion as his chief sources of inspiration Vossius, Selden and Bochart.

The comparative framework leads the annotator, just as it does Vossius, to examine different religions on the same level: A.W. clearly distinguishes different practices and establishes dispersion models for diverse idolatrous practises found in Rogerius's descriptions. Through this early form of comparative religion he makes the various idolatries, be they Brahmin, Egyptian or Roman, into separate *religions* in the first place and elevates them from the profane to the sacred. Idolatry is no longer a fourth category used to lump together everything outside of the Abrahamic religions: instead it becomes merely an umbrella term for numerous different traditions, which can be compared to one another, and, importantly, can also be compared with Judaism, Islam and Christianity. In contrast to Rogerius who is focussed solely on specific practices of *Gods-dienst*, A.W. participates in the process through which the term 'religion' is reassessed: instead of denoting piety or belief in the true and universal faith, 'religion' becomes a category which is a part of any given peoples' society and can be compared to other religions. It is through this process that 'religion' gradually acquired its modern meaning.

But A.W.'s reasoning differs in a marked way from Vossius's *De theologia gentili*, A.W.'s greatest model for a history of idolatry. Vossius's work still abounds with references to writings that are Neoplatonic in nature, but Vossius's own argumentation

is beyond Renaissance Neoplatonism.[311] In Vossius's natural theology religious unity had not been possible after the fall of Adam and idolatrous practices originated as deviations from the truth as it is outlined in the Bible.[312] Where for Vossius truth was impossible outside of revelation, for A.W. truth is everywhere. A.W. takes over Vossius's comparative framework, but does not abandon a Neoplatonic vision of religious unity. He follows Steuco in seeing Christian truth in pagan traditions, where sages recognised the essential unity of God, the coming of Christ and the nature of the trinity. Numerous different religions have preserved truth, which is available to anyone who seeks it - within and outside the bounds of Christian revelation.

How then do the comparative framework of the history of idolatry and the ideal of perennial philosophy, seemingly so oppositional in their nature, manage to coexist in A.W.'s narrative? To understand this I believe it is worth making a comparison with a more well-known early modern antiquarian, namely Athanasius Kircher. Kircher applies a similar version of perennial philosophy as A.W. does, in that for him there was an original Adamic Revelation on which idolaters built their own religions; those only descended into idolatry through degeneration, when truth was misunderstood. Kircher was ultimately looking for esoteric wisdom in Egyptian religion.[313] Dmitri Levitin certainly has a point when he says that 'we need to read Kircher not as an example of an out-of-date Renaissance syncretism, but as a contributor to "developing an original interpretation of Egypt that transcended the binary opposition of Egypt as the font of truth and Egypt as the nursery of superstition by regarding it as both"'.[314] The way such a form of accommodation was achieved by A.W. for the case of the Brahmins is by applying the same textual argument as Kircher: to argue for a sharp distinction between the common man and the highest echelons of society, the priests. To illustrate this I have one last footnote to quote:

> Of this feeling were nearly all pagans. See more broadly on this *Vossius de idol.*, *Elias Schedius de diis German. Agustine de civit. Dei* thought that even with the names of *Jupiter, Juno, Mars, Venus, Mercurius, Pallas* etc. they did not intend to express so many gods, but only one God who had different features and powers, and this idea does not seem so foreign, where it is understood among the wisest and most learnt among them, not though by

[311] Häfner, *Götter im Exil*, 237, 239.
[312] Ibid., 236-237, 247-248.
[313] See for a discussion of this Levitin, 'From Sacred History to the History of Religion', 1134-1137.
[314] Levitin, 'From Sacred History to the History of Religion', 1137; citing Daniel Stolzenberg, 'The Egyptian Crucible of Truth and Superstition: Athanasius Kircher and the Hieroglyphic Doctrine', in *Antike Weisheit Und Kulturelle Praxis: Hermetismus in Der Frühen Neuzeit*, ed. Anne-Charlott Trepp and Hartmut Lehmann (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2001), 164.

