Corruption and administrative values have attracted considerable attention in recent times, for instance as a result of the corrupt practices of government officials “breaking the rules”. These scandals not only create upheaval and indignation in the media and the public at large, but are also of interest for academics as scandals tell us something about the ethical aspects of administration, what a present day administrator is allowed to do and what is not allowed, when actions are contrary to all rules, leading to corruption or at least accusations of corruption. For a better understanding of the ethical aspects of administration a historical approach is interesting as it offers the possibility to research the development of values through time. After all, corruption scandals have occurred throughout history and are therefore not only relevant for research into contemporary administration but also for historical research into administrative values in The Netherlands. For historians a focus on scandal is interesting as it serves as a way to make explicit values which usually remain implicit, as only during upheaval it is publicly spelled out what is (not) allowed and what values matter. Yet public values can also change. In order to better understand the development, change and context dependency of values through time the NWO project “Under Construction: The Genesis of Public Value Systems” therefore focuses on corruption and public values in The Netherlands in the period 1650-1950. These three centuries have been divided up into three parts, my subproject focusing on the relevant administrative values in the Dutch Republic, specifically the period 1650-1747, the next two centuries being researched by two other Ph.D. students, Toon Kerkhoff and Ronald Kroeze.

For a better understanding of the foundations of the NWO project “Under Construction” it is necessary to give more information on several central concepts, the project’s research question, theory and methodology. The “Under Construction” project hinges upon one central question: “how are values established as moral groundings for administrative behaviour, and how do these change over time?”. The point of departure is the argument that historical corruption can best be tackled as a social construct. A focus on the contextual nature of corruption can be of use for historical research, as values change in time and place. Michael Johnston's “neo-classical approach” is promising as it considers corruption to be “the abuse, according to the legal or social standards constituting a society’s system of public order, of a public role or resource for
CORRUPTION AND ADMINISTRATIVE VALUES [164]

private benefit” (Johnston, 1996: 331). Instead of a definition, it is rather an approach by which contemporary definitions and understandings of corruption can be found. The added value of the “neo-classical approach” lies in the fact that this approach is receptive to every definition imaginable, not only Aristotelian (with a focus on the political cycle of governments in a society with basic forms of government and the degenerate forms of each of these governments) or World Bank definitions (with a focus on the abuse of public office for private gain). Corruption is not only regarded as a formal-legal issue, but also as a moral issue. Secondly, the focus is not only on individual transgressions, but also on the “moral framework” of whole societies. Within the “neo-classical” approach corruption scandals are of vital importance as administrative values acquire their meaning during the clash over boundaries, public versus private, politics versus administration, state versus society. Conflicts can result in new standards regarding reprehensible behavior within administration. Another advantage is that for the early modern era relevant documents about transgressions are available from which we can distill “positive” public values, which are difficult to find.

As already mentioned, Johnston is not using a definition of corruption, but also does not offer a theory from which hypotheses can be derived. As a result his approach has been supplemented with Max Weber’s theory (1978), which argues that modern Western administration has gone through three phases of administrative development. The first two phases, traditional and patrimonial administration are all about personal relations. The third phase, the bureaucratic ideal type, reflects a legal-rational, professional, transparent and impersonal administration. While using Weber’s theory it is important to keep in mind, in line with Susanne Schattenberg (2009), that corruption research should not attempt to portray Dutch administrative history as a Defizitgeschichte, as a deviation from norms with the modern bureaucracy as the sole perspective. The patrimonial ideal type within the development of Western administration can also be of considerable use for the early modern era to better understand values as the moral groundings of administrative behavior and the change of values over time. Finally, the relevance of Niklas Luhmann’s theory of social systems for historical research into public values will be discussed. This theory argues that modern society is divided into separate self-referential value systems. Corruption ensues when these systems start to overlap, for instance when values from the legal system penetrate the political system. Although Luhmann’s theory of social systems is not central to my research it does offer some interesting insights into possible alternatives for historical research into public
values. Luhmann’s theory will be discussed more extensively after this in the comparison of the corruption scandals from the period 1650-1747.

