CHAPTER 4

# Talking Privately in Utopia: Ideals of Silence and Dissimulation in Smeeks' *Krinke Kesmes* (1708)

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Utopias of the early modern period typically envision societies with a transparent communality and no private property. In Thomas More's much imitated and adapted *Utopia* (1516), the narrator, Raphael Hythloday, reports that "there is nothing private anywhere […] [the Utopians] live in the full view of all". People's homes have doors "which open easily with a push of the hand […] [and] let anyone come in".[1] We might therefore expect utopias to provide a scarce source of evidence about the practices and ideals of early modern private conversations. However, a utopia such as Hendrik Smeeks' *Beschryvinge van het magtig Koningryk Krinke Kesmes* (*Description of the Mighty Kingdom of Krinke*

[1] Thomas More, *Utopia*, ed. by George M. Logan, trans. by Robert M. Adams, 3rd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 48, 62. All subsequent references to the text are to this edition by page number.

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*Kesmes*), published in Amsterdam in 1708,[2] is striking for depicting conversations involving discretion, dissimulation, intimacy, silence, and secrecy, allowing substantial room for the representation and imagination of private experience. Dissimulation even appears to be an ideal of the utopian society, contradicting the transparent communalism expected of utopia. What is the ideological role of dissimulation in *Krinke Kesmes* and what can it tell us about ideals and practices of private conversations in early modern Europe?

Utopian literature provides an excellent source of evidence to study the role of early modern dissimulation in conversation because dialogue plays such an important role in propelling utopian narratives. The dialogic framework of utopias is seen in the binary contrast of an existing and ideal society and in the use of characters' dialogues to mediate the comparisons.[3] Plato's Socratic dialogue *Republic* (c. 375 BCE) has been said to "haunt" *Utopia*.[4] However, More goes beyond Plato, not only presenting a humanist model for utopian sociability in More, Giles, and Hythloday's philosophical comparison of contemporary England and Utopia in the Socratic setting of a garden in Antwerp.[5] Utopia is presented—unlike ideal societies described by Plato or Aristotle—as actually existing in the world.[6]

[2] The modern Dutch critical edition is Hendrik Smeeks, *Beschryvinge van het magtig Koningryk Krinke Kesmes*, ed. by P.J. Buijnsters (Zutphen: W.J. Thieme & Cie, 1976). In this chapter, page numbers for quotations from the Dutch text are from Buijnsters' edition. Unless otherwise stated, all quotations in English are from Robert H. Leek's translation, Hendrik Smeeks, *The Mighty Kingdom of Krinke Kesmes (1708)*, ed. by David Fausett (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1995).

[3] Vita Fortunati discusses the dialogic role of utopian characters in "Fictional Strategies and Political Message in Utopias", in *Per una definizione dell'utopia: metodologie e discipline a confronto: Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Bagni di Lucca 12–14 settembre 1990*, ed. by Nadia Minerva (Ravenna: Longo Editore, 1992), 17–27 (23).

[4] J.C. Davis, "Thomas More's Utopia: Sources, Legacy and Interpretation", in *The Cambridge Companion to Utopian Literature*, ed. by Gregory Claeys (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 28.

[5] Indeed, it has been proposed that Utopia's social model is conceived as an extension to the whole society of the intimate practices and ethics of humanist friendship. See Hannah Chapelle Wojciehowski, "Triangulating Humanist Friendship: More, Giles, Erasmus, and the Making of the Utopia", in *Discourses and Representations of Friendship in Early Modern Europe, 1500–1700*, ed. by Daniel T. Lochman, Maritere López, and Lorna Hutson (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2016), 45–64.

[6] More, *Utopia*, xix.

Utopias also typically set up multiple intertextual, often contrapuntal, dialogues with previous utopias and works from other genres. Explicit or implied references and borrowed or reframed *topoi* often assume a satirical tone. In More's *Utopia*, for instance, the poet Anemolius strikes a competitive contrast with Plato's *Republic* in the paratext which explains the pun of 'utopia':

> 'No-Place' was once my name, I lay so far;
> But now with Plato's state I can compare,
> Perhaps outdo her (for what he only drew
> In empty words I have made live anew
> In men and wealth, as well as splendid laws):
> 'The Good Place' they should call me, with good cause.[7]

Later utopias diverge in many ways from More's model and, from the seventeenth century onwards, shift to a narrative form based on the model of contemporary travel accounts. However, while an overt Socratic structure is abandoned, dialogue remains crucial to the utopia as travel narrative through the narration of the journey to utopia and characters' reported discussions of utopian society. As Chloë Houston has persuasively demonstrated, both the dialogue and travel account "assert that it is conveying a real experience" and both draw "attention to the reader's role in making sense of the text by maintaining the parallel between the experience recorded—be it physical journey or oral conversation—and the reader's act of reading". Houston argues that, in the predominantly narrative form of utopias after More's work, dialogue is incorporated within the narrative to shape "multiple layers of meaning", "an uncertain relationship with the truth", and a parallel between "the reader's experience of reading the text and the author's experience within it". Characters' conversations therefore remain at the heart of the distinctive form of utopian narrative.[8] These dialogues describe strange but plausible utopian societies as though they were real, incorporating travel observations of non-European peoples while reminding readers of the early

[7] More, *Utopia*, 117.

[8] See Chloë Houston, *The Renaissance Utopia: Dialogue, Travel and the Ideal Society* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2014), 9. Nina Chordas also discusses the way in which dialogue 'haunts' early modern utopias in *Forms in Early Modern Utopia: The Ethnography of Perfection* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010), 17–34.

modern truism that "travellers may lie by authority".[9] Utopian authors exploited this gap to allow readers space to speculate on an ever greater variety of social possibilities and utopian models.[10]

*Krinke Kesmes* includes all these dialogic facets of the utopian form. It unfolds the comparison of two societies largely through conversations between the narrator, Juan de Posos, who travels to Krinke Kesmes from Europe, and a local host, the Garbon, whose responsibility is to take care of visiting aliens. The reported conversations between these two and other characters convey the experience of utopia as real and make expedient use of opportunities to highlight parallels between the reader's, author's, and narrator's experiences of the text. The complex and eclectic intertextuality of *Krinke Kesmes* combines references both to earlier utopian works such as *Utopia* and Francis Bacon's *New Atlantis* (1627), travel literature, political satire, geography, ethnography and political theory, wisdom literature, the autodidact tradition, as well as practical literature such as recipes and lists. This makes a utopia like *Krinke Kesmes* a rich source for examining the ideal forms of privacy in early modern conversation.

In this chapter, I will examine how dissimulation is represented in De Posos' conversations as a tool intended to secure the privacy, secrecy, or silence of the characters' intentions or desires and consider dissimulation's significance as part of the ethical and ideological framework of *Krinke Kesmes*. This will require a consideration of the fluid and shifting senses of the terms 'privacy', 'secrecy', 'silence', and 'dissimulation', which were widely discussed in the conduct literature of Smeeks' day and which carry meanings that differ in important ways from these terms as generally understood today.

In his study of the "normative disciplinary discourse" of dissimulation in treatises of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Jon R. Snyder defines dissimulation as "the disciplined use of reticence, taciturnity, diffidence, negligence, omission, ambiguity, irony, and tolerance". By 'tolerance', he means the pretence of not seeing or hearing something.

[9] Daniel Carey, "The Problem of Credibility in Early Modern Travel", *Renaissance Studies* 33:4 (2019), 524–547.

[10] For some examples of how utopian authors combined travel accounts with utopian speculation, see David Fausett, *Writing the New World: Imaginary Voyages and Utopias of the Great Southern Land* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1993) and Alfred Hiatt, "Terra Australis and the Idea of the Antipodes", in *European Perceptions of Terra Australis*, ed. by Anne M. Scott, Alfred Hiatt, and Christopher Wortham (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), 9–43.

