

Lineages of the Hegemon

Constructing Dutch hegemony, XIV-XVII

Andrea Lo Bianco

Università Roma1 “La Sapienza”

Corso di Dottorato in “Storia dell’Europa”, XXXI ciclo

Relatrice

Prof. Francesca Romana Lenzi

Co-relatrice

Prof. Cristiana Facchini

Lineages of the Hegemon

Figures

Tables

Introduction

1. Tracking down Dutch power across history
2. The Revenge of the Repressed
3. Dutch hegemony and power
4. A brief history of the Low Countries, XIV-XVII centuries

Chapter 1. Debates on the transition from feudalism to capitalism

1.1 The General debate on the transition to capitalism

Dobb

Brenner

Sweezy

Wallerstein

1.2 The Dutch transition in the scholarly debate

Early scholarship on the Dutch transition

De Vries

Van Zanden

Brenner

Chapter 2. Hegemony or Hegemon?

2.1 Hegemony as projection of power

2.1.1. Pattern of hegemony 1

2.1.2. Pattern of hegemony 2

2.2 The hegemon's perspective

2.2.1. The trialectic of state capital and society

2.2.2. The trialectic unity of state capital and society

Ch. 3. The historical formation of the Dutch space of accumulation, XIV-XVI century

- 3.1 Urban-rural complex as early unit of capitalist development: a study
- 3.2 Accumulation by checked dispossession
- 3.3 The early European networks of Dutch accumulation
- 3.4 The capitalist logic and the Dutch ecology
- 3.5 By way of introduction

Ch. 4. The Dutch regime of accumulation: from scattering to concentration to redeployment. XVI-XVII centuries.

- 4.1 The birth of the Dutch state and the dawn of the Dutch regime of accumulation*
 - 4.1.1. 1482-1560. The first surge of territorial state-building: absolutism in reverse
 - 4.1.2. 1560-1600. The second surge of territorial state-building: republican materialism

- 4.2 The Dutch regime of accumulation under completion*
 - 4.2.1. The capitalist organization of Dutch military space
 - 4.2.2. Religion, welfare and the logic of capital accumulation

Ch. 5. Historical-theoretical reprise: The Dutch Hegemon

Bibliography

Index

Figures

1. Holland and Zeeland in 1433
2. The Republic of the Seven United Province

Tables

Table 3.1. Labor-input in non-agricultural activities in the countryside of the Holland region (in man-years), 1350-1550

Table 3.2. Estimates of labor inputs (in man-years) and shares of wage labour in the main branches of proto-industry in Holland

Table 3.3. Estimates of per capita wealth c. 1500 (in guilders Holland pounds of 40 groten)

Table 3.4. Grain export from Danzig according to the harbor records of Danzig (1490-1557) and the Sound Toll tables (1562-1569)

Table 4.1. Collective public debt (1292–1482)

Table 4.2 Collective public debt (1404–1425)

Table 4.3 Political ties of members of the Admiralty Boards

Table 4.4 Characteristics of investors in the Amsterdam annuities, 1542-1565, in percentages and in guilders

Table 4.5 . Estimates of the growth of production in the most important sectors of the economy and in the economy of Holland as a whole. 1500-1650 (annual average growth rates)

Table 4.6. The taxable value of capital assets according to taxes levied in 1599, 1650,1672 and 1788 (in millions of guilders).

Table 4.7 Annual budget of the Dutch Republic c.1641, and the Dutch state, 1801: percentage distribution of expenditure (excluding local and provincial expenses)

Table 4.8. Percentage of income of selected charitable institutions raised through collections and alms boxes

Introduction

This is not a typical historical study. It is a study aiming at understanding the historical development of a world power within the capitalist world-system¹, which is also a would-be general perspective or framework of analysis to fathom how a world hegemon emerges out of the history of its own. In a nutshell: it is to be argued that the hegemon is a regime of accumulation wherein state, capital and society work hand in glove with a particular degree of coherence developed within the legal boundaries of its territorial sovereignty. This internal structure of power breeds hegemony, that is, the projection of power unto and onto world space, and into the international system of states and markets. Hence, this study represents an attempt to glean the connection between the internal composition of a regime of accumulation and the propensity and force of the same regime to expand its scale and scope of operation in world space – what Joshua Goldstein calls «lateral pressure»². However, what will be essayed is not the customary inquiry into the *projection* of power onto the system which a powerful regime engendered, and whose manifestation is what we call hegemony, but an investigation into the *inner source* and *morphology* of power whence such a projection

primary feeds off. The nub of this study is the hegemon: to understand its path of development, its composition and how it works.

More to the point, we will delve into Dutch history to substantiate historically such a perspective. At the end of the sixteenth century a new state called United Provinces stepped into the limelight of European and world history. It emerged out of the war for the independence from the most powerful Empire of the early modern era, the Spanish world power. This war *contributed* to shape Dutch history. But the United Provinces were more than a development of the sixteenth century. Their historical complexion, as it is to be argued, originated from a past made of unruly ecology and incipient ecological and human commodification. The historical *foundations* – not their operational organization – arose during the late middle ages, and more precisely in the span of time that went from the XIV to the XVI century. The Dutch Republic, as it was called, became thereby the first hegemon of the modern era through the *organized expansion* and *sovereign structuring* of the medieval space of wealth, accumulation and power. In particular, it was the first hegemon of the modern world-system, a capitalist world-economy, the current world historical-social system³. The present study is, in general, a very long-run analysis and synthesis of Dutch history to understand the overall movement of power, wealth and capital that characterized the Northern Low Countries from the XIV century to the XVII. The analysis will focus on the power relations, structures, processes, networks, institutions, agents and agencies which developed, operated and changed during this span of time. As a consequence, the level of the *événementielle* is to be omitted outright.

As a whole, this study takes inspiration and attempts to assume, expand, or answer to, some of the suggestions important scholars have launched in the course of the last three decades of research on Dutch history. The first suggestion to be considered is made by Leo Noordegraaf in a noteworthy study on the industrial landscape of the

Dutch Republic. It pertains to, and emphasizes, the importance of the *longe durèe* for an understanding of Dutch power in the XVII century: «The basic assumption – Noordegraaf says – [...] is that if the effect of the medieval inheritance is counted, the rise of the Dutch Republic and Holland's advantage in the seventeenth century lose some of their enigma»⁴. Or, more precisely, we need to «tackle issues relating to the influence of Holland's medieval history, and whether it created some kind of path dependency»⁵. We will try to eviscerate Dutch path-dependency and then incorporate the medieval inheritance to explain the rise of the Dutch Hegemon in the XVII century.