In order to answer how values are established as moral groundings for administrative behavior and how they change over time, it is necessary to study the primary sources. Ben Hoetjes’ “sources of social values” serves as a heuristical tool to deal with the multitude of archival material available (Hoetjes, 1977, 1982). Four sources of values can be distinguished. Firstly, the application of law in corruption scandals, as reflected in the legal files of trials. Secondly, the nature and formation of public opinion in corruption scandals focuses on (for instance) the pamphlet literature of the time. Thirdly, the codes of the “shop floor” or in other words the everyday rules by which local administration was (supposed to be) conducted. Fourthly, moral authorities (or “the best opinion or morality of the time”), encompassing political philosophy, theology or books on etiquette.

Before turning to actual research I would like to discuss several expectations with regard to the establishment of values as moral groundings for administrative behavior and the development of values over time. Two hypotheses elucidate the project’s fundamental issue. I will first turn to the hypothesis based on Weber's theory on Western administrative development, which states: “A development from patrimonial administration to a more bureaucratic administration is already visible in the Dutch Republic in the period 1650-1747”. I expect to see change and continuity with regard to the relevant administrative values which are closely related to the development of patrimonial administration to a more bureaucratic administration. Patrimonialism is a “face-to-face” administration in which personal relations are key, stressing values such as the preservation of harmony and stability. Trust is therefore very important as promises between magistrates need to be honored. On the contrary, bureaucratic administration reflects other basic values such as administering in a rational, independent, transparent and impersonal manner. I argue that to a certain extent a shift in values is already visible in the Dutch Republic in the period 1650-1747. Secondly, I have some expectations with respect to the usefulness of another theory in order to find values and better understand the change of values over time. Several particularistic theories can be used to study corruption and public values from a historical perspective.
Whereas I am using a “neo-classical” approach to corruption combined with Max Weber’s theory on administrative development, another theory also seems promising. As already mentioned, Niklas Luhmann’s theory of social systems (Brans & Rossbach, 1997; Luhmann, 1980, 1985) argues that modern society is divided into separate self-referential value systems. Social systems such as the scientific, legal, political or economic system are “autopoietic”, meaning self-producing, and evolve according to their internal dynamics while employing “binary codes”, true or false, legal or illegal or good or bad, for certain standardized responses. For example, responses within the legal system depend on whether or not certain actions are legal or illegal. Corruption ensues when these systems start to overlap, for example when values from the legal system penetrate the economic system or the political system. According to Luhmann separate self-referential value systems were not characteristic for the early modern era. Instead, boundaries were blurred and social standing decisive to assess what was (not) allowed within everyday administration. Yet societal change (i.e. the transition from early modern to modern society) resulted in a shift in mode of differentiation from vertical stratification (i.e. social standing as the decisive factor to judge corruption) to horizontal functional systems, whereby corruption ensued when self-referential value systems (such as the legal, economic and political system) started to overlap. I have therefore come up with the following hypothesis: “Luhmann’s theory of social systems, which divides society into separate self-referential value systems, is already applicable to and visible in early modern Dutch administration (1650-1747)”.

In order to gain further insight into values as the moral groundings for administrative behavior and the development of public values in the period 1650-1747, it is necessary to focus on the nature of as well as the similarities and differences between the corruption scandals I have examined. The scandals have been researched with the help of Michael Johnston’s “neo-classical” approach supplemented by Max Weber’s theory on the development of Western administration, particularly his ideal types of patrimonialism and the rational-legal bureaucracy. The corruption scandals will be discussed with the help of Hoetjes “sources of social values”, the law in corruption cases, public opinion, public rectitude and the “codes of the shop floor”.

Three corruption scandals, concerning Andries Hessel van Dinther, baljuw of Beijerland, Lodewijk Huygens, drost of Gorinchem and Jacob van Zuijlen van Nijevelt, baljuw of Rotterdam, resemble each other. Before turning to a discussion of these scandals on the basis of Hoetjes’ “sources of social values”, it is necessary to go further
into the main actors, events as well as the outcomes of these corruption scandals. Hessel van Dinther was appointed baljuw of Beijerland in 1637, but as a magistrate he would encounter considerable problems in local administration. His relationship with his Aldermen seemed to be strained, for instance, with regard to the administration of justice. The baljuw abused the possibility of composition of criminal offences, meaning the payment to a legal officer by a suspect in order to avoid prosecution. This practice could quickly turn into extortion as accusations of violations of edicts were easy to make. Hessel van Dinther was also accused of adulterous behaviour, a notable accusation as that was not only illegal, but also because it was his duty to prosecute adultery in his jurisdiction. The baljuw’s actions in Beijerland eventually resulted in legal consequences. In 1660 Hessel van Dinther was provisionally suspended as baljuw of Beijerland. Cornelis de Witt, brother of the influential Grand Pensionary Johan de Witt, would stand in for Hessel van Dinther. Only in 1672 was Andries Hessel van Dinther reinstated as baljuw and Dike warden of Beijerland, after the downfall of the brothers De Witt.