Snyder argues that as "states and societies grew in size and complexity" in the early modern period, an "ever-increasing circulation, contamination, transformation, and appropriation" of knowledge produced a culture of secrecy that stimulated an extensive literature on the theory and conduct of dissimulation. In the absolutist political and religious culture of the Old Regime, the capacity to disguise one's intentions, feelings, and opinions and accurately determine the sincerity of others "could make the difference between life and death".[11] Although the art of dissimulation was originally intended for use by princes, courtiers, and diplomats, its practices were adopted by other social groups in time. However, Snyder points out that it is impossible to recover how people practised dissimulation in the early modern period; scholars can only seek to understand the discourse that arose about it and how it shaped how individuals might "perform, legitimize, interpret, or contest dissimulatory acts".[12] Dissimulation is not peculiar to the early modern period. Forms of deception are practised by humans everywhere and have been the subject of storytelling and myth for centuries in many cultures. The Kaurna people of Adelaide in Australia tell the story of Tjirbruke, who uses dissimulation to avenge the murder of his nephew Kulultuwi by the brothers Jurawi and Tetjawi, who try to cover up their crime.[13] Odysseus disguised himself as a beggar to enter Troy.[14] Hamlet is racked by the task of discovering his mother's deceit. Deception has also been observed in non-human primates, although its intentionality and similarity in cognitive form to human practice remain the subject of research and debate.[15] However universal dissimulation's appearance might be in human societies, early modern Europeans made it a subject for special attention.

It is by no means straightforward to explain why dissimulation was given such emphasis during the early modern period. Snyder proposes it

[11] Jon R. Snyder, *Dissimulation and the Culture of Secrecy in Early Modern Europe* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2009), 1–26.

[12] Snyder, *Dissimulation and the Culture of Secrecy*, 45–46.

[13] Karl Winda Telfer and Gavin Malone, "Tjilbruke/Tjirbruki Story", City of Port Adelaide Enfield, 2020, https://www.cityofpae.sa.gov.au/explore/arts-and-culture/explore-first-nations-culture/m2y/more-stories/tjilbruke-story, accessed 8 December 2023.

[14] Miriam Eliav-Feldon, *Renaissance Impostors and Proofs of Identity* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, and Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 1.

[15] Brian Hare, Josep Call, and Michael Tomasello, "Chimpanzees Deceive a Human Competitor by Hiding", *Cognition* 101:3 (2006), 495–514.

was the emphasis placed on display and observation to establish a person's status and reputation that contributed to the intense interest in dissimulation. This created an acute tension because, paradoxically, dissimulation "had to exist unseen"—that is, the dissimulator must not be seen to dissimulate. Snyder regards the early modern culture of secrecy and dissimulation as integral to the Old Regime and argues that it was swept away by a shift to transparency with the French Revolution.[16] Miriam Eliav-Feldon argues that early modern Europeans' interest in dissimulation was obsessive and stemmed from a concern with "identification and from a deep anxiety that things were not what they seemed and people were not who they said they were".[17] Her focus is the role of dissimulation in efforts to avoid persecution during the violent religious conflicts of the Reformation. People knew that a few reckless words or gestures giving the appearance of their being on the wrong side of a confessional divide could not only undermine their reputation but threaten their property and even life.[18]

I will consider how representations of dissimulation in conversations in *Krinke Kesmes* might reflect both an imaginary of Smeeks' own society as well as of the utopian one presented for comparison, highlight relevant commercial and imperial spheres outside the utopian text in which the concept of dissimulation circulated and was thought to be practised in everyday life—for example, in the realm of commerce, and consider the way in which dissimulation is presented for social critique through the ambiguities of utopia's dialogic form.

I will also pay attention to the multisensorial aspects of dissimulation and its related terms. Their representation in *Krinke Kesmes* is more than a matter of intellectual interest at the level of the word alone; rather, their appearance is part of the author's representation of conversation as an embodied experience which assumes strong visual and physically felt components. Smeeks' representations are informed not only by contemporary conduct literature but also by theories of visual art which were

[16] Snyder, *Dissimulation and the Culture of Secrecy*, 61, 178.

[17] Eliav-Feldon, *Renaissance Impostors*, 3.

[18] See also Virginia Reinburg's discussion in this volume of the subtle silences and omissions that Gilles de Gouberville used in order to report conversations about religious ideas and events in his diary, including avoiding the mention of his attendance at Protestant ceremonies he had good knowledge of to protect his reputation as a Catholic gentleman.

prominent and well understood by literate individuals (such as Smeeks himself) in the Low Countries in the early modern period. It is telling that the print editions of *Krinke Kesmes* supported this strong visual element with the inclusion of a number of copperplate illustrations. These demand to be included as part of the examination of private conversations in the utopia.

Following a brief introduction to *Krinke Kesmes*, I will review some of the most important early modern commentaries on dissimulation and its uses, and highlight the relevance of utopian literature to a discussion of dissimulation in conversation. I will then discuss in detail pertinent examples of represented conversation in *Krinke Kesmes* in its historical context and ask how the novel's ethic of dissimulation can inform our understanding of the experience and practice of early modern conversations.

## Krinke Kesmes

The first-person narrator of *Krinke Kesmes* is a Dutch merchant who conducts profitable business in Panama before setting his sights on trading opportunities in Asia. After a summary of his early life, he recounts a chance meeting with his dear friend and mentor, whom he calls 'the Master', outside Visscher's map shop in Amsterdam. Instead of More's garden in Antwerp, they go to the Master's room in an inn where they catch up on each other's lives and converse about issues of the day, such as what secrets the 'Southland' (now called Australia) might hold and the best means to uncover them. As in *Utopia* and Bacon's *New Atlantis*, European imperial exploration of the world stands as a metaphor for extending human knowledge of the secrets of nature.

The outer narrative frame—the story of the Dutch merchant's experiences in the author's and reader's world before he reaches Krinke Kesmes—sets up dissimulation as a key theme. We know the narrator only as Juan de Posos, the name he has adopted from a Spanish friend of his from Ronda, Andalusia to improve his trading opportunities in South America, where he succeeds in making good profits. His name change recalls the 'merchants of light' in *New Atlantis* who travel the world incognito, collecting knowledge for use in the utopian research institution of Salomon's House. De Posos travels in the opposite direction, returning to Europe from Krinke Kesmes with a trove of papers about utopia which have been generously shared with him by his host,

the Garbon. It is ironic therefore that the Kesmians possess an ethical maxim on the virtues of silence which recommends that "[o]ne should be discreet, and not expose oneself to all the world; but change one's name in accordance with situations and business".[19] This maxim not only contradicts the expected transparency of utopias and reveals the Garbon's breach of a maxim of his own society by sharing so much with his foreign guest, but it explicitly endorses the dissimulatory practice of the foreigner, De Posos. This crux highlights an essential tension over privacy at the heart of utopia. Paradoxically, this maxim on silence is essential to the privacy of utopia as a whole society because—as in More's and Bacon's models—even as privacy within utopia is typically limited or eliminated, utopia must maintain its private isolation from the rest of the world to protect its enhanced society.[20] Despite the expectation of utopian transparency, various forms of deceit and dissimulation exist in Krinke Kesmes, although their interpretation is complex.

De Posos' next venture is to Asia. He boards a ship in Panama bound for the Philippines, but it is blown off course in a storm and stranded on an island of the Southland called Krinke Kesmes. The Kesmians have a harmonious society without the religious dissension of Europe. Unlike More's *Utopia* or Vairasse's *Sevarambians,* in which private property is abolished and opportunities for private experience explicitly limited, in *Krinke Kesmes*, there is no explicit mention of private property nor any instance of the Dutch word *privaet*, derived from the Latin *privatus*.[21] However, like many early modern archistic utopias, Krinke Kesmes has a centralised (monarchical) state in which the King controls all political and economic power.[22]

After landing on an unpopulated part of the coast, De Posos and his companions explore their surroundings and eventually sight a city from

[19] Smeeks, *Krinke Kesmes*, 95.