We need also to recall a great challenge issued by Oscar Gelderblom in the Introduction of *The Political Economy of the Dutch Republic* : «It is a major challenge for students of Dutch history to explain the rise and the decline of the Dutch Republic within one conceptual framework»⁶. Alas, herein we will delve only into the rise of the Republic, we try to put this within one conceptual and historical framework of *longue durèe*. However, within the same organic framework, the Republic's decline might be later investigated, thereby sealing the entire history of the rise and decline of Dutch power into this one single conceptual and historical framework of *longue durèe*.

By paraphrasing Philip Gorski's words, it is to be argued that the Dutch Republic was a strong organization of state, society and economy, «and I hope that they will be persuaded by the evidence that I present to support it. [To understand this] I will argue, we must shift our focus from the central to the local, and we must broaden it to include a wider range of institutions»⁷. Finally, such a perspective, and historical explanation and analysis, aims at answering to a question raised by Jan De Vries in his critique to Wallerstein's *The Modern World-System* – a central inspiration to the present writer: «*how do countries find their appropriate niche in this world economy, and on what basis do countries move from one to another of the zones?*»⁸. This study would aim at elucidating the *inner* conditions according to which a country finds its appropriate niche

in the capitalist world-economy: our case concerns the way a state and a regime become hegemonic, that is, go up at the heights of the hierarchy of world power.

What I set out to do is to seek out a historical explanation that encompasses the most comprehensive historical ensemble of social, economic, political, institutional and ecological factors and vectors that, in their organic and seamless interlocking, bring out a causal-historical dynamic. In this regards hence, history turns into a tool, a means of analysis, not the objective thereof. Only a further step may turn such a causal dynamic, premised on the analysis of power relations, structures, networks and processes, into a more accurate historic explanation of the dynamic itself. In short: to join structural history with the history of the *événementielle*.

Of course, historians are already turning their noses up for such a mode of approaching history calls for a different typology of sources, a different use of the sources, different objectives and different mode of operating compared with the customary historical method⁹. Macro-analysis of this sort, which aims at probing the *longe durèe* of history, imposes painful choices which hamstring historical method and procedures, and also demands great patience and even more broad-mindedness for those scholars who read it: archival collections begrudgingly have to be put aside – since a four century long gaze on Dutch history *as a whole* would require an immersion into the archives that outreaches the time given to the present writer to round off such a study; then, names, faces, protagonists, events, are not taken into primary account if not by using primary sources such as coeval treaties, essays and pamphlets to uphold the analysis and the explanation. The problem of sources and method will be treated in the second section

Section 3 will in short take into account the basic literature on Dutch hegemony and state power. The fourth and last section puts forth a short portrayal of Dutch history to contextualize the historical analysis. The first section instead posits an overview on

the method to be employed in the following pages which will be carried on and expanded also across section 2. It comprises a preview of the contents of the study.

However, the most important thing to bear in mind in such a reading is the following: the present investigation seeks new possibilities not final conclusions. It is an attempt to seek out different, lifelike way of analyzing and explaining history, which is a continual, shifting, uneven and seamless process of development and change. Hence, this approach refuses the scientific fantasy of final theoretical and historical closure in favor of a *perspective* which opens up questions on the actual interlocking complexity of historical-social developments, endeavors to build a different historical-social angle of analysis and new opportunities for different historical understandings. Hence, the hegemon's perspective is not to be considered a model since a theoretical model is not a lifelike picture of history. It *artificially* dissects history. The present perspective is simply a conceptual track for investigating structural-historical relations¹⁰.

Needless to say, the perspective to be argued is ridden with shortcomings and incongruences, both in history and in concept. For example, we will evade the role of nobility because anonymously integrated in what we shall call urban-rural syndicates (or in a different context, rulers) – the point will be the movement of historical-social power and its governance, not the specific role of one social class or another. We evade also, for example in chapter 4, the role of Dutch banks, incorporated into what we shall understand as governmental-business agencies – the role of Dutch banks, the Wisselbank (1609) for example, is well-known, as well as the resounding activities of the Bourse (1607). Therefore it has been a deliberate choice to disregard them¹¹. By contrast, what is to be investigated in this respect will be the interconnections and linkages among, and the overlapping spatial relations in, finance, taxation and the industrial-commercial accumulation in and over Dutch space. For this reason we will evade also the world operations of accumulation of VOC and WIC. At the center of the

investigation will be the *internal* structure of power of the Dutch hegemon with its *inner* resonance. Dutch multinational corporations were integral to the Dutch systemic cycle of accumulation as «leading agencies [which] promoted, organized, and regulated the expansion or the restructuring of the capitalist world-economy» as a whole¹². Their role was with no doubt important also to the Dutch space of accumulation¹³, but the real motor force of it was of different kind, historical magnitude and sociospatial penetration.

In all this, the present writer does not know if some or none of the referred-to cherished hopes – the opening up of different questions, opportunities for different historical understandings, different historical-social views – will be fulfilled. But this is intrinsic to the intellectual posture that seeks out new possibilities not final conclusion.

1. Tracking down Dutch power across history

Charles Tilly argues that an excellent strategy to probe history is to track down the master processes that mold the structure(s) of an era¹⁴. Herein, the master process of our concern is the historical formation of Dutch space – historical structure and networks of power and accumulation – that goes from the XIV to the XVII century. From this historical path of development, a strict dependency to the historical unfolding of Dutch life will emerge. The historical formation of Dutch space led to the development of conditions that enabled the construction of the Dutch hegemon – the Dutch regime of accumulation. The Dutch regime of accumulation is to be explored in chapter 4, whereas the definition of regime of accumulation will be posited in Chapter 2. Both Dutch space and regime will be probed by tracking down patterned relations of power, and their horizontal and vertical interlocking in space.