Lodewijk Huygens was appointed drost of Gorinchem in 1672, an office he would hold through 1685. Through a resolution Huygens was awarded sole power to appoint people to much sought after positions. The drost abused his powerful position by receiving money or gifts from aspiring magistrates wishing to obtain a seat on the town council. Huygens demands were often extravagant exceeding what was morally or socially acceptable. The drost also abused the possibility of composition of criminal offences and did not flinch about dividing an office up into three parts for personal gain, contrary to established traditions. After a provisional suspension and a sentence by the Provincial Court of Holland, Zeeland and West-Friesland in 1676, the drost was eventually able to return to Gorinchem in 1678, following a favorable sentence by the High Court. However, strife in local administration continued. Factions constantly quarreled about, for instance, the appointment of officers in the local militia or vacant positions in the Estates’ daily administration and the Admiralty. A pamphlet war would eventually bring the conflict into the limelight. The ongoing unrest resulted in Huygens’ fall from Stadtholder William III’s grace. By way of compensation the former drost was appointed member of the Gorinchem town council and the Admiralty of the Meuse in 1686.
Jacob van Zuijlen van Nijevelt was appointed baljuw of Rotterdam in 1676. His growing influence in the city was often associated with abuse and corruption, ultimately leading to legal consequences. Similar to Hessel van Dinther and Huygens, the baljuw of Rotterdam was accused of misusing the practice of composition in criminal cases, whereas fellow magistrates had supposedly signed documents to always follow blindly the sentiment of the baljuw in all government affairs, including the bestowal of seats in the city council and other offices. Local magistrates became part of the baljuw’s faction or “correspondence”, the remaining regents being excluded as a result of which the system of seniority and rotation of office suffered, similar to the Huygens scandal. A pamphlet war ensued, in which the baljuw was accused of being a whoremonger. The “Kosterman uprising” of 1690, following the beheading of a citizen of Rotterdam, had resulted in Van Zuijlen fleeing the city. An investigation would follow into complaints about possible abuses by the baljuw, leading to a case before the Provincial Court which was eventually transferred to the High Court (as Stadtholder William III intervened). The High Court decided to acquit the baljuw in 1692 and compensate all legal costs. Van Zuijlen was reinstated and able to return to Rotterdam, receiving a considerable compensation for damages done. After his return adversaries would lose their seat in the town council and be excluded from political influence. Yet the baljuw’s return would be short-lived. He died in 1695.

Turning to an analysis of the three scandals by means of Hoetjes’ “sources of social values” the “codes of the shop floor” show that a magistrate’s main task was to preserve peace, unity and harmony in local administration. Unrest and discord had to be prevented at all times. Yet this is where things went wrong for Andries Hessel van Dinther, Lodewijk Huygens and Jacob van Zuijlen van Nijevelt. As legal officers they had not abided by established patrimonial traditions, for instance with regard to the bestowal, rotation and seniority of office. Huygens and Van Zuijlen found themselves in a precarious position as patronage was at the core of early modern administration. On the one hand they had to remain on good terms with the local magistrates, but on the other hand personal submission and unconditional loyalty towards their patron, Stadtholder William III, were required. Losing favor with the Stadtholder could mean the end of a magistrate’s career. A capable administrator was also required to deal with all particularities surrounding gift-giving in the Dutch Republic. Although gifts formed an intrinsic part of social reality, they were also highly ambiguous, especially in relation to the bestowal of office. In order to judge the appropriateness of a gift it mattered
whether a gift was given on a voluntary basis or a preceding contract, was part of a longstanding relationship or given on a one-time basis implying a specific service in return (for instance a seat on the town council). Lodewijk Huygens sometimes misjudged the acceptability of certain gifts and sums of money. Another possible explanation for the disruption of harmony is not related to the actions of these administrators, but to the fact that these men were outsiders and were thwarted by the local regents. These regents appealed to (existing?) local privileges and called themselves free and unattached and considered the baljuw, drost or ruwaard to be an outsider. This line of argumentation is visible in the cases of Cornelis de Witt (and his substitute Coomans), Huygens (an outsider in Gorinchem) and Van Zuijlen van Nijevelt (who had a citizen of Rotterdam beheaded). To treat administrators from higher bodies impolitely, is a theme that is characteristic of early modern administrative culture. Therefore, not only errors of judgement which resulted in turmoil serve as a possible explanation for a disruption of harmony in the local administration. Perhaps these men did not take part in the local “harmony” (Groenveld, 2004: 31-55). A final possibility that needs to be taken into account, is the political situation surrounding some of the corruption scandals. As a result of the political turmoil of 1672, regents that lost power and influence could have felt resentment towards men like Huygens and Van Zuijlen van Nijevelt.