[20] On the importance of utopian isolation, see Vita Fortunati, "L'ambiguo immaginario dell'isola nella tradizione letteraria utopica", in *Il fascino inquieto dell'utopia: Percorsi storici e letterari in onore di Marialuisa Bignami*, ed. by Giuliana Iannaccaro et al. (Milan: Ledizioni, 2014), 51–61.

[21] *Privaet* had been in use in Dutch since the sixteenth century. See *Woordenboek der Nederlandsche Taal*, q.v. 'privaat' sense II. Leek's English translation uses 'private' twice: 'Private Soldier' for *Soldaat* and 'private' for *stille* ('silence', 53). The latter instance is discussed later in this chapter.

[22] Nicole Pohl, "Utopianism After More: The Renaissance and Enlightenment", in Claeys, *Cambridge Companion to Utopian Literature*, 51–78.

a mountain top. At this point, they are arrested by the king's soldiers and taken to the city, which is called Taloujaël. There, De Posos meets the Garbon who will be his guide for the remainder of his stay in Krinke Kesmes. The Garbon informs him about the Kesmians' political institutions, geography, and history. The relationship between De Posos and the Garbon plays out a clash of ethics about property and personal autonomy. Their conversations and exchange of knowledge and material goods comprise the mirror through which Smeeks' society in early eighteenth-century Netherlands is contrasted with his utopian ideal.

## Dissimulation in Early Modern Europe

It will be useful to digress briefly to survey the discourse on dissimulation in its early modern European context as this will better inform the discussion of its appearance in Smeeks' text, which will then be the focus of the remaining part of this chapter.

Concern with display, identity, and dissimulation can be seen in contemporary literature and drama. From Portia's suitors in *The Merchant of Venice* (1596) to Iago in *Othello* (1604) and Hermione's statue in *The Winter's Tale* (1610), Shakespearean plots are driven by deception and dissimulation. Early modern theories of art both emphasised and valued art's power of illusion and dissimulation. Willem Goeree observed that artworks "show us the truth of the things that are, through untruth and a disguised appearance". Samuel van Hoogstraten wrote that paintings "make things appear to be that are not", while Franciscus Junius defined grace as "the effect of a carefully disguised and cleverly concealed Art" that achieves "a certain sort of carelessness".[23]

What is especially striking is the expansive conduct literature in which the theory and practice of dissimulation is discussed in detail. Snyder identifies *The Prince* by Niccoló Machiavelli (1469–1527) as the starting point for the early modern discourse on dissimulation. Although printed in 1532, it was probably written almost two decades earlier. Machiavelli argues that dissimulation is one of the techniques a prince must master to maintain the state and the loyalty of his subjects. To this degree, a

[23] Thijs Weststeijn, *The Visible World: Samuel van Hoogstraten's Art Theory and the Legitimation of Painting in the Dutch Golden Age*, trans. by Beverley Jackson and Lynne Richards, Amsterdam Studies in the Dutch Golden Age (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2008), 239, 281.

prince's political action is subject to different standards from those of ethics and religion. However, the purpose of dissimulation is not opportunistic amorality for its own sake, but rather a pragmatic acceptance that, to gain and maintain power, a prince must often "act against faith, against charity, against humanity, against religion". Snyder outlines how exponents of the doctrine of reason of state followed Machiavelli in advocating a prudent use of dissimulation. However, anti-Machiavellians argued that princes should be motivated by honesty and Christian values and often misinterpreted or exaggerated Machiavelli by condemning those who allegedly equated dissimulation with prudence.[24]

The conduct literature highlights the role of conversation in the everyday experience of practising and discovering dissimulation. Stefano Guazzo (1530–1593) connected dissimulation with grace and civility in conversation in *La civil conversazione* (*The Civil Conversation*, 1574). In *Oráculo manual y arte de prudencia* (*The Art of Worldly Wisdom*, 1647), the Spanish Jesuit, Baltasar Gracián y Morales (1601–1658) advises that, in conversation, "discretion matters more than eloquence".[25] This idea probably reflects the impact on discourse and rhetoric of the seventeenth-century shift to realism and, in epistemology and natural philosophy, the movement away from Aristotelian reasoning to empirical observation and experiment, exemplified by the approach of Francis Bacon.[26] Gracián's handbook of three hundred aphorisms was widely read and translated into many languages. Among his recommendations were several on dissimulation, the practice of concealing an individual's thoughts, feelings, and character.

The belief that "communication with others risks revealing one's inner state" has been proposed as the first principle of the discourse of dissimulation in early modern Europe.[27] In the preface to his English translation of Lipsius' *On Constancy* (1595), John Stradling warns his readers to "talk as affable as you shall see cause; but keep your mind secret unto

[24] Snyder, *Dissimulation and the Culture of Secrecy*, 109–114. The translation from *The Prince* is Snyder's.

[25] Baltasar Gracián, *The Art of Worldly Wisdom: A Pocket Oracle*, trans. by Christopher Maurer (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 148.

[26] See Lorraine Daston, *Observation as a Way of Life: Time, Attention, Allegory*, the Hans Rausing Lecture 2010, Uppsala University, Salvia Småskrifter 13 (Uppsala: Tryck Wikströms, 2011).

[27] Snyder, *Dissimulation and the Culture of Secrecy*, 290.

yourself".[28] Conversation is a double-edged sword: it can trigger conflict, but is also the means to its resolution. Dissimulation likewise may allow a speaker to avoid conflict and promote their interests in intercourse with another, but if not done discreetly and if one speaker becomes aware that the other is holding something back, it may easily have the opposite effect, as we will see in a critical episode of *Krinke Kesmes*.

The art of conversation was not limited to the use of words alone. Its objective also involved the conscious and careful curation of gesture and the physical expression of feeling to match and convey the impression of the spoken word.[29] As Bacon observed in *The Advancement of Learning* (1605), conversation involves composing and ordering the passions and countenance to match the words spoken because "it is nothing won to admit men with an open door, and to receive them with a shut and reserved countenance".[30] In addition to his essay "Of Simulation and Dissimulation" (1625), Bacon discussed dissimulation elsewhere in his writings. His discussion in *The Advancement of Learning* highlights that he regarded it as more than simply a social and political matter of display and interpreting the intentions, identity, and status of others. It was foundational to the framework of early modern epistemology.

## Smeeks' Main Sources on Dissimulation

Smeeks would have generally known the conception of dissimulation from these commentators as they circulated throughout Europe, especially through neo-Stoic discourse. He was influenced in *Krinke Kesmes* most particularly by Gracián's treatise and by Bacon's writings, including

[28] Justus Lipsius, *Tvvo Bookes of Constancie. Written in Latine, by Iustus Lipsius. Containing, Principallie, A Comfortable Conference, in Common Calamities. And Will Serue for a Singular Consolation to All That Are Priuately Distressed, of Afflicted, Either in Body or Mind*, trans. by John Stradling (London, 1595).

[29] Much research attention has been paid to the art of conversation. See, for example, Peter Burke's comments on the development of bodily self-control in Protestant northern Europe in *The Art of Conversation* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993).