Power is to be understood in Parson's vein: it is «generalized means» to attain goals¹⁵, which in Dutch space, as we shall argue, were capital, wealth and productivity. In chapter 3 we shall see that Dutch power was premised on, and deployed according to, the capitalist logic:

this logic dictated that capital should be invested in trade and production only as long as returns in these activities were not only positive, but higher than whatever rate justified the exposure of capital to the risks and troubles inseparable from its employment in trade and production and, secondly, compensated its owners for the returns that capital could have earned in financial deals¹⁶

The capitalist logic of power, or logic of capital accumulation, entails a *wider* organization and movement of value in space which unfolds within market – but which is not only *contained* into the markets, although implicated – and which is to be centered upon processes of commodification and appropriation of land, labor, and nature. The commodity-centered pattern of value re/production or value's logic «encodes labor productivity as the decisive metric of wealth and mobilizes Nature to advance labor productivity». In so doing, capitalism, and herein “Dutch capitalism”, becomes value-in-motion by which «Power [...] is at the center of every moment of value» as well as value is at the center of every moment of power (chapter 3)¹⁷. The formation of Dutch space and structure of accumulation during the late middle ages, it is suggested, responded to the capitalist logic of power premised on a commodity-centered pattern of value re/production. We try to explain how and why in chapter 3. Hence, the perspective to be argued rebuffs the formal scheme, in terms of historical evidences and narratives, according to which pre-capitalist formations are defined by production for use (of use-value) in contrast to capitalism, in which production is fully-fledged commodity production within market – chapter 1.

The general approach stems from Michael Mann's *The Source of Power* and the underlying concept of society, from which deriving our method. According to Mann, «Societies are constituted of multiple overlapping and intersecting sociospatial networks of power».

A general account of societies, their structure, and their history can best be given in terms of the interrelations [between]ideological, economic, military, [financial-fiscal], and political [...] relationships. These are (1) overlapping networks of social interaction, [...]. This follows from my first statement. (2) They are also *organizations, institutional means of attaining human goals*. Their primacy comes not from the strength of human desires for ideological, economic, military, or political satisfaction but from the particular *organizational means* each possesses to attain human goals, whatever these may be¹⁸.

The next chapters will probe historically and extensively the sociospatial and organizational complex of power relations deployed over and within Dutch space across four centuries. As Mann, the kernel is concerned with organization, control, logistics – «the capacity to organize and control people, materials, and territories, and the development of this capacity throughout history». As it to be argued, the Dutch source of power emanated from an early development and entrenchment of the logic of capital accumulation which enabled a specific organization of socio-ecological control (chapter 3). In the course of the four centuries here under exam, it offered capacity to organize Dutch space, enabling the form of this organization to dictate the form of society at large – and thus to permeate the unfolding of the ensuing Dutch history. The present analysis rests on understanding sociospatial capacity for organization and explaining its development¹⁹.

Whereas the Dutch space of accumulation until the XVI century was characterized by the historical *scattering* of the capitalist logic on the societal ground, and its historical entrenchment within institutions, public and private sphere, markets, and

human beings on the societal ground, the structuring of the Dutch state during the XVI century spelt the historical *concentration* and expansion of power, wealth and accumulation previously formed and rooted *within* society. In Parson's vein, this general movement was distinguished by features that were both collective – cooperation allows for the expansion of the capitalist power vis-à-vis others and over nature – and distributive – a zero-sum game where a fixed amount of power can be distributed among participants. Their uneven and shifting combination allowed for the societal *expansion* of the socio-ecological alteration of capitalist sort that typified Dutch history since the late middle ages (chapter 3) – although, by way of the construction of the Dutch state, the collective moment of Dutch power turned out to be the prevalent feature of the Dutch regime of accumulation (chapter 4).

Power – Parsons says – is a *generalized* facility or resource in the society. It has to be divided or allocated, but it also has to be produced and it has collective as well as distributive functions. It is the capacity to mobilize the resources of the society for the attainment of goals for which a general "public" commitment has been made, or may be made. It is mobilization, above all, of the action of persons and groups [...].The capitalist version is, with all the qualifications which such an assertion must occasion, primarily production-oriented [or, according to the present perspective, commodity-centered]²⁰.

The Dutch regime deployed its historical power as no jurisdictions in early-modern time did through the most coherent, efficient and effective redeployment and organization of what Michael Mann calls extensive and intensive power. The hegemon is the most powerful regime in the international system. The interstate system which Westphalia sorted out in the XVII century crowned the Dutch Republic as leading national organization, despite its human and material limits compared with other regimes. As we shall argue, this was the outcome of what is to be understood as “internal coherence” of Dutch regime's structure and operations (chapter 2-4). The

Dutch regime conflated the ability to organize the largest numbers of people over the territory in order to engage in stable cooperation (extensive power) with the ability to organize tightly and command the highest level of mobilization or commitment from the participants (intensive power). The Dutch Republic was thus an organization of human space that enabled human beings to extensively and intensively cooperate in order to fulfill their goals – the primary goals of the Dutch were independence and capital accumulation, both *inextricably* interlocked in their achievement (chapter 4)²¹.

However, the concrete method of tracing historical relations of power, which hence are commodity-centered value relations, is premised on a more general understanding of human reality which the world-systems analysis – along with its obverse, the world-ecology perspective – brings with it as method to probe human reality itself, and which the present writer embraces.

WSA is neither a theory nor a paradigm but «call for a debate about the paradigm», according to Immanuel Wallerstein²². It argues that the foremost analytical level to understand human reality is “complexity”. It rebuffs hence the consolidated nineteenth-century Newtonian mode of scientific production – what the astronomer Arthur Eddington termed «microscopic dissection of objects»²³. To grasp complexity therefore, WSA tears down any disciplinary barrier and rebuffs the concept of discipline as a relatively self-contained domain as well as the related concept of interdisciplinarity which, pivoting on the idea of discipline, tends to focus more on the reproduction of knowledge within a comfortable and cozy ensemble of categories and concepts than on its production. Thereby it is denied the customary nineteenth-century analytic segmentation and separation of human domain – the so-called «dogmatic trinity», state/market/economy – for a more organic, complex and lifelike inquiry into human reality. «The whole is a seamless skein»:

The three presumed arenas of collective human action – the economic, and the social or socio-cultural – are not autonomous arenas of social action. They do not have separate “logics”. More importantly, the intermeshing of constraints, options, decisions, norms, and “rationalities” is such that no useful research model can isolate “factors” according to the categories of economic, political and social, and treat only one kind of variable, implicitly holding the others constant. *We are arguing that there is a single “set of rules” or a single “set of constraints” within which these various structures operate*²⁴

Indeed, the present writer believes that to have a better grasp on human realm we cannot separate the economic from the social or from the political and the ecological. We cannot rely only on figures and series to produce quantitative analysis. Their conceptual premises are exactly the «artificial dissection of objects». Hence, we have to pay attention also to “quality”, that is, the *historical panoply of factors and vectors* which are accountable for a historical-human phenomenon – in our case, historical power²⁵.