> the common man. So also Hermesianax says [...], that is, *Pluto, Prosepina, Ceres, Venus, Cupid, Triton, Nereus, Thetis, Neptune, Mercurius*, and the famed *Vulcan, Pan, Jupiter, Juno, Minerva*, and the archer *Apollo*, are all *one God*. Suchlike said also Seneca *de beneficiis*. To this end were also the altars of the Romans, erected with this inscription: DIS DEABVSQUE OMNIBVS. To the honour of all Gods and Goddesses. And also the famed Pantheon and different other temples. This is also confirmed by [the letter of] Maximus to Augustine, when he writes in his name and that of all pagans: *Equidem unum esse Deum summum atque magnificum, quis tam demens, tam mente captus, neget esse verissimum?* [*Who could be so insane and taken by folly to deny that the highest truth is that there is truly one God that is the highest and most magnificent?*] [...] The Brahmin Padmanabha also said that Vishnu and Shiva were in essence one and the same God, and that they were but two names, and different characters, just like I have found from the writings of our author.[315]

This quote sums up A.W.'s combination of a universalistic comparison of different forms of idolatry with a hidden monotheism which is inherent to them all; yet this monotheistic element, preserved as it is through a series of transmissions from teacher to pupil in a classical perennial philosophy ideal, is restricted to a select few. In the case of the Indians this means that only the actual *varna* of Brahmins, whose members have also been outed as good Platonists, are partakers in a perennial truth to which Christians also have access. Only the most learnt and the wisest of the pagans, Brahmins or otherwise, know the truth, whilst the common people are steeped in superstition and polytheism. In A.W.'s annotations the Brahmins, as well as other old and modern pagans, hold an analogous position to Kircher's Egyptians: they are both fountains of truth, having preserved the original Adamic truth through a tradition of perennial philosophy, and idolaters who worship idols and devils and believe in all manner of superstitions.

[315] 'Van dit ghevoelen zijn meest alle *Heydenen* geweest. Siet hier van in't breede by *Voss. de Idol. lib.* I. *cap.* 2. ende *Eliam Schedium de diis German. syngr.* I. *cap.* 12. *Augustinus de civit. Dei lib.* 4. *cap.* 24. meynde datse oock selfs met de namen van *Iupiter, Iuno, Mars, Venus, Mercurius, Pallas*, &c. niet en wilden soo veel Goden uyt drucken, maer alleenlijck eenen Godt die verscheyden eyghenschappen en krachten hadde, ende dit ghevoelen en schijnt oock soo vreemt niet te zijn, by aldien het verstaen wert van de wijste ende gheleerste onder haer, ende niet van den ghemeynen Man. So seyde oock Hermesianax [...] dat is, *Pluto, Prosepina, Ceres, Venus, Cupido, Tritones, Nereus, Thetijs, Neptunus, Mercurius*, endie dien vermaerden *Vulcanus, Pan, Iupiter, Iuno, Minerva*, enden Schutter *Apollo*, zijn alle *een Godt*. Dierghelijcke seght oock *Seneca de beneficiis lib.* 4. *cap.* 7. Hier toe dienen oock de Altaren by de *Romeynen* op-gherecht met dese insciptie: DIS DEABVSQUE OMNIBVS. *Ter eeren van alle Goden en Goddinnen.* Ende oock dat vermaerde *Pantheum* te *Roomen*, ende verscheyden andere Tempels meer. Dit confirmeert oock *Maximus* aen *Augustinum* uyt sijner, ende aller *Heydenen* naem schrijvende, waneer hy seyde: *Equidem unum esse Deum summum atque magnificum, quis tam demens, tam mente captus, neget esse verissimum?* [...] Den Bramine *Padmanaba* hielt het oock daer voor, dat *VVistnou*, ende *Esvvara*, in wesen waren een ende deselve Godt, ende dat het maer twee namen waren, ende verscheyden figueren, ghelijck ick uyt des Autheurs schriften ondervonden hebbe.' Rogerius, *Open Deure*, 104-105.