[30] Francis Bacon, *The Major Works*, ed. by Brian Vickers (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 266.

his utopia, *New Atlantis*.[31] Gracián offered much advice on dissimulation in conversation in his popular work, *The Art of Worldly Wisdom*. Gracián makes clear the connection between speech, gesture, and feeling. He understood that "[w]e see very few things for ourselves, and live by trusting others. The ears are the back door of truth and the front door of deceit. Truth is more often seen than heard".[32] For Gracián, "[t]he passions are the gates of the spirit. The most practical sort of knowledge lies in dissimulation. […] Let no one discover your inclinations, no one foresee them, either to contradict or to flatter them".[33]

Gracián emphasised that it was critical for the success of dissimulation to ensure that the act of dissimulating was also dissimulated. Like many other writers of conduct literature, Gracián used the example of the Roman emperor Tiberius (r. 14–37 CE) to illustrate this precept in his *El Héroe*. The source is Tacitus, who marked the irony that Tiberius expressed his belief that his greatest virtue was dissimulation—hence betraying his own art of dissimulation.[34] Dissimulation is political. Gracián advised, "Master yourself, and you will master others".[35]

In the *Advancement of Learning*, Bacon discussed the role of dissimulation in learning and advised against it, because "[d]issimulation breeds mistakes in which the dissembler himself is caught". He concluded that "the continual habit of dissimulation is but a weak and sluggish cunning, and not greatly politic".[36] Zagorin argues that Bacon's attitude to secrecy and dissimulation was ambivalent. He was critical of philosophers such as alchemists who claimed to have hidden knowledge, but in his own writings he sometimes tried "to veil his doctrines by an affected obscurity", probably motivated, as Zagorin suggests, by the fear that he would be misunderstood and misrepresented.[37]

[31] Buijnsters notes that Gracián's *Art of Worldly Wisdom* was the main source for the maxims on silence and Gian-Paolo Marana's *L'Esploratore turco* (Paris, 1684) was also a source for the maxims on religion. See *Krinke Kesmes*, ed. by Buijnsters, 39–40.

[32] Quoted by Snyder, *Dissimulation and the Culture of Secrecy*, 4.

[33] Gracián, *Art of Worldly Wisdom*, Aphorism 98.

[34] Snyder, *Dissimulation and the Culture of Secrecy*, 15.

[35] Gracián, *Art of Worldly Wisdom*, Aphorism 55.

[36] Bacon, "Advancement of Learning", in *The Major Works*, 281.

[37] Zagorin, *Ways of Lying*, 274.

Bacon expresses this ambivalence in his essay "Of Simulation and Dissimulation". His discussion is indebted to Lipsius.[38] He compares three forms of deceit or veiling of the self: (1) dissimulation, (2) simulation, and (3) closeness, reservation, and secrecy.

Bacon explains that dissimulation is "when a man lets fall Signes, and Arguments, that he is not, that he is". It is a second-rate kind of secrecy, albeit one that is acceptable when it is necessary to prevent the disclosure of important secrets. However, it is a difficult behaviour to pull off successfully and risks betraying secrets because of the effort of hiding them. Strategies such as withdrawing from a conversation are likely to arouse suspicion in one's interlocutors, and "equivocations, or oraculous speeches" are generally unpersuasive.

Bacon defines simulation as a vice, although he admits it may be used as a last resort to protect important secrets in extreme circumstances.

The third form of deceit has the most positive value. Bacon defines it as "closeness, reservation and secrecy". It is a conduct that makes it impossible for others to tell a person's character. As a result, others often feel willing to share intimacies with such a person. For Bacon, this "Habit of Secrecy, is both Politick, and Morall". However, it requires control of the passions, the non-betrayal of emotions to others. Used successfully, it also means having "that penetration of judgment [that a person] can discern what things are to be laid open, and what to be secreted, and what to be shewed at half lights, and to whom and when".[39]

Thus, Bacon sets up a moral hierarchy in practices of deceit with dissimulation situated midway in value between simulation and secrecy.

It is interesting that Bacon found it necessary to use three words—closeness, reservation, and secrecy—to define the most positive form of deceit. When he refers back to the concept later in his essay, he abbreviates to "secrecy", but it appears that this word alone did not fully cover the meaning of the concept he had in mind. Bacon's conception seems to approach what today we might call 'privacy'. His idea is perhaps closest in sense to the modern use of the adjective for a reserved, 'private' person. This sense was attested in the early seventeenth century for the adjective

[38] Snyder, *Dissimulation and the Culture of Secrecy*, 56.

[39] Bacon, "Of Dissimulation and Simulation", in *Major Works*, 349–351.

'private'.[40] He probably could not use the word 'privacy' because, at the time, the prevailing sense of the noun was closer to the Latin otium, meaning a state of withdrawal from public or political engagement.[41]

In Bacon's *New Atlantis*, there are two particularly strong references to deceit. The central edifice of the utopia, both architecturally and ideologically, is the scientific college of Salomon's House, described as "the very eye of this kingdom". The collegians' purpose is "to discern (as far as appertaineth to the generations of men) between divine miracles, works of nature, works of art, and impostures and illusions of all sorts".[42] They unlock the secrets of nature or interpret God's works, thereby creating many ingenious inventions for the benefit of their society. It is a figure for Bacon's scientific method, an institution which could overcome the three barriers to the progress of knowledge Bacon identified in *Advancement of Learning*: attacks on learning by the Church and political men, and poor scholarship.[43]

The other critical reference to dissimulation is the method by which the Bensalemites of *New Atlantis* gather the best knowledge from all parts of the world to add to the sum of human knowledge and inform the experiments and inventions of Salomon's House. 'Merchants of light' travel around the world to observe and collect intelligence. They travel like spies, dressing as the locals do, speaking their languages, and telling no one where they come from.

Bacon opened "Of Simulation and Dissimulation" with an apparent dismissal of dissimulation as "but a faint kind of policy or wisdom; for it asketh a strong wit and a strong heart to know when to tell truth". However, he admits that dissimulation is sometimes necessary, even if it may carry risks. In New Atlantis, God leaves secrets to be unlocked by humanity, but Bacon would probably have associated the secret workings of creation with a closeness, reservation, and secrecy rather than charging God with dissimulation. However, he would probably have accepted that

[40] Oxford English Dictionary, q.v. "private", sense 10: "Of a person, etc.: retiring, reclusive; living a quiet or secluded life; reserved, unsociable".

[41] Oxford English Dictionary, q.v. "privacy", gives a contemporary instance from Act III, Scene iii of Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* (1609). Achilles says, "Of this my priuacie, I haue strong reasons". Ulysses replies, "But gainst your priuacie, The reasons are more potent and heroycall".

[42] Bacon, "New Atlantis", in *Major Works*, 464.

[43] Bacon, "New Atlantis", in *Major Works*, 577–579.

it was necessary in a fallen world for the merchants of light to use dissimulation to gather intelligence for the higher purpose of advancing human knowledge. How did Smeeks interpret Bacon and Gracián?

It is in the conversations between De Posos and the Garbon that the reader learns about Smeeks' utopian society and reflections on philosophical questions of his day. Their conversations show a clash between prevailing European practices of commerce based on dissimulating desires and interests to gain trade advantages and the more open values characteristic of the Kesmians' enhanced sociability. Through their exchange of goods and knowledge, Smeeks' conception of dissimulation can be examined.

## Under the Effigy of Silence

On one of his tours of Taloujaël, the Garbon takes De Posos inside the most important building at the heart of the city. De Posos describes it as "a striking large Pyramid or Tower, which one could climb by steps ascending on the outside".[44] From a platform at the top, there is a synoptic view of the city and surrounding countryside, including the city's thirteen bastions. Its form resembles the image of the Great Temple of Tenochtitlan in Georg Braun and Franz Hogenberg's *Civitates Orbis Terrarum* (1572–1617),[45] but its structure is also reminiscent of the central buildings of other seventeenth-century utopias such as Tommaso Campanella's *City of the Sun*, Denis Vairasse's *History of the Sevarambians,* and Gabriel de Foigny's *The Southland Known*. It may also be a reference to the Tower of Babel, in part because of the Kesmians' facility with languages.[46]

The Garbon has the keys to the pyramid/tower and leads De Posos inside and shows him its many rooms and spaces. De Posos is awed by his entry to the first main room: "I saw a spacious hall which was neither light nor dark, but, like the twilight filtering through the forests, fit for enticing bashful Maidens: for this was the *Hall of Love*."[47] In the Hall of Love are

[44] Smeeks, *Krinke Kesmes*, 87.