Borrowing from the great British historian Jonathan Israel,

I do not believe in 'economic history' or in 'political history'. What I try to do is write general history, [...] shaped by a complex mixture of economic and political factors as well as some social and cultural factors which are not properly either 'economic' or 'political'. Human thought and activity is a single continuum in which economics, politics, culture, religion, and social life are always involved and always inextricably interacting. The question which had primacy, the economic or the political, [...] is, to my mind, entirely meaningless since what matters is precisely the complex interaction between the spheres. [...] Moreover, most of these so-called 'political' factors, when analysed, are seen to be an inextricable mix of the political and economic which are ultimately rooted in economic reality²⁶

These assumptions are central to the present writer and to his intellectual posture.

2. “The Revenge of the Repressed”²⁷

«What is the use of social theory to historians, and what is the use of history to social theorists» Peter Burke asks in the introduction of *History and Social Theory*. Burke’s answer is: we are unlikely to understand either the past or the present without a combination of theory and history²⁸.

Already in the 1970s, Anthony Giddens answered the question in his highly influential *Central Problems in Social Theory*: «What history is, or should be, cannot be analyzed in separation from what the social sciences are or should be [...]. *There simply are no logical or even methodological distinctions between the social sciences and history*»²⁹.

What was at the origin of the nineteenth-century general debate on method that counterposed, in general, theorists and empiricists and which the Germans termed *Methodenstreit*³⁰? This harsh dispute between students and scholars embodied the intellectual-structural divide formed during the XIX century between what has been called «the Two Cultures»³¹. The growing scientific hierarchical divergence between nomothetic and idiographic disciplines and the consolidation of the Newtonian mode of knowledge production in XIX century stimulated what Burke calls «the return of the repressed»³². As far as the writer is concerned here, the issue is understood as the general, long-standing – but non totalizing³³ – scientific compression of history, theory and sociology, which has been constantly reproduced during the XX century through the structural fracture between synchrony and diachrony in the historical-social sciences.

On the basis of this division sociologists have been content to leave the succession of events in time to the historians, some of whom as their part of the bargain have been prepared to relinquish the

structural properties of social systems to the sociologists. But this kind of separation has no rational justification with the recovery of temporality as integral to social theory [and social theory as integral to history]; history and sociology become methodologically indistinguishable³⁴

Philip Abrams concurs with Giddens. Indeed, Abrams says, we need

a more radical recasting of problems, a deeper and subtler modification of styles of analysis, a more open and thorough-going recognition of the extent to which in some fundamental respects the two disciplines [history and sociology] are trying to do the same thing and are employing the same logic of explanation to do so. The argument rests on the claim that at the heart of both disciplines is a common project: a sustained diverse attempt to deal with what I [...] call the problematic of structuring [which not to keep] either the anti-theoretical fetishism of history-as-evidence [...] or the a-historical fetishism of theory-as-knowledge [...]³⁵.

Structuring is process of spatio-temporal construction which owns and displays a specific form of causation which is manifold, sequential and cumulative, Abrams says. Historians, sociologists and historical-social theorists alike, according to Abrams, are all engaged in demonstrating the meaningful *patterning* of historical-social reality³⁶. To do so they need to put at the center the «*continuous confrontation and interweaving of narrative and theoretical matter*», Abrams contends. «What is involved [especially in in works of long-range history and historical theory] is a breaking of the bounds of conventional distinctions between types of explanation» and their analytical movement towards processes and structural changes across history³⁷. What we will attempt to do herein is to show, through the continuous confrontation and interweaving of historical and theoretical matter, the structuring of Dutch space in its *longue durée*. It displayed a form of historical causation which was manifold, sequential and cumulative.

Burke, Giddens and Abrams sum up the essence of the framework that props up history and development of Historical Sociology, and especially Grand Historical Sociology – spatially comparative and/or embracing the *longue durée* alike³⁸. However, this essence shows limits and contradictions in relation with the established historical (and sociological) method and mode of analysis³⁹. Many students inveighed against it.

The most violent attack was launched in 1991 in *The British Journal of Sociology*, an article by John Goldthorpe⁴⁰. The scholar thinks that in «grand historical sociology the links, that are claimed, or supposed, between evidence and argument tend to be both *tenuous* and *arbitrary* to a quite unacceptable degree». According to Goldthorpe, this weakness stems precisely from the fact that historical sociologists based their analysis on secondary rather than primary sources. Hence, the sources are not relics but historians' interpretations of relics:

In effect, then, what grand historical sociologists seem to me to be generally doing is not developing an argument on the basis of evidence – in the manner of 'primary' historians or again of sociologists working on their 'own' research data – but rather, engaging in interpretation that is of, at least, a second-order kind: [...]. And in consequence, I would maintain, the connection between the claims they make about the past and relics that could conceivably serve as warrant for these claims is often [...] quite impossibly loose

Such a looseness involves, according to Goldthorpe, degrees of «arbitrariness» and «tendentiousness» which the historical-sociological method pushes forward by putting aside relics, primary sources, to develop encompassing theoretical frameworks. In view of this, Goldthorpe strongly endorses the necessity to retrieve and maintain a clear separation between the two disciplines since «the question must remain of how far [GHS] does possess a real basis in the relics of the past – or merely an illusory one in a

scattering of footnotes». Hence the scholar asserts, history and sociology are «different *intellectual* enterprise»⁴¹.

This conclusive assertion hamstrings the entire structure of critiques and evidences Goldthorpe puts forth. In fact, he does not develop a systematic definition of *structural and motivational* differences intrinsic to the investigation which would move historians, theorists or sociologists alike towards separate and diverging *intellectual* directions – thereby gainsaying Giddens, Burke or Abrams. He merely beats around the bush assigning utter centrality to an apocryphal utilization, an abuse or non-use of relics and data, that is, of primary sources whatsoever, which brings out *operative* idiosyncrasies not *structural-intellectual* divergences.

Giddens' observation, according to which there simply are no logical or even methodological distinctions between the social sciences and history, is not premised on a *necessary overlapping of research tools* – sources, typology, data and their uses, etc. – but, as in Abrams, on a convergence of analytical and scientific objectives which marshals methodologically the investigation towards a disciplinary synthesis. In this respect, such a perspective slips over that of what the late Fernand Braudel used to call “total history” – Burke aptly describes it: total history is «*not an account of the past including every detail, but one which emphasizes the connections between different fields of human endeavor*»⁴². Fernand Braudel is the greatest champion of grand historical sociology which is total history in its essence. Total history, Braudel says, «is not a pretension to write a complete history of the world. It is not such a puerile, funny and lunatic pretense. *It is simply yearning to face a problem by systematically overstepping limits*»⁴³.