Although in all three scandals a univocal meaning of corruption existed on a formal-legal level, legal standards were only of limited relevance in everyday administration. As a consequence there was no unambiguous standard on corruption. Legal standards only came into play after harmony and unity in local administration had been seriously disrupted on account of magistrates not adhering to the “codes of the shop floor”. All three, Hessel van Dinther, Huygens and Van Zuijlen van Nijevelt, eventually faced legal consequences in the form of provisional suspensions, repayment of money received and fines, although Van Zuijlen van Nijevelt eventually received a considerable compensation for damages done to his honor and goods.

The pamphlets published by local factions only seemed to contain accusations the quarelling factions expected the public to consider reprehensible behavior. Opinion makers formed part of the elite that was embroiled in the corruption scandals. Yet pamphlets were meant to appeal to a larger audience in order to convince readers to support a local faction or to turn against the other faction. From the pamphlet wars we
can conclude that the public and private were closely intertwined, accusations of corruption often focused on a legal officer's reprehensible character traits, with which the accusers wished to show that an officer was unfit for the fulfillment of office. In case factions referred to moral authorities they did so for opportunistic reasons instead of using “the best opinion and morality of the time” as a benchmark to assess administrative actions.

The three corruption scandals seem to fit neatly within Weber’s patrimonial ideal type. Patrimonial administration was a “face-to-face” administration, in which officials did not refer to laws and regulations. Their main task was the preservation of a harmonious administration with respect for local traditions and customs. However, there were also bureaucratic standards to be found in laws and regulations. As such Normenkonzurrenz and Parallelität von Normen were characteristic for the early modern era, in which legal-rational bureaucratic standards did exist next to but could also conflict with patrimonial “face-to-face” standards. Normenkonzurrenz was also visible in the scandals concerning Hessel van Dinther, Huygens and Van Zuijlen van Nijevelt. Harmony was key in the Dutch Republic, with its institutional fragmentation, provincial sovereignty and the center of power in the local administration. Although the local administration’s primary task was to preserve harmony and unity, faction strife regularly resulted in discord and unrest. The idealization of the political system through principles of harmony served as a compensation for everyday political reality. Only after harmony had been disrupted did legal standards come into play.

Not every scandal reflects the patrimonial ideal type. Elements of Weber’s bureaucratic ideal type are visible in two later corruption scandals. Although not representative for the entire Dutch Republic, consider the scandal concerning Gerard Burchard van Rechteren (1719-1724), Governor of Doornik, a barrier city in the Austrian Netherlands. In 1710 the Estates General issued a resolution concerning the pay of Commanders and officers of the barrier cities. In 1719 Gerard van Rechteren was appointed Governor of Doornik, but as a result of the resolution he was no longer allowed to enjoy gifts and other ways of income next to his pay. However, Van Rechteren violated the resolution by receiving “welcoming gifts” (sums of money) upon arrival. A disruption of the harmony in the local administration in the form of tension between the garrison and the tax farmers of the excises on tobacco, brandy and gin, resulted in accusations of corruption and a court case before the Council of State. In 1720 Governor Van Rechteren was suspended from his office as Governor of Doornik and the
accompanying pay for the period of a year. He was also sentenced to repay a twofold of sums received. A lengthy affair would follow in which the Governor’s brother, Count Van Rechteren, would stand up for the Governor’s honour and reputation by publishing pamphlets on his behalf. The efforts of the Van Rechterens’ would be of no avail. In 1723 Gerard van Rechteren decided to accept the position of Governor of Breda.