[45] See Georg Braun and Franz Hogenberg, *Cities of the World: 363 Engravings Revolutionize the View of the World: Complete Edition of the Colour Plates of 1572–1617*, ed. by Stephan Füssel (Hong Kong: Taschen, 2008).

[46] Fausett, "Introduction", in Smeeks, *Krinke Kesmes*, xv.

[47] Smeeks, *Krinke Kesmes*, 92.

many effigies symbolising Kesmian virtues and vices. Each effigy stands on a pedestal inside which, behind a locked door, are papers with the maxims of Sarabasa, known as the 'Old Philosopher', the wise man who once established the principles of the Kesmians' deistic religion. Descriptions of the effigies and their symbolism are drawn from the emblematic literature of the time. Alexandra Kocsis discusses in this volume how similar kinds of printed images of intimate topics and their accompanying texts were a focus for private conversations.[48] It can be inferred that the effigies were intended to inspire the Kesmians to contemplate and talk about vices and virtues, as emblem books and prints did in early modern Europe.

During the tour of the Hall of Love, the Garbon is interrupted by someone who beckons him away for a private conference. The Garbon excuses himself and takes a paper from the locked cupboard in the pedestal under the Effigy of Silence. He hands it to De Posos and asks him to read and copy it down. It contains the Kesmian maxims on silence—a long list of aphorisms, including several derived from Gracián. They begin: "Silence is the first step to Wisdom, the Loving Mother of Peace, and the Guardian of Virtue. […] In the art of Silence, of not revealing oneself, resides all secrecy".[49] Silence is presented in the first maxim as a positive virtue: it fosters wisdom and peace. The second maxim explains that silence also involves some form of dissimulation: the art of "not revealing oneself". Silence is conceived as more than not speaking; it is an active, judicious attempt to conceal and select parts of the self to be kept secret from others. The close conceptual relationship between silence, secrecy, and dissimulation in the maxims highlights aspects of the relation between the interior self and society that affords an understanding of the meaning of privacy in Smeeks' day.

Many parallels can be observed between Sarabasa's maxims on silence and Gracián's aphorisms. For example, three maxims read as follows:

> A wise Man does not declare himself because he knows that he will pay Dues to as many people as he reveals himself to.
>
> A heart without secrecy, is like an open Letter and a disclosed resolve, and is like a game given away, which is held in low regard.
>
> He who is able to abstain from speech has great power over himself.[50]

These make a close translation of Gracián's aphorism 179:

[48] See Alexandra Kocsis' contribution to this volume.

[49] Smeeks, *Krinke Kesmes*, 92.

[50] Smeeks, *Krinke Kesmes*, 93–94.

> A breast without reserve is an open letter. Have depths where you can hide your secrets: great spaces and little coves where important things can sink to the bottom and hide. Reserve comes from having mastered yourself, and being reserved is a genuine triumph. You pay tribute to as many people as you discover yourself to.[51]

Careful control over what one reveals about oneself is a form of self-mastery and also gives one the power to master others and thereby discover their dissimulations, secrets, and deceptions. Therefore, both silence and dissimulation have political objectives: to control or master others by learning what motivates them while not giving away one's own motives. As Gracián warned, discovering oneself to others carries a high cost: "You pay tribute to as many people as you discover yourself to". This political aspect is summarised in the cryptic maxim, "Whoever discovers, will be Master".[52] To discover is to uncover the concealed and dissimulated intentions and feelings of others. It is also related to the imperial notion of 'discovery', the effort of merchants, adventurers, and explorers to identify new markets and sources of profitable trading commodities to exploit. This imperial context for dissimulation will be discussed at greater length below.

Sarabasa's maxims on silence show a great deal of overlap between the notions and associations of the concepts of dissimulation and silence, but it is not easy to appreciate the value that Smeeks and his contemporaries might have attached to these ideas in different contexts, particularly when they are presented in a list of maxims. Dissimulation appears to be associated with the virtue of silence (that is, virtue in the Machiavellian sense), albeit not always positively. To understand the subtleties of these terms better, it is necessary to analyse the text of *Krinke Kesmes* more closely. The modern Dutch word for dissimulation is *veinzerij*, from *veinzen*, 'pretend'. It is a loanword from the Latin *fingere* (via the French *feindre*) and is cognate with the English 'feign'.[53] In *Krinke Kesmes*, three words formed from the root of this word express aspects of dissimulation: *veinsen*, *ontveinsen*, and *geveinstheid*. The first two appear in three maxims on silence:

[51] Gracián, *Art of Worldly Wisdom*, Aphorism 179.

[52] Smeeks, *Krinke Kesmes*, 95.

[53] See *Oxford English Dictionary*, q.v. "feign" and *Woordenboek der Nederlandsche Taal*, q.v. "veinzen", sense I.

> A shrewd person must be nimble-minded, see, penetrate and judge everything, say little, feign [*veinsen*], and cover up his thoughts and intentions; yet act truly with courtesy, affability, and a happy countenance.
>
> One should be shrewd enough to hide one's shortcomings, and adroit at disowning [*ontveinsen*] one's passions, in order that others may never know your urges […]
>
> Dissimulation [*Ontveinsen*] is most important in Politics; one must often seem and pretend [*veinzen*] not to understand, what one understands.[54]

In the first two maxims, *veinsen* and *ontveinsen* are associated with shrewdness: it is prudent to cover up or dissimulate one's thoughts and passions.[55] Here, Smeeks draws heavily on the discourse of dissimulation in the conduct literature. The practice of covering one's own thoughts and desires and attempting to perceive and judge the motives of others while maintaining 'affability and a happy countenance' are virtues recommended by Castiglione, Accetto, and Gracián. In the last maxim quoted here, the idea of the prudent man who pretends not to understand what he does understand is expressed by Bernardo Bibbiena in *The Book of the Courtier* (1528).[56] This last maxim would probably have been understood less positively by Smeeks' contemporaries, because the reference to politics indicates the more extreme and sustained level of dissimulation required of princes and in the field of reason of state.

A still darker representation of dissimulation appears in another hall of the pyramid. The room of the Sovereign has effigies associated with politics and government. There is an effigy of Cham-Hazi, the king who with Sarabasa established the Kesmians' utopian regime, alongside effigies of a Historian, Polity, Avarice, Nobility, War, and Excise. Among them, an effigy depicts dissimulation (*Geveinstheid*) specifically as "a skinny Hag [*Wijf*], dressed in Sheepskins, from below which a Wolf's head peeps;

[54] Smeeks, *Krinke Kesmes*, 95. For the Dutch equivalents, see Smeeks, *Krinke Kesmes*, ed. by Buijnsters, 214.

[55] Leek's translation of *ontveinsen* as "disowning" in the second maxim seems a step too far. Citations in the *Woordenboek der Nederlandsche Taal* (q.v. "ontveinzen") suggest that the sense of denying that one's feelings belong to oneself is a nineteenth-century development. The seventeenth-century citations have a meaning closer to 'covering up', more synonymous with *veinzen* (sense I). The practice of dissimulation requires one to possess a clear knowledge of one's own feelings, even while it is denied to others.