In defense of Grand Historical Sociology, a brief but noteworthy contribution was published in 1994 in *The British Journal of Sociology* by Nicos Mouzelis⁴⁴. There is no doubt, Mouzelis says, that in grand schemes of history – such as in world-historical

comparative investigations and in the long-run historical analyses, or both – the scale and the scope in time and/or in space of the perspective constraints, frustrates or impedes the use of primary data, and «this is obviously a disadvantage»..

But given that we live in an imperfect world and that all methodologies and approaches to history entail advantages and disadvantages, it is absurd to see this disadvantage as a reason for rejecting [...] macro-historical comparisons [or investigations]. And it is equally absurd not to realize that there are a variety of ways of minimizing the risks of not using primary sources⁴⁵.

We can substantiate this claim by calling on two cases of distinguished scholarship: Charles Tilly and Perry Anderson. These are leading scholars in sociology, historical sociology, history and political science at world level. Both are integral to historical, sociological and political debate alike⁴⁶. If we take into consideration their most important works⁴⁷, we note scanty presence, if complete absence, of primary sources – Anderson and Tilly were professor of both history and sociology during their carriers. Both scholars disregarded the classic historical (sociological) methodology to understand human reality in favor of an encompassing, wide-ranging, long-run observation of history and world backed by the widest study of literature.

Charles Tilly developed a gripping analytic vision to investigate human development across history⁴⁸. Tilly says:

We should build concrete and historical analyses of the big structures and large processes that shape our era. The analyses should be concrete in having real time, place, and people as their referents and in testing the coherence of the postulated structures and processes against the experiences of real times, places, and people. They should be historical in limiting their scope to an era bounded by playing out of certain well-defined processes, and in recognizing from the outset that time matters – that when things happen within a sequence affects how they happen, that every structure or process constitutes a

series of choice points. Outcomes at given point in time constrain possible outcomes at later points in time⁴⁹

A great part of the present study is premised on this order of ideas – although the present writer is perfectly aware of the difficulties and contradictions such an analytic movement may bring with it. The present long-run observation of Dutch history endeavors to understand the big structures and the large processes that shape the Dutch era under examination by testing the coherence of the postulated structures and processes. They will be historical in limiting their scope to XIV-XVII centuries of Dutch History, bounded by playing out of certain well-defined processes – as instance, the capitalist transformation of human behavior and landscape – and in recognizing from the outset that time matters – that when things happen within a sequence affects how they happen. Outcomes at given point in time constrain possible outcomes at later points in time – Dutch late-medieval path dependency.

Tilly's scientific imagination offers a precise methodology which seizes his historical sociology, and in general, represents the major example of Grand historical-sociological method. Tilly calls it «encompassing comparisons» – the historian jests on it: «Lovers of risk should try encompassing comparisons»⁵⁰. Encompassing comparisons can produce alternative explanations that other analytic strategies seem not to be able to grasp⁵¹, since its analytic fluidity enables to pinpoint effects and properties of change of structures, processes and system in their mutual interplay. The larger the level of analysis, the greater the power and utility of such a strategy of inquiry⁵².

Tilly envisages four levels of investigation:

At world-historical level, we are attempting to fix the special properties of an era and to place it in the ebb and flow of human history. Schemes of human evolution, of the rise and fall of empires, and of

successive modes of production, operate at world-historical level. At world-systemic level we are trying to discern the essential connections and variations within the largest sets of strongly interdependent social structures. [...]. At the macro-historical level, we seek to account for particular big structures and large processes and to chart their alternate forms. At the micro-historical level, we trace the encounters of individuals and groups with those structures and processes, with hope of explaining how people actually experienced them⁵³

Tilly does not believe at any rate that the only historical patterns worthy of being investigated are the biggest ones. He believes in the thorough relevance of the past for the understanding of the present time and that in turn the present must be investigated through a long-run historical perspective: «while the argument is eminently historical, it brings us right up to the present»⁵⁴. By way of these four levels, according to Tilly, we can trace the boundaries of the historical-social inquiry: variations among networks, operations and operability of specific networks, variations between structures and processes within specific networks and the ensemble of experiences people go through within specific networks with common features. We will tap into the macro-historical level to seek to understand and explain the big structures and large (long) processes of Dutch history through variations or continuity among networks, through the operations and operability of specific networks, and through variations or continuity between structures and processes within specific networks.

Tilly ensconces himself in the macro-historical level: «they are the attainable “big structures, large processes, and huge comparisons” I actually have in mind. Their systematic study within specific world systems but not necessarily throughout an entire world system constitutes the historically grounded treatment of structures and processes I advocate as our surest path to knowledge»⁵⁵.

Perry Anderson is one of the most groundbreaking historians of the XX century. In a nutshell: he evened out the customary conceptual boundaries and methodological

edges that separate history from sociology and theory. In his double volume on the historical formation of modern Europe, *Passages from antiquity to feudalism* and *Lineages of the absolutist state*⁵⁶, he proceeds to nail down an «intermediate conceptual plane» of investigation which constitutes the bridge between factual evidences and explicit theoretical infrastructure, weaved within the historical dissertation itself by means of spatio-temporal comparisons. In so doing, Anderson gains a major hold on the perennial tension between «necessity and contingency» that inherently characterizes the study of human reality in space and time:

The premise of this work is that there is no plumb-line between necessity and contingency in historical explanation, dividing separate types of enquiry – 'long-run' versus 'short-run', or 'abstract' versus 'concrete' – from each other. There is merely that which is known – established by historical research – and that which is not known: the latter may be either the mechanisms of single events or the laws of motion of whole structures. Both are equally amenable, in principle, to adequate knowledge of their causality. (*In practice, the surviving historical evidence can often be so insufficient or contradictory that definite judgements are not feasible: but this is another question – of documentation, not intelligibility.*) One of the main purposes of the study undertaken here is thus to try to hold together in tension two orders of reflection which have often been unwarrantably divorced in Marxist writing, weakening its capacity for rational and controllable theory in the domain of history⁵⁷.