Hoetjes’ sources of social values offer some interesting perspectives with regard to the Van Rechteren scandal. In the barrier city of Doornik tensions ensued between the garrison on the one side and the tax farmers and local administration on the other hand. Accusations of corruption focused on Van Rechteren receiving “welcoming gifts” as the Governor should have understood that the gifts implied a certain reciprocity and a future service in return (i.e. the prevention of smuggling among his soldiers). In assessing proper administration the Count Van Rechteren and his brother the Governor still relied on patrimonial “face-to-face” values on the shop floor level of local administration. The Van Rechteren family honour and reputation were at stake. Yet this case no longer fit neatly within the patrimonial ideal type. This scandal also differs from the preceding three corruption scandals as the Normenkonkurrenz, which was characteristic for the early modern period, was challenged (or entirely pushed aside) as legal standards (i.e. the Estates General’s resolution of 1710) penetrated into the shop floor level of everyday administration. Bureaucratic values pushed aside the patrimonial “face-to-face” values. In line with legal-rational administration the Governor of Doornik was expected to fulfill his office in an independent and impersonal way as set out in formal rules and procedures. Van Rechteren should refrain from taking part in “face-to-face” practices concerning the furnishing (and receiving) of gifts to strengthen relationships. In the Van Rechteren scandal legal standards became completely dominant, something the Van Rechterens still needed to get used to. This corruption scandal also tells us something about the applicability of Luhmann’s theory of social systems for historical research into public values. I will go further into this in the section discussing the hypothesis based on Luhmann’s theory.

Another corruption scandal from 1747 also shows that the patrimonial ideal type becomes increasingly less applicable in early modern administration. The conflict centers around Cornelis Schrevelius and Johan van den Bergh, two Leiden magistrates. This corruption scandal shows the existence of coexisting and conflicting standards of
CORRUPTION AND ADMINISTRATIVE VALUES

Correct ethical conduct, i.e. bureaucratic versus patrimonial values. On the one side there was the conflict between Schrevelius and Van den Bergh (with a focus on wrongful individual behaviour), about whether or not Van den Bergh had promised to reinstate Schrevelius in the contract of correspondence in Leiden (i.e. the dominant faction in the town council) as well as to choose him as schout of Leiden. On the other hand there was the reform movement of 1747 (with a broader notion of political corruption and a focus on the political system), challenging the sovereignty of the magistrates and obedience to patrician authority as well as the way officials were selected. Both Schrevelius and Van den Bergh were still firmly ingrained in patrimonial “face-to-face” administration. The selection of patrimonial officials was largely based on personal trust, family ties, social prestige and not so much on an aspiring magistrate's technical qualifications. As a result, values such as kinship, esteem, honor, decency, honesty, dignity and “grey hairs” were emphasized. As a result of economic and political factors the sovereignty of the magistrates and obedience to patrician authority were challenged in 1747. Calls for reform and the creation by the periodical press of an image of continual abuses within the oligarchy resulted in shifting administrative values. Interestingly, opinion makers no longer formed part of the elite, but of the middle classes. One could therefore speak of the emergence of a new kind of “public opinion” in this 1747 scandal, which is not visible in the preceding scandals. Criticism was aimed at the patrimonial selection of officials based on personal trust and family ties. Thus “face-to-face” values concerning the bestowal of office were challenged by bureaucratic standards, according to which an official should be knowledgeable and have expertise. Similar to the first three scandals, Parallelität von Normen and Normenkonkurrenz are very recognizable in this case, the only difference being that the Leiden magistrates were still ingrained in patrimonial values whereas the reformers perhaps wished to introduce new administrative values as the grounding for administrative actions. In other words, one group wanted something, the other group wanted something else, but no one wanted both value systems at the same time.

Concluding, it is necessary to return to the project's fundamental issue: “how are values established as moral groundings for administrative behaviour, and how do these change over time?”. Do changes occur steadily or as a result of far-reaching events such as corruption scandals? The focus of this research has been on scandals as Michael Johnston’s “neo-classical approach” argues that concepts acquire their meaning in the clash over boundaries. Another reason to focus on scandals is the availability of archival
sources. This can be especially useful for the early modern era where sources are not always at one’s disposal. I argue that scandals can both serve as a confirmation of the status quo (existing administrative values which have not been adhered to, such as the preservation of harmony), as well as a catalyst for or at least proof of administrative change. Archival research seems to support Johnston’s neo-classical approach, in the sense that conflicts, more specific corruption scandals, could lead to administrative concepts (including administrative values) acquiring a different or entirely new meaning in the Dutch Republic in the period 1650-1747.