[56] See Snyder, *Dissimulation and the Culture of Secrecy*, chapter 2.

in her hand she held a Book and a Rosary".[57] This representation is a concise combination of elements from the two emblematic descriptions of hypocrisy in Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia*. In the first, a woman (*Vrouwe*) with leprous face and hands and leprous and naked feet is dressed in a sheepskin from under which a wolf peeps out. In the second description, a thin, pale woman, dressed in a torn, half-woollen, half-linen robe holds in her left hand a rosary (*Paternoster*) and a breviary which she is reading. At the same time, she passes alms with her right hand to a beggar sitting behind her with wolf-like legs and feet (Fig. 4.1). Smeeks probably knew the 1644 Dutch translation of Ripa's *Iconologia* by Dirck Pieterszoon Pers, which includes an illustration of the second woman with the rosary and breviary handing alms to the beggar, based on the Italian original.[58] However, in Pers' image, the woman's feet—rather than those of the beggar—appear wolf-like.[59]

Ripa's emblematic representations of hypocrisy rely on a number of contrasts: sheep and wolf, wealth and poverty, able-bodied and disabled. The first named in each of these pairs suggested goodness to early modern Europeans whereas the second suggested falseness and duplicity. As Barbara Kaminska explains in this volume, the poor, disabled, beggars, and lepers were all associated with feigning and cheating.[60] The source of the contrast between the false wolf and good sheep (an image of Christ) is Matthew 7.15: "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves".[61] Ripa's

[57] Smeeks, *Krinke Kesmes*, 104.

[58] Cesare Ripa, *Iconologia, of Uytbeeldingen des Verstands*, ed. by Giovanni Zaratino Castellini, trans. by Dirck Pieterszoon Pers (Dirck Pieterszoon Pers: Amsterdam, 1644), 165–66. Both entries are entitled "Hippocresia. Geveinstheyt, Schijnheyligheyt". A later Dutch edition of Ripa's *Iconologia*, published by Dirck Pieterszoon Poot in 1743, has two images: the same image for the second description and an additional one for the first, showing the wolf peeping out from the woman's sheepskin dress. This image appears in no pre-1708 edition that I have seen, and therefore may not have been known to Smeeks.

[59] The woman's feet do not look wolf-like in the illustration in the Italian edition, suggesting that this detail was added by the Dutch illustrator to clarify the woman's hypocrisy and align the two descriptions in the same image. For the Italian image and text, see Cesare Ripa, *Iconologia*, ed. by Sonia Maffei (Turin: Giulio Einaudi, 2012), 244–245.

[60] See Barbara Kaminska's contribution to this volume.

[61] Maffei, ed., *Iconologia*, 714, no. 8.

**Fig. 4.1** Illustration of Hypocrisy in the 1644 Dutch translation of Ripa's *Iconologia* (From Cesare Ripa, *Iconologia, of Uytbeeldingen des Verstands*, trans. Dirck Pieterszoon Pers [Amsterdam: 1644], 166. Koninklijke Bibliotheek/Early European Books, © 2017 ProQuest LLC)

emblem recombines these contrasting symbols of goodness and falseness in a variety of ways to reaffirm the lesson on hypocrisy. Smeeks could probably expect his readers to be familiar with the frequently reprinted image and needed only a couple of words to remind them of its symbolism. The second description explains that the woman is hypocritical because the vain 'ambition' of her almsgiving is to be regarded well by others. The rosary is also suggestive of a Jesuit or Roman Catholic, which was the definition of a false prophet for Protestants (Smeeks was

a member of the Dutch Reformed Church). The effigy of *Geveinstheid* recalls Bacon's critical description of dissimulation in the *Advancement of Learning* as "but a weak and sluggish cunning, and not greatly politic".[62] The wolf imagery shows that the vain self-aggrandisement of this hypocritical form of dissimulation is ethically more disreputable than the self-protecting forms which appear in the maxims of silence. The need for such an effigy in Krinke Kesmes emphasises that the Kesmians—like humans everywhere—need moral instruction to help guide them away from the social risks of hypocrisy and deceit.

A final maxim will help conclude this discussion of dissimulation and hypocrisy. One of Sarabasa's maxims of religion states: "Doet u Godsdienst in't stille buiten roem", which Leek translates as "practise your religion in private without display".[63] However, *stille* would be rendered more precisely as 'silence' and *roem* would be better translated as 'fame' or 'repute'. "Practise your religion in silence without [ambition for good] repute" highlights the value of silence or 'privacy' in the sense of being alone and candid with one's god, without thought to how to burnish one's public reputation.

The effigies and maxims of *Krinke Kesmes* represent acts of dissimulation, covering up or keeping private, and feigning, deceit, or hypocrisy in a number of different contexts. Dissimulation can be a tool of prudent, self-protective silence in conversation or a vain act intended to look good before others which backfires and reveals one as a hypocrite if detected. It is also a necessary tool of politics, for use in governing peoples. The political aspect receives less emphasis in *Krinke Kesmes* than in utopias such as *New Atlantis* or Denis Vairasse's *L'Histoire des Sévarambes* (*History of the Sevarambians*, 1675–1679) where fake miracles are used for the good purpose (sensu Machiavelli) of maintaining popular consent for the regime.[64] Smeeks was more interested in its role in imperial commerce, which is the focus of discussion in the final two sections of this chapter.

[62] Bacon, "Advancement of Learning", in *The Major Works*, 281.

[63] Smeeks, *Krinke Kesmes*, ed. by Buijnsters, 154; Smeeks, *Krinke Kesmes*, 53.

[64] On miracles in these two works, see Richard Serjeantson, "Natural Knowledge in the New Atlantis", in *Francis Bacon's New Atlantis: New Interdisciplinary Essays*, ed. by Bronwen Price (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), 82–105 and Dino Carpanetto, "Religione e politica: Considerazioni sull'utopia dei Sevarambi dell'ugonotto Denis Veiras", *Riforma e Movimenti Religiosi* 1 (2017), 179–220 (203–204). Cyrus Masroori examines Vairasse's contrast of the use of deception for good public and evil

## Foxes and Monkeys in the Southland

Before De Posos sets out on his main voyage, he discusses the use of dissimulation with his close friend and mentor, the Master in Amsterdam. De Posos asks why explorers such as Willem de Vlamingh and William Dampier were unsuccessful in their attempts to acquire knowledge of the Southland, referring to the continent now called Australia. At the time, the Dutch United East India Company (VOC) had sent ships to the continent for more than a century with the aim of learning what the inhabitants valued and traded. The VOC hoped initially to find the gold that was rumoured to lie there. The sailors who landed brought back samples of natural materials and reports of unusual animals, fragrant trees, and 'savage' peoples. Some recounted tales of shipwreck and other life-threatening adventures at sea. Expeditions consistently failed expectations and the VOC concluded that the continent was dry and barren with nothing of value to trade.

Very little was published of the VOC agents' observations of the continent and its peoples aside from a standard description of about half the coastline which circulated with disembodied Dutch toponyms commemorating the VOC ships, directors, and captains credited with charting it. However, fictional works like *Krinke Kesmes* provide evidence suggestive of the copious conversations that spread to the wider community from VOC agents' accounts of their experiences in the Southland. Speculation filled the gaps in knowledge. Some were inclined to think—like those French merchants and bureaucrats who became rivals of Dutch interests in the last quarter of the seventeenth century—that the VOC was keeping its knowledge secret. Smeeks offers his own ideas through the conversation of De Posos and the Master.

The Master proposes that De Vlamingh and Dampier failed to gain knowledge of the continent because, although they were capable seamen, accomplished at protecting their ships and crews from the risks of sailing, they lacked the skills necessary to negotiate with the inhabitants. These skills include dissimulation and deceit. The Master explains that a successful explorer "must be able to perform wondrous and awesome

private ends. See Masroori, "Toleration in Denis Veiras's Theocracy", in *Paradoxes of Religious Toleration in Early Modern Political Thought*, ed. by John Christian Laursen and María José Villaverde (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2012), 121–138 (130).