On these bases thus, we will try to make Dutch historical contingency our analytical necessity. To broaden our view of time in space helps in limiting the impact of such an ambiguity on the research: «In itself, the effort to describe or understand very broad historical structures or epochs needs no undue apology or justification: without it, specific and local research fall short of their own potential significance»⁵⁸. Anderson outlines and elaborates on the jigsaw and complex pattern of history as a path unfolded in the long run to point out and infer the uniqueness or distinctiveness of historical

developments. We will operate in the same fashion to understand the uniqueness of both origin and development of Dutch capitalism and power, as well as the construction of the Dutch hegemon⁵⁹.

For the present study, no another point can be pulled by Anderson's work, although many other challenges the British historian lends to the historical method and vision⁶⁰. Both Tilly and Anderson become the clearest example of influent scholarship which stretches the limits of knowledge and transcends the borders of method and tradition. Their scholarship and their immense scientific production, whose impact on the world academic territories is extraordinary, demonstrate how fallacious Goldthorpe's overly severe reservations on method and results can be. History, sociology and any other discipline pertaining to the historical-social sciences need «sociological imagination» as propellant towards different landscape of knowledge and modes to produce it. Charles Wright Mills depicted such a scientific imagination: it

in considerable part consists of the capacity to shift from one perspective to another, and in the process to build up an adequate view of a total society and of its components. It is this imagination, of course, that sets off the social scientist from the mere technician. [...]. Yet there is an unexpected quality about it, perhaps because its essence is the combination of ideas that no one expected were combinable, [making a] sense of the world, which the technician as such usually lacks. Perhaps he is too well trained, too precisely trained. Since one can be trained only in what is already known, training sometimes incapacitates one from learning new ways; it makes one rebel against what is bound to be at first loose and even sloppy⁶¹.

In keeping with this, the grand historical sociology calls for a «macro-sociological imagination», as Theda Skocpol terms it⁶², in order to unfold its analytical power in long-run investigations, and the use of secondary sources as possible research tools: «If a topic is too big for purely primary research – and if excellent studies by specialists are

already available in some profusion – secondary sources are appropriate as the basic source of evidence for a given study. Using them is not different from survey analysts reworking the results of previous surveys rather than asking all questions anew»⁶³.

At any rate, if secondary evidences seem shaky, Mouzelis then aptly points out, historical-social scientists have not to avert them but step into their shakiness to envisage and raise new questions which in turn lead to a more careful examination of both secondary and primary sources – «And it is precisely through such a dialectic process, in a context of relatively open communications between scholars (some working more with primary and others with secondary sources), that our knowledge about long-term historical transformations can advance»⁶⁴.

As Anderson points out also, the surviving historical evidences can often be so insufficient or contradictory that definite judgements are not feasible. Thereby, the intelligibility of the relics comes to be questioned, making documentations ambiguous and open to a wide range of interpretations – even figures and numbers can be construed in contradictory, if opposite, ways according to intellectual orientation, leanings and interests of those who read them. Goldthorpe «does not seem to realize» Mouzelis says, «that both 'relics' and the empirical data that a [scholar] generates are themselves interpretations of interpretations. *They are second-order interpretations referring to those of the first order that individuals generate when they act and interact*»⁶⁵. Mouzelis gets to the point by questioning Goldthorpe's scientific approach, and above all else, intellectual posture, and the tremendous constraints in and of knowledge which ensue from it:

Is Goldthorpe suggesting that one should give up not only the type of work [the grand historical sociologists are] doing, but also the attempts by historians to provide an account of how whole societies or groups of societies are changing in the *longue durèe*? And if we do this, what shall we put in their

place? Should we simply turn our backs on the type of problems that both grand historical sociology and 'synthesizing/grand' history generate? Should we indulge into the type of methodological perfectionism that fetishizes 'relics' and stresses their importance to such an extent that one is unable to examine the type of problems that macro-historical comparisons generate? Should we also ignore the obvious fact that macro-historical interpretations, however 'tenuous and arbitrary', do generate new hypotheses which often lead to new interpretations of relics or, even to the discovery of new relics?⁶⁶

The present study gives negative answers to the last three questions above mentioned. Hence, we will try to envisage different hypotheses, both in method and in visions, and different interpretations of both history and method. By using Abrams' words, this attempt «involves us in superimposing structure on history with a view to recovering the way history superimposes structure on us. It crystallises as a negotiation of concept and evidence in the concrete study of structuring»⁶⁷.

3. Dutch hegemony and world power

The world system we live in came into existence during the long sixteenth century. It is a world-system, a capitalist world-economy which is a capitalist world-ecology⁶⁸. The Dutch Republic came to dominate the capitalist world-system in the seventeenth century and slowly but steadily declined during the XVIII. The story of such a rise and decline has been recounted, explored and analyzed several times and in several fashions⁶⁹. We will evade such historical narratives across this study. By contrast, we will pull the general WSA historical-theoretical framework in which this rise occurred⁷⁰. That is, the reader must bear in mind that our analysis and explanation of the rise of the Dutch is installed within such *a cultural framework, general view of the world, and also mode of approaching human reality*⁷¹. However, differently from

world-systems analysts, we will not discuss the rise of the United Provinces at the commanding position of the seventeenth-century world-economy and their world-systemic operations, wars and interactions, but how the Dutch regime developed power to carry out that rise.

Here instead, it is important to touch upon in very brief the main explanations accounting for the rise of the Dutch at the commanding heights of the world-economy to introduce questions in order to contrast the historical perspectives already argued and the perspective to be argued herein. In general, the rise of an international context which links world capitalism with war and state formation was at any rate central to any scholar engaged in understanding Dutch power – and in general the modern world. There is unanimous consensus on the fact that the Dutch was the most efficient economy in the seventeenth century and that this, above all else, bestowed the greatest capability to wage war on the Dutch. Both, along with limits to competitors and their mutual rivalry, allowed for rise. What changes in this explanations is the timing of such a rise (and decline) and/or the foremost factor triggering power.