In order to research public values and the change of values over time Michael Johnston’s “neo-classical approach” was supplemented by Max Weber’s theory on administrative development. A hypothesis based on Weber’s theory stated that “A development from patrimonial administration to a more bureaucratic administration is already visible in the Dutch Republic in the period 1650-1747”. With regard to this hypothesis I argue that to a certain extent there is a development from a patrimonial to a more bureaucratic administration. Particularly the Van Rechteren scandal resulted in new or shifting public values with respect to the taking of gifts and the discharge of office. Whereas patrimonial administration stresses values characteristic for a “face-to-face” administration, trust, seniority, grey hairs, harmony and stability, new administrative values resembled Weber’s ideal type of the bureaucracy. Magistrates were supposed to administer in an independent, transparent and impersonal manner without accepting gifts. In the Van Rechteren scandal we see a new development towards a distinction between a public and private sphere in which it was no longer allowed for an official to receive gifts from citizens. In this scandal harmony was no longer decisive for judging administrative behavior, contrary to earlier scandals. Instead, independent and impersonal government would, in the long run, serve as the new grounding for government. A change in values was also visible in 1747 when reformers argued that the selection of officials should be based upon technical qualifications instead of birth and family relations. Similar ideas were shared about administration in general.

The Van Rechteren scandal also shows that the “Parallelität von Normen” which was characteristic for the early modern era was challenged for the first time. “Parallelität von Normen” meaning that values could exist next to each other, but could also conflict with each other (i.e. Normenkonkurrenz). In the Dutch Republic magistrates were supposed to adhere to (what Hoetjes called) the “codes of the shop
CORRUPTION AND ADMINISTRATIVE VALUES

floor”, the everyday rules by which local administration should be conducted. Harmony was the key value. Legal-rational standards only came into play after harmony in local administration had been disrupted and accusations of corruption had resulted in criminal proceedings. Legal standards existed next to the “shop floor codes” and they could also conflict. This did not mean that legal standards were “less ethical”, they were just as important for our understanding of administrative values. However, in the long run the “Parallelität von Normen” was challenged, especially in the period 1750-1850. Legal-rational standards would become dominant in assessing ethical behavior, replacing the traditional face-to-face standards which had been decisive for so long. The Van Rechteren scandal of 1720 can be regarded as a precursor of things to come.

The Van Rechteren scandal also tells us something about the applicability of another interesting theory for historical research into corruption and public values, Luhmann’s theory of social systems, which assumes the coming into being of separate self-referential, autopoietic value systems. The aforementioned hypothesis argued: “Luhmann’s theory of social systems, which divides society into separate self-referential value systems, is already applicable to and visible in early modern Dutch administration (1650-1747)”. The Van Rechteren scandal shows that in this case it is not only possible, in line with Hoetjes, to speak of “sources of values”, but also of “value systems”. In line with Luhmann’s system theory approach one could argue that in the Van Rechteren scandal corruption ensued after legal standards (which had become self-referential) penetrated the shop floor level, replacing the traditional “face-to-face” administrative standards. The influence of social descent and hierarchy as the criteria to judge corruption diminished, although Van Rechteren’s subordinates were still punished more severely than the Governor. As a consequence the “honor and reputation” defense of Count Van Rechteren and his brother the Governor turned out to be fruitless. As early modern society was not characterized by separate self-referential value systems, but by blurred boundaries, social standing was important in judging which actions were (un)ethical. In the transition from early modern to modern society there was a shift in mode of differentiation from vertical stratification (social descent being decisive) to horizontal systems, in which corruption came into being when systems started to overlap.

Ongoing research into integrity of governance will offer further insight into the ethical aspects of administration. While research in the Netherlands and internationally often
focuses on gaining a better understanding of integrity in present day administration, it is also important to draw attention to (the development of) public values from a historical perspective. The NWO research project “Under Construction. The Genesis of Public Value Systems” has attempted to fill this void regarding corruption and public values in the Netherlands in the period 1650-1950. Hopefully this research will offer more insight into integrity of governance for the seventeenth and the first part of the eighteenth-century. What tasks still lie ahead of us? First there should be international comparative research into corruption and public values in a historical perspective. This can be done through new research projects leading to new volumes, articles and international conferences. Research in other countries I have become acquainted with through visits to international conferences shows that future opportunities are plentiful.