It would however be misleading to think of A.W. as stuck in an earlier time, practising an out-of-date form of Renaissance concordism instead of more contemporary visions of religion. This is not old Renaissance concordism but rather a modern recasting of perennial philosophy by a scholar who is well aware of critical philology and uses a comparative framework to showcase differences between (idolatrous) traditions.

This form of perennial philosophy plays an important role in A.W.'s conception of Brahmin religion and religion itself. The members of the Brahmin *varna* are interpreted by A.W. to be priests, in an analogous role to the priests of the ancient people of Israel. These priestly Brahmins are the only ones who have preserved truth through the transmission of a perennial philosophy, which consequently has become a secret esoteric (inner) doctrine unknown to the common people. The vast majority of the population instead practices an exoteric (outer), form of religion which is open to everyone. Such a distinction is by no means an innovation at the time of the *Open Deure*, but actually dates back to antiquity, more precisely to the Patristic literature A.W. likes to cite so much. Eusebius and Lactantius used such a distinction in their descriptions of pagan peoples and the interest in secret Hermetic Egyptian teachings intensified the popularity of this narrative, both in antiquity and during the Renaissance.[316]

A.W.'s annotations in such a way provide us with a link between the Protestant scholarship on the history of idolatry and the European missions in Asia, more specifically with the theology behind the Jesuit method of accommodation in Asia.[317] A distinction between esoteric monotheism and exoteric idolatry was an important narrative in the Jesuit descriptions of Asian traditions in the late sixteenth and throughout the seventeenth century, as the highest echelons of society were presented to be compatible with Christianity, easiest to convert and potentially bringing about a broader conversion among the common people.[318] While A.W. does not speak of accommodation itself, we have seen that he presents the Brahmins as priests who are maintaining a system of idolatry, but also as Platonist monotheists who effectively know the truth, who know of the essential nature of God. Therefore, from a missionary point of view, they present the best starting point for European efforts at conversion. The conversion of the Brahmins would potentially also lead to an abandonment of idolatry, as all of the Indians would be able to learn about Christianity. This reinvigorated narrative of exoteric and esoteric religion would end up having a long afterlife in European conceptions of Indian and Asian religious traditions.

[316] See on this App, *The Birth of Orientalism*, 2ff.
[317] For the Indian mission see Rubiés, 'Jesuit Discovery'.
[318] See on the coeval political dimension of the Jesuit method Rubiés, 'The Concept of Cultural Dialogue and the Jesuit Method of Accommodation: Between Idolatry and Civilization', 254.

Another necessary consequence of A.W.'s perennial philosophy was that the Brahmins could not be presented as members of heterogeneous traditions, but needed to be shown to all believe in the same basic theology and the same one God. In practice this means that A.W. ignores different traditions in Brahminism, presenting them, unlike Rogerius, as one large homogenous group. Not once does A.W. follow Rogerius in distinguishing Shaivites from Vaishnavites, instead proclaiming them over and over again to believe in the same tenets. This discourse extends beyond Pulicat or even South India, as A.W. makes comparisons with Brahmins from different parts of the Indian subcontinent and remarks on the similarity of their customs.[319] Whilst we can hardly speak of a codified concept of Hinduism here, A.W. does exhibit the tendency to see a broader phenomenon of Brahmin religion, in stark contrast to Rogerius's carefully presented differences between traditions.