According to Wallerstein, the Dutch developed the greatest efficiency and coherence of their agro-industrial and financial complex in the brief period that goes from the end of the Thirty Years Wars, 1648, to 1670s. This was, according to the American scholar, the historical bout of Dutch Hegemony. After that point, England and France challenged, and surpassed in the first decades of the eighteenth century the Dutch⁷². Giovanni Arrighi instead put forth Dutch hegemony as part and parcel of a wider systemic cycle of accumulation of about 220 years ca. in which the Dutch led and drove the capitalist world-economy forward. It went from 1560 to 1780. Within the Dutch systemic cycle, their bout of hegemony unfolded from the end of the XVI century to c. 1740. In this long period of leadership in the world-economy, the Dutch were the leading agents with the leading agencies (i.e.: VOC) running the systemic processes of

capital accumulation. The foremost trigger of Dutch hegemony was an ongoing dominance on the systemic networks of commercial accumulation – systemic transactions, carrying trade, banking. Especially the VOC, according to Arrighi, was the agency which enabled the Dutch to maintain their hegemony for long time. Only when systemic conditions changes, pressures escalated, and the power of the VOC, and as a consequence the strategy and priority of Dutch capital set about changing, the power of the Dutch Republic began to wane⁷³. Some of the most eminent historians such as Ruggiero Romano, Bernard Slicher van Bath, Violet Barbour, Fernand Braudel, and Jonathan Israel would shore up the general historical instantiations of both⁷⁴.

Notably Arrighi's historical periodization draws heavily on Jonathan Israel who posited his own framework of rise and fall of Dutch power in *Dutch Primacy in World Trade*. In this important volume, Israel challenges, above all else, Braudel's dictum of a «rise-and-fall rhythm linked to the ups and downs of the Baltic grain trade» and maintains that the Dutch hegemony in the world economy was historically patterned after seven phases that goes from phase one 1590-1609, the inception of Dutch world expansion, and ends with phase seven 1713-1740 which starts off the relative decline of the Dutch. According to Israel, the decline was due to the disintegration of the world trading organization put into place by the Dutch owing to the new mercantilist politics and the accrual of capital and war-making capability of England and France above anyone else. The prime mover of Dutch hegemony is thus commerce, buttressed and bolstered by the high-value trade in Europe and Asia⁷⁵.

Israel's book brought about great commotion among Dutch historians whose harsh critiques involved specific aspects of Israel's historical findings and narratives. In particular, Israel gainsays the classic thesis argued by Dutch historiography pertaining to the climax of Dutch economic hegemony and commercial expansion in the world trading system during 1621-1647⁷⁶. Central, in Israel's book, is the impact of political-

military factors and events on economic trends and power. Economic historians like Jan Luiten van Zanden, or Leo Noordegraaf, rebuff this interpretation especially in relation to phase III 1621-1647. Van Zanden bashed both Israel's phasing and the underlying interpretation of the *convoeien en licenten* (customs)⁷⁷. In phase III, the British historian put at the center the importance of the Spanish Embargo against the Dutch whose commercial-industrial accumulation thereby came to be greatly constrained and impaired. Van Zanden, backing his assertion with statistical data on economic trends, rejects strongly the embargo's effectiveness and the consequent constraints to the Dutch trading system. Van Zanden uses the *convoeien en licenten* for the period 1621/1647 to argue that customs rose by 52% for the Amsterdam admiralty college, 64% for that of Rotterdam, and 90% for that of Zeeland. On the other hand, van Zanden views industrial production growing during 1621-1647, reaching the peak during the 1630s.

Van Zanden's contention does not stand up for one moment – Israel asserts. Every year from 1635 to 1647 Leiden's *laken* output was below, usually far below, 16,000 pieces annually; from 1647 until 1672, *laken* output exceeded 16,000 pieces in every single year. His contention is even more palpably wrong in the case of camlets. Camlet output at Leiden was of little significance before 1647, climbed to around 30,000 pieces yearly by the late 1650s and then climbed to its zenith, 50,000 pieces yearly which was consistently sustained in the years 1667-1671¹². If Van Zanden looks again at the total value of Leiden's textile production in the middle decades of the seventeenth century, he will see that it did not fall after 1654 but continued to rise. Far from the years before 1647 being part of the high-point of Leiden's performance as a textile producer, Leiden only began to assume her classic role at the end of the 1640s.⁷⁸

The debate on the economic power of the Dutch Republic stands out as pivotal to understand the history of Dutch hegemony *in* the world-economy, but, as it has always been, interpretations and figures diverge highly⁷⁹. It is question of method, but also of views of world and knowledge⁸⁰. However, it is peacefully accepted the economic

power of the Dutch in the XVII century. Timing and trends do not scratch Dutch world economic primacy.

A different story concerns the Dutch state. Within the historical rise of European states and world capitalism, the Dutch Republic has been viewed as an anomaly. Recent scholarship re-evaluates such a judgment. The power of the Republic now is also linked to the typology of state, to the structures and institutions of the Dutch state, and to the state ability to manage warfare processes, wage war and profit from it. To say that economic primacy and wealth accretion stemmed from composition, quality and structure of the Dutch state.

During the 1970s, impelled by Gabriel Almond, a political scientist and leading member of the influential Committee on Comparative Politics of the Social Science Research Council, Charles Tilly put into place a research group and program to understand the political development of national states in Europe⁸¹. What he called «process of state formation» was to become one of the most fruitful general strands of study in twentieth-century scholarship⁸². It can be summed up through the well-known Tilly's maxim «war makes states, and states make war»⁸³. The seminal book that ensued from this early research explored and expanded in time and space the historical link between state, capital and war⁸⁴. *Coercion, Capital and European States* gave rise to an even larger spate of studies, which also involved directly Dutch scholarship. The tremendous heuristic value of Tilly's reflections was thereby tapped to understand and explain analytically also Dutch power⁸⁵.

Coercion and capital probes how different trajectories of state formation were influenced or driven by the ongoing state of European warfare and competition, and how state formation impacted on the mode of warfare and competition in turn. According to Tilly, the ongoing process of change and adaptation which ensued took the entire high middle ages to modern times and paralleled what he calls «the master

process of modernity», that is, the formation of an interstate system in Europe with a network of capitalist accumulation on a world scale centered in north-west Europe⁸⁶. Both forced states to adapt and learn to profit from the struggle for power and stability in Europe⁸⁷. «Through the interplay of competition, technological change, and the sheer scale of the largest belligerent states, war and the creation of coercive means became immensely more expensive over time. As that happened, fewer and fewer rulers could create military means from their own routine resources». This made for capital and coercion concentration in specific loci of accumulating power within some state jurisdictions, that is capital and coercion became, more than ever, spatially uneven. What Tilly calls patrimonial states, that is, state structures which enabled rulers to extract and appropriate value to wage war in the form of tribute and rent from society, did not withstand the impact of the increasingly violent warfare and its larger scale. Around 1400, all-out violence started off the process of structural change and accretion whence eventually surfaced the early-modern «brokerage» state organization, 1400-1700 – after 1700 the constant process of adaptation to historical movement and change brought about another major re-structuring, what Tilly calls the «nationalization» of society, here however not pertinent⁸⁸.