Miracles, at the right time and in the right place" to awe and deceive the indigenous inhabitants:

> Look at the title Illustration, where a grim Lion, a Serpent, a Fox, and a Monkey are shown with me. An Explorer of Countries must be able to acquire these characteristics; he must be able to change shape like *Thetis*, in response to circumstances.[65]

Thetis is the goddess of the sea and mother of Achilles. Although the text is not explicit about the characteristics which the four animals are supposed to possess, each had a metaphorical meaning in the contemporary discourse on dissimulation.

Machiavelli argued in one of the most infamous passages in *The Prince* that a prince needs the skills of the lion to "frighten off the wolves" and of the fox to know the snares. However, it is better for the prince to be a fox because he "must be a great simulator and dissimulator", able to outwit those "who will let themselves be deceived".[66] Machiavelli took these symbols of the lion and fox from Cicero's *De Officiis* (44 BCE).[67]

Giambattista della Porta (1535–1615) wrote in *De humana physiognomonia* (*On human physiognomy*, 1599) that dissimulators could be recognised because they looked like monkeys.[68] Monkeys have long been associated with simulation, although the meaning of their use, particularly in travel and colonial literature, has a complex of associations. Christina Normore tells us that although simians were rare in Europe until modern times, they became more common as anthropomorphic metaphors from the late medieval period onwards. Owing to their appearance as "humanity's imperfect doubles", monkeys were often used as metaphors for human failings, in particular, to satirise elites.[69] This association with 'fallen' humanity might also partly explain why the monkey

[65] Smeeks, *Krinke Kesmes*, 23.

[66] Quoted by Snyder, *Dissimulation and the Culture of Secrecy*, chapter 4.

[67] Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, ed. and trans. by Peter Bondanella, Oxford World's Classics (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 108, no. 60.

[68] Snyder, *Dissimulation and the Culture of Secrecy*, 200.

[69] Christina Normore, "Monkey in the Middle", in *The Anthropomorphic Lens*, ed. by Walter Melion, Bret Rothstein, and Michel Weemans (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 43–66.

was used in imperial contexts to ridicule or dehumanise peoples considered inferior to Europeans. Simianism has a long history of association with dehumanisation and racism.[70]

Dampier compared the Bardi people he met in northern Australia to monkeys when they failed to understand and obey his orders to carry barrels of water to his ships: "[A]ll the signs we could make were to no purpose for they stood like statues without motion but grinned like so many monkeys staring one upon another".[71] The ostensible meaning of Dampier's metaphor is that the Bardi are stupid, but the context of the episode might also suggest Dampier's fear that he is the object of the Bardi men's fun. Dampier was desperate to resupply his ships with water and he often projected his frustrations onto a land and people he regarded as inhospitable. He might also have projected his own effort at dissimulation on to the Bardi. Since he gave the Bardi dissimulatory gifts of friendship in the form of trinkets and clothes intended to persuade them to carry water to his ships, he might have interpreted the Bardi men's grins as an attempt to dissimulate their refusal to help.

Smeeks knew the water-carrying episode because he makes a precis of Dampier's constant search for water. Indeed, this is the trigger for the discussion between De Posos and the Master.[72] Smeeks might also have been inspired by the copperplate illustration of the episode by Caspar Luyken in the 1698 Dutch translation of Dampier's *A New Voyage Round the World*.[73] The monkey metaphor is therefore turned back on Dampier in *Krinke Kesmes*. The Bardi may be monkeys to Dampier, but Dampier is not monkey enough to get the Bardi to do his bidding.

In Diego de Saavedra Fajardo's *Idea of a Christian Political Prince* (1640), the serpent's twisting movement is a metaphor for the thoughts of a prince whose direction cannot be guessed.[74] The serpent thus suggests a metaphor for the higher form of deceit, which Bacon defines as

[70] Wulf D. Hund, Charles W. Mills, and Silvia Sebastiani, eds., *Simianization: Apes, Gender, Class, and Race* (Zurich: Lit Verlag, 2015).

[71] Dampier, *A New Voyage Round the World*, chapter 16.

[72] Smeeks, *Krinke Kesmes*, 22.

[73] Liz Conor, "Found: The Earliest European Image of Aboriginal Australians", *The Conversation*, 5 November, 2018, http://theconversation.com/found-the-earliest-european-image-of-aboriginal-australians-106176; William Dampier, *Nieuwe Reystogt rondom de werreld*, trans. by Willem Sewel (s'-Gravenhage: Abraham de Hondt, 1698).

[74] Snyder, *Dissimulation and the Culture of Secrecy*, chapter 4.

"closeness, reservation, and secrecy" since it makes it impossible to know the prince's mind.

The quoted passage is challenging to interpret not only on the level of content. Until this point, the Master has been speaking to De Posos, so the reader must understand the deictic statement "Look at the title Illustration, where a grim Lion, a Serpent, a Fox, and a Monkey are shown with *me*" (my italics) as spoken by the Master. However, on turning to the frontispiece, the reader sees De Posos looking back at them, writing his description of Krinke Kesmes and pointing with his left hand through the frame of a curtained window to the Southland. His ship can be seen off the coast, and a monkey, serpent, fox, and lion sit or lie at his feet (Fig. 4.2).

This breach of the fourth wall marks a moment of estrangement, since suddenly, De Posos addresses the reader directly, as though we were in the inn with him and the Master, observing their conversation like a fly on the wall or a theatre audience. One explanation proposed for this estrangement is that both the Master and De Posos are alter egos of Smeeks himself.[75] The consequence is that Smeeks reveals his own practice of dissimulation as author and invites the reader into an intimate sphere of shared, complicit knowledge about the composition of his book.

Smeeks makes clever use of a highly visual description in both illustration and text of the context, words, and gestures of a private conversation to enhance the impact of this moment. The composition of the frontispiece also invokes the practices of viewing visual art that were so important to the contemporary culture of display. The curtain recalls van Hoogstraten's comment on the dissimulation inherent in Dutch realist or descriptive painting in the seventeenth century—that paintings "make things appear to be that are not".[76] "Look", the deictic imperative that opens the estranging statement by De Posos/the Master, combines with the image of De Posos' left-hand gesturing pointedly through the curtained window to persuade readers of their intimate involvement in a conversation with the author/narrator. Paradoxically, the intention and effect of the breach of the fourth wall is to enhance the fiction that De Posos' conversations with the Master and—by extension of his deictic left hand—his entire experience and account of Krinke Kesmes are true.

[75] *Krinke Kesmes*, ed. by Buijnsters, 108n.

[76] Weststeijn, *The Visible World*, 281.


**Fig. 4.2** Frontispiece of *Krinke Kesmes* showing the narrator, Juan de Posos, with a monkey, serpent, fox, and lion at his feet, writing and pointing at the Southland through a curtained window (From Hendrik Smeeks, *Beschryvinge van het magtig Koningryk Krinke Kesmes: Zynde een groot, en veele kleindere Eilanden daar aan horende; Makende te zamen een gedeelte van het onbekende Zuidland gelegen onder den Tropicus Capricornus ontdekt door den Heer Juan de Posos, en uit deszelfs Schriften te zamen gestelt door H. Smeeks* [Amsterdam: Nicolaas ten Hoorn, 1708], frontispiece)

## Folding Mirrors

Towards the end of *Krinke Kesmes*, there is an unexpected rift in relations between the Garbon and De Posos. It comes amid a trade fair on the beach. The agreement is that the market is strictly regulated by the

king. The Garbon asks for a full inventory of all the goods that De Posos plans to sell, claiming that the king will pay for everything that is bought. Everything is going very well. De Posos is making huge profits selling wares to the Kesmians, he entertains the Garbon on his ship with wine and food, and there is a lively exchange of knowledge about each other's societies and goods. However, when De Posos gives a folding mirror to the Garbon as a gift for someone else, relations sour.