The indologists of Caland's era could therefore naturally disregard the annotations. But from the time of publication of the *Open Deure* well into the nineteenth century readers of Rogerius who were interested in pan-Indian or pan-Asian religion or a supposed ur-tradition in India found much of interest in A.W.'s antiquarian footnotes. The annotator of the *Open Deure* is not so much remarkable for advocating a perennial philosophy in the vein of Steuco or following in the footsteps of the historians of idolatry. What is remarkable, though, is the way that A.W. uses perennial philosophy in combination with the framework of the history of idolatry to create a more modern way of looking at the Brahmins. A.W. does not only participate in a process of redefining the term 'religion' in Europe by elevating the religion of the Brahmins to the same conceptual level of Christianity, but also adds a Neoplatonic antiquarian analysis of Brahmin religion to Rogerius's text which gives this tradition a rich monotheistic history much like Judaism and Christianity.

[319] E.g. Rogerius, *Open Deure*, [De bonte Kraeyen eten gheven] 92.

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Appendix

Original Chapter titles of the *Open Deure*

Part I

Het I Capittel - Vande Vier Hooft-Stammen der Heydenen, op de Cust Chormandel	Chapter 1 - Of the Four Main Tribes of the Pagans, on the Coromandel Coast
Het II. Capittel - Vande Perreas, een Gheslacht, 't welck de Heydenen niet weerdigh enachten, om onder haer Gheslachten te reeckenen	Chapter 2 - Of the Perreas, a Tribe which the Pagans Do Not Honour to Count among Their Tribes
Het III. Capittel - Van waer dat de Bramines haren Naem hebben, ende vande verscheyden Secten der selve	Chapter 3 - From where the Bramines Have their Name, and from the Different Sects of the Same
Het IV. Capittel - Hoe dat de Bramines, door maniere van leven, van malkanderen onderscheyden zyn	Chapter 4 - How the Bramines, through their Way of Living, Distinguish Themselves from Others
Het V. Capittel - Van de Praerogativen, ofte Privilegien, de welcke den Vedam den Bramines toe-staet	Chapter 5 - Of the Prerogatives, or Privileges, which the Veda Affords to the Bramines
Het VI. Capittel - Van het Ampt der Bramines, ende wat sy daer voor ghenieten	Chapter 6 - Of the Station of the Bramines, and what They Enjoy Through It
Het VII. Capittel - Hoe dat de Bramines sich draghen ontrent de gheboorte harer Kinderen, ende waneer sy haer een Naem gheven, ende de ooren door-booren	Chapter 7 - How the Bramines Carry Themselves Concerning the Birth of their Children, and when they Give them a Name, and Pierce their Ears
Het VIII. Capittel - Van't koordeken Dsandhem, 't welck de Bramines om den hals draghen	Chapter 8 - Of the Dsandhem, which the Bramines Carry around their Necks
Het IX. Capittel - Hoe dat de Bramines sorghe draghen dat hare Kinderen onderwesen werden	Chapter 9 - How the Bramines Assure that their Children Are Educated
Het X. Capittel - Vande Philosophische Kennisse welcke onder de Bramines is	Chapter 10 - Of the Philosophical Knowledge which Can Be Found among the Bramines
Het XI. Capittel - VVanneer dat de Bramines haer Kinderen uyt-hylijken. Waer op dat syletten als sy het versoeck gaen doen. Ende hoe het Houwelijck bevestight wort	Chapter 11 - When the Bramines Out-Wed their Children. What they Take Care of to Do when they Try. And how the Marriage Is Confirmed.