At each stage «*more than one combination* of capital and coercion appeared» and this led in fact to different developments and combinations of developments. Factors such as markets, cities and intercity competition, industrial, financial and commercial powers, bureaucracies, socio-cultural institutions, local framework of potency and early centralizing state structures and interests were always present but unevenly reshuffled and recasted according to historical conditions in space⁸⁹. The outcome was power *unevenness*, *uneven* concentration of power and *qualitatively* differentiated concentration of power. Tilly singles out three *general* modes of «reshaping of relations

between ruler and ruled [which] produced new, contrasting forms of government, each more or less adapted to its social setting»:

- In the coercion-intensive mode, rulers squeezed the means of war from their own populations and others they conquered, building massive structures of extraction in the process. Brandenburg and Russia were the case.

- In the capital-intensive mode, rulers relied on compacts with capitalists whose interests they served with care - to rent or purchase military force, and thereby warred without building vast permanent state structures. The Dutch Republic, according to Tilly, slips over such a mode.

- In the intermediate capitalized coercion mode, rulers did some of each, but spent more of their effort than did their capital-intensive neighbors on incorporating capitalists and sources of capital directly into the structures of their states. Holders of capital and coercion interacted on terms of relative equality. According to Tilly, France and England⁹⁰.

The formation of national states, premised on a differentiated combination of capital and coercion which adapted to their social setting, allowed for the rise of an interstate system of relations in early-modern Europe (1400-1700) working on a shifting balance of power between states that were qualitatively different but similar in the capacity to move war and to vie for dominance. On these bases, European inter-state military and economic war became the universal plane over which the forces of historical change raged. The «Military revolution» of the sixteenth-seventeenth century was an outcome of the historical contingencies and necessity that this two-pronged but single process of historical formation in Europe – states and system – brought with it. Military science, scientific management and organization of troops and drills, gun-

powder, the utilization of *trace italienne* for siege constituted the nub of the army reforms of the XVI and XVII century⁹¹.

At the same time, the state was to be restructured to manage the new wars and armies. Larger-scale conflicts demanded ever-larger capital accumulation: the organization of military power thereby was to incorporate processes of commercialization and monetization of warfare operations and the expansion of the market logic to them. States needed money and needed a more efficient management thereof. Philip II became bitterly aware of this fact in the course of the war against the Republic. What has been called «fiscal-military state» was substantiated by an intraspate of state reorganization in the course of the second historical phase of state formation singled out by Tilly which entailed the creation of new fiscal institutions and strategy to extract increasing quantity of value and resources. The new level of extraction all-out war required implicated thus a reorganization of the relations between state, public agents and private actors, and a different entanglement between state bureaucracy, markets, financiers and the commercial-industrial combines. This movement of restructuring of relations in time gave primacy to the cash nexus and the monetary factor within both state structures and institutional frameworks⁹². In this way, the state became also a «contractor»: «the pressing need for military supplies [...] spurred, shaped, and constrained an emergent military-entrepreneur market and how state and contractors influenced each other's development and *ipso facto* the nation as a whole»⁹³. Networks of contacts and market/monetary relations began to expand as a consequence within the state. Rulers began to check these networks more strictly in order to tap into the economic opportunity their territories offered, and to redeploy more efficiently value and resources throughout the state organization of army and society⁹⁴. This process occurred for the most important European states during the last part of the XVII and especially in the XVIII century – England, Spain, Germany and France. The

entire twentieth-century scholarship until the last decades viewed these countries model of modern state, concerning both the historical path of formation and the historical composition of structures, institutions and networks. However, they were not trailblazers in any of these revolutions.

In fact, the Dutch came at the forefront at the end of the XVI century in both organization of warfare and capital through their particular articulation of capital and coercion within a unique state, which was an early and unique fusion of the referred-to features. In these respects, Dutch and non-Dutch scholarship now posits Dutch hegemony as a combined outcome of state structure and state institutions, state organization and state commercialization of warfare, state protection of trade and state finance and fiscality. Recent researches single out the state as an early determinant of Dutch power across the XVII-XVIII century⁹⁵. Correct, but to the present perspective, partial.

Few pieces of the most recent scholarship tends to credit what the present study will attempt to argue⁹⁶: seventeenth-century Dutch power originated from a historical structure of patterned relations and power dating back to the late middle ages. Such a structure of accumulation then *expanded* in the XVI century *by means of* the construction of a capital-intensive state which as such emanated from and slipped over Dutch “traditional” society and economy through which a marketized organization of military power and a capital-oriented welfare organization was put into operation. It is believed that a long-run perspective allows to appreciate the Dutch unique fusion and historical spatial articulation. Regardless, this begs a question.

If the Dutch state, unique in its historical composition and operative structures and institutions, is stepping into the limelight as main factor of Dutch power, we should dismantle the twentieth-century articles of faith which views the experiences of France and England as *main* paths of modern development. The roots of this stance stems from

the 1950-1960s developmental studies; the teleological reading of Tilly's works then greatly expanded their academic imprinting through spates of publications. In fact, Tilly's research group did not find a general model of modern development or general sequences of political development patterned after western Europe. This was a teleological translation of Tilly's research in the 1970s inherent in the original Almond's quest to seek out strong historical evidences to bolster the post-war studies which posed at the center the historical experiences of France, England or Germany, and thus western history. Teleology aimed at propelling Western influence throughout the academic world and hence in world politics. Tilly's early book on state formation in the 1970s – as well as the following one – in fact gainsaid and disappointed these ideas and hopes. Indeed it opened up manifold questions on the same trajectory and stages of development it was supposed to endorse⁹⁷. It does not find solutions. Hence *Coercion and Capital* tells us that there was no single solution to the conundrum of historical power, European dominance and world hegemony, but that many paths were opened and overlapped, and many different ones could be, and sometimes were undertaken: Europe's chaotic unbridled development was integral to western dominance. Power was the outcome of ability and prowess of human beings to adapt to history and harness its potential through practical, although flawed, solutions. This was true in the XVI century and in the XIV as it is in XXI.

The most recent historiography on Dutch state and power purports to endorse Tilly's *real* intentions. The work of the Dutch historian Pepijn Brandon does exactly this. As for the present perspective, in Brandon's painstaking historical-archival research, the state assumes a different function and form. It becomes *vector for* expanding power, not *factor of* Dutch power. The real factor of Dutch power was social relations according to Brandon. *They* allowed the historical construction of the Dutch state as it was, and *through