A folding mirror (*boekspiegel* in Dutch) was an optical instrument consisting of three hinged mirrors which folded together like a book. When folded out and facing each other, the mirrors created illusions of infinite repeating reflections.[77] The folding mirror's original purpose is no longer clear, but the VOC transported many such mirrors to Asia. There were twenty in the cargo of each of the two ships of the VOC expedition which circumnavigated the continent now called Australia in 1642 and 1643, commanded by Abel Janszoon Tasman (c. 1603–1659).[78] The purpose of the folding mirrors on Tasman's voyage seems to have been to enchant and awe the local inhabitants so that they would reveal 'secrets' about their trading interests to the VOC's agents. They were tools of distraction to facilitate dissimulatory commercial negotiations favourable to the VOC. Tasman's instructions included the following on how to negotiate with "civilised men" should they meet them and how to dissimulate and play down the VOC's interest in precious metals:

> [Let] them know that you have landed there for the sake of commerce, showing them specimens of the commodities which you have taken on board for the purpose, […] closely observing what things they set store by and are most inclined to; especially trying to find out what commodities their country yields, likewise inquiring after gold and silver whether the latter are by them held in high esteem; making them believe that you are by no means eager for precious metals, so as to leave them ignorant of the value of the same; and if they should offer you gold or silver in exchange for your articles, you will pretend to hold the same in slight regard,

[77] *Woordenboek der Nederlandsche Taal*, q.v. "boekspiegel".

[78] J.E. Heeres and C.E. Coote, eds., *Abel Jansz. Tasman's Journal of His Discovery of Van Diemen's Land & New Zealand in 1642, with Documents Relating to His Exploration of Australia in 1644*, Project Gutenberg Australia, eBook by Colin Choat and Bob Forsyth (Amsterdam: F. Muller & Co, 1898), Appendix G, 140.

> showing them copper, pewter or lead and giving them an impression as if the minerals last mentioned were by us set greater value on.[79]

The Garbon takes a great interest in the folding mirror, and De Posos recalls that he has not given a folding mirror to the Garbon, even though he has two other chests full of them on his ship. When he reveals this, the Garbon becomes pale and says:

> I believed you to be an honest Man, whose word was to be trusted. I have given you so many papers; tomorrow another box-full will arrive here for you, and you will have yet more before you leave, such as have never been outside our Country, I have shown you all the friendship that is in my power, and you deceive me? What cause have I given you to do so? Have I not instructed you to sell such Merchandise only to the King, and to no-one else?[80]

The Garbon explains that he could send De Posos to the capital city to face justice for having concealed on his ship goods he plans to sell. The Garbon asks again for a full list of the ship's cargo to take to the king. Over the following days, De Posos repairs his breach of trust. However, it is clear that his inclination to dissimulate, to not reveal all that he has in the chests of his heart and on his ship, has momentarily failed. Like Tiberius, he failed to dissimulate his dissimulation and, as a result, put himself in grave danger of permanent imprisonment far from home.

It is not a coincidence that the fall of De Posos' dissimulatory mask was triggered by the Garbon's interest in the folding mirror. Mirrors were common metaphors in early modern Europe and were particularly associated with the discourse on prudence (of which dissimulation was a part). The mirror would have been recognised by early modern readers of *Krinke Kesmes* as a reference to the dictum *nosce te ipsum*, "know thyself", ultimately derived from an inscription at Delphi. Smeeks would have been familiar with Aphorism 89 in Gracián's *Art of Worldly Wisdom*:

[79] Heeres and Coote, eds., *Abel Jansz. Tasman's Journal*, Appendix E.

[80] Smeeks, *Krinke Kesmes*, 124.

> [K]now yourself: your character, intellect, judgment and emotions. You cannot master yourself if you do not understand yourself. There are mirrors for the face, but the only mirror for the spirit is wise self-reflection.[81]

This episode reinforces the message of the treatises on dissimulation by Gracián and others that, although dissimulation is sometimes necessary, it also carries risks. Dissimulators must know themselves to dissimulate without giving away their dissimulation. It required a constant effort of attention to both the emotions and feelings or passions as well as to the form of words used in conversation, which is why Bacon believed that the practice of "closeness, reservation, secrecy" had a higher ethical value, because it enabled a more natural engagement in conversation without the risk of exposure as a fake. De Posos puts himself at grave risk when his mask slips.

## Conclusions

Whatever might be expected about the transparency of social relations in a utopia, dissimulation exists in the ideal society of Krinke Kesmes. Since dissimulation entails a conscious distinction between the outward and interior person, a notion of privacy therefore also exists in Krinke Kesmes. Smeeks' engagement with the early modern discourse on dissimulation supports Snyder's thesis about the emphasis placed on cultivating secrecy in the Old-Regime period, before the development of a culture of transparency associated with the French Revolution. As Snyder argues, such texts explain what was considered ideal practice, not what actually took place. There is little sign of a critique of this form of privacy in *Krinke Kesmes* because dissimulation exists in both the utopia and the status-quo society (in the practices of European commerce and exploration). The translation of Gracián's aphorisms on dissimulation in the Kesmian maxims on silence indicates Smeeks' acceptance—perhaps even internalisation—of the need for such conduct in social interactions. Smeeks does not envision a utopia of people with an essentially different human nature, as Foigny does in his utopia of gynandrous people in *The Southland Known*. The Kesmians' traits resemble those of Eurasians from the northern world.

[81] Translated by Snyder in *Dissimulation and the Culture of Secrecy*, 48.

The dialogues between the Garbon and De Posos include an important commentary on the ethic of dissimulation, one which comes to a conclusion in the folding-mirror episode. On the surface, De Posos and the Garbon conduct their conversations in accordance with the recommendations of the conduct literature on dissimulation, with courtesy, affability, and a happy countenance. It is De Posos rather than the Garbon who seems to profit most from this 'friendship'. De Posos gains huge receipts for his sales of goods and a vast amount of knowledge about the Kesmian utopia. He sails away with his treasure trove, having also escaped punishment or loss for deceiving his host. Given the criticisms of Dampier and De Vlamingh in the dialogue between De Posos and the Master, it is clear that De Posos wants the reader to know that he is a more successful "explorer of countries" than they were. His use of dissimulation in his conversations with his host—his adoption of the skills of the fox—plays an important role in his achievement.

An important insight of Snyder's concerns the effect of the spread of printed texts on the early modern culture of dissimulation. Citing Lina Bolzoni's discussion of how writing removes words from the unrepeatable flow of oral communication and turns them into objects that can be seen and analysed in space,[82] Snyder observes that, although the printed text promises to hold a mirror to the hidden interior or private self, in fact it makes explicit a "dissimilarity (if not a rupture) between inside and outside" which produced an anxiety about the identity between the two. He proposes, therefore, that the discourse on dissimulation was an "antidote" for the resulting anxiety about the identity of interior and exterior selves.[83]

Therefore, it is ironic that when De Posos offers a folding mirror to the Garbon, he exposes his own deceit and dissimulation rather than discovering more secrets about the foreign country. The folding mirror reveals more about its user than about the hidden other. Despite De Posos' confidence about discovering a new society, much of the knowledge the Garbon shares is itemised only as lists of categories of information—in fact, De Posos finds one of the maps entirely illegible. This absence of detail suggests the possibility that the Garbon is less candid

[82] Lina Bolzoni, *The Gallery of Memory: Literary and Iconographic Models in the Age of the Printing Press*, trans. by Jeremy Parzen, Toronto Italian Studies (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), xviii.

[83] Snyder, *Dissimulation and the Culture of Secrecy*, 1–26.

than he appears and his description of Krinke Kesmes is less than it purports to be. De Posos' report from utopia is ultimately unverifiable and rather a mirror of his own society. Utopia remains a private unknowable place, as ephemeral as the specifics of an oral dialogue not written down. The folding mirror is an emblem of the anxiety caused by privacy's unknowable negation.

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