Het XII. Capittel - Aen wien dat de Bramines hare Kinderen uyt-Houwelijcke	Chapter 12 - On how the Bramines Out-Wed Their Children
Het XIII. Capittel - Van de Polygamia die onder de Heydenen in ghebruyck is	Chapter 13 - On the Polygamy Which Is Common among the Pagans
Het XIV. Capittel - Dat de Bramines, ende de gantsche Natie der Heydenen, dagh verkiesers zijn	Chapter 14 - That the Brahmins, and the Whole Nation of Pagans, Believe in Fortunate and Ill-Fated Days
Het XV. Capittel - Van den Panjangam, ofte Almanach, der Bramines	Chapter 15 - Of the Panjangam or Almanach of the Brahmins
Het XVI. Hoe dat de Bramines den dagh beginnen, ende door brenghen	Chapter 16 - How the Brahmins Start the Day and Spend It
Het XVII. Capittel - Den Inhout van de Historie van Gasjendre Mootsjam welcke de Bramines in den Morgen-stont singhen	Chapter 17 - Of the Content of the Story of Gasjendre Mootsjam which the Brahmins Sing in the Morning
Het XVIII. Capittel - Van het Eten, ende Vasten, der Bramines	Chapter 18 - Of the Eating and Fasting of the Brahmins
Het XIX. Capittel - Hoe dat met de Bramines ghehandelt word in haer Sieckte, ende nahaer Doot	Chapter 19 - How the Brahmins Are Treated in Sickness and Afterwards in Death
Het XX. Capittel - Hoe dat sich alles toe-draeght, alsser een Vrouw by haren dooden Man, ghebrant, ofte levendigh begraven, sal werden	Chapter 20 - How Everything Occurs When a Woman, When her Husband Dies, Should Be Burnt or Buried Alive
Het XXI. Capittel - VVat dat de Vrienden des Overleden na de Doot van haer af-ghestorven Vrient doen	Chapter 21 - What the Friends of Someone who Has Died Do after their Friend's Death

Part II

Het I. Capittel - Van Godt	Chapter 1 - About God
Het II. Capittel - Dat de Bramines den oppersten Godt oock eenighe Vrouwen toe-voegen	Chapter 2 - How the Brahmins Add to the Highest God Also Some Women
Het III. Capittel - Hoe dat VVistnou thienmael een Lichamelijcke ghedaente soude hebben aenghenomen, ende op deser Aerden ghekomen zijn	Chapter 3 - How Vishnu Is Supposed to Have Taken a Body Ten Times and Have Come to Earth
Het IV. Capittel - Van de aff-komste eeniger minder Goden, die by de Bramines in achtinge zijn	Chapter 4 - Of the Ancestry of Some Minor Gods which Are Honoured by the Brahmins
Het V. Capittel - Van de VVerelt. Haer Scheppinghe, ende haer Eynde	Chapter 5 - About the World. Its Creation and End
Het VI. Capittel - Van de Enghelen, ende Duyvelen	Chapter 6 - Of the Angels and Devils
Het VII. Capittel - Van den Mensch, ende de Ziele des selven	Chapter 7 - Of Man and the Soul of the Same
Het VIII. Capittel - Van den Gods-dienst der Bramines; ende het op-rechten der Pagoden	Chapter 8 - Of the Worship of the Brahmins and the Building of Temples
Het IX. Capittel - Van de ghestalte der Pagoden van VVistnou, ende Essvvara, ende wat datter in zy	Chapter 9 - Of the Character of the Temples of Vishnu and Śiva and what they Contain
Het X. Capittel - VVat de Bramines van de Pagoden houden	Chapter 10 - What the Brahmins Think of the Temples
Het XI. Capittel - Van de Beelden die de Bramines in hare Pagoden op-rechten, ende wat eere sy de selve aen doen	Chapter 11 - Of the Images that the Brahmins Erect in Their Temples and how They Honour These
Het XII. Capittel - Van eenighe Feesten, welcke de Bramines ter eeren van VVistnou ende Esvvara, vieren	Chapter 12 - Of Some Celebrations which the Brahmins Have for Vishnu and Shiva
Het XIII. Capittel - Van den Pongol: een Feest ter eeren van de Sonne	Chapter 13 - Of the Pongol: a Celebration in Honour of the Sun
Het XIV. Capittel - Wat eere dat de andere minder Goden, welcke Devvetaes ghenoemt werden, aenghedaen wert	Chapter 14 - What Honour They Give to Other Minor Gods Whom They Call Devatas

Het XV. Capittel - Hoe dat de Heydenen, op de Cust Chormandel, oock den Duyvel dienen	Chapter 15 - How the Pagans on the Coromandel Coast also Serve the Devil
Het XVI. Capittel - VVaer door dat de Heydenen tot een goet eynde meynen te gheraken	Chapter 16 - Through Which Means the Pagans Believe to Achieve a Good End
Het XVII. Capittel - Van eenighe eyghenwillighe dwase Gods-diensten	Chapter 17 - Of Some Wayward Foolish Forms of Worship
Het XVIII. Capittel - Van de middelen door welcke dese Heydenen verghevinghe der sonden meynen te bekomen	Chapter 18 - Of the Ways in Which These Pagans Think to Redeem Themselves From their Sins
Het XIX. Capittel - De redenen waerom dat de Heydenen soo veel wercks van 't Water der Riviere Ganga maken	Chapter 19 - Why the Pagans Make Such A Fuss about the Water of the River Ganges
Het XX. Capittel - Wat middel dat sy voor die ghene, de welcke de gheseyde middelen niet en hebben ter hant ghenomen, ghebruycken	Chapter 20 - What Means They Use for those who Have Not Used the Indicated Means
Het XXI. Capittel - Van den staet der Menschen na de doot	Chapter 21 - Of the State of Men after Death

In-References in the Open Deure

Table 1: In-references according to order in the *Open Deure*. Left denotes the chapter of origin, right the chapter being referenced

1.1	→	1.18	1.18	→	1.3	2.5	→	2.1
1.1	→	1.3	1.18	→	1.10	2.5	→	1.17
1.1	→	1.14	1.19	→	2.14	2.5	→	2.1
1.1	→	1.19	1.19	→	2.21	2.6	→	2.15
1.2	→	2.10	1.19	→	1.13	2.6	→	2.4
1.3	→	2.1	1.19	→	2.6	2.6	→	1.21
1.3	→	2.1	1.19	→	2.20	2.6	→	2.1
1.3	→	1.7	1.20	→	2.21	2.6	→	2.1
1.3	→	1.10	1.21	→	2.19	2.6	→	2.5
1.3	→	2.2	1.21	→	2.6	2.6	→	2.21
1.3	→	2.1	1.21	→	2.20	2.7	→	2.2
1.4	→	2.17	2.1	→	2.5	2.7	→	2.21
1.4	→	1.3	2.1	→	1.10	2.8	→	2.13
1.5	→	2.1	2.1	→	2.4	2.8	→	2.14
1.5	→	1.14	2.1	→	2.5	2.8	→	2.18
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1.8	→	2.11	2.1	→	2.14	2.9	→	2.1
1.10	→	2.15	2.2	→	1.10	2.9	→	2.4
1.10	→	2.3	2.2	→	1.3	2.9	→	2.12
1.10	→	2.12	2.2	→	1.5	2.9	→	2.4
1.10	→	2.12	2.2	→	1.14	2.11	→	2.8
1.10	→	2.2	2.2	→	1.10	2.12	→	1.10
1.10	→	2.8	2.2	→	1.14	2.13	→	1.3
1.10	→	2.6	2.2	→	2.19	2.13	→	1.14
1.11	→	1.14	2.2	→	2.9	2.14	→	2.1
1.11	→	1.14	2.3	→	1.10	2.14	→	2.1
1.11	→	1.9	2.3	→	2.6	2.14	→	2.6
1.14	→	2.1	2.3	→	2.5	2.14	→	1.10
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1.16	→	2.8	2.4	→	2.17	2.21	→	1.1
1.17	→	2.5	2.4	→	2.5	2.21	→	1.18
1.17	→	2.5	2.4	→	2.13	2.21	→	1.21
1.17	→	2.21	2.4	→	2.13	2.21	→	2.6
1.18	→	1.8	2.4	→	2.1	2.21	→	1.19
1.18	→	1.1	2.5	→	2.1	2.21	→	2.15
1.18	→	2.21	2.5	→	2.19	2.21	→	2.6
1.18	→	1.12	2.5	→	2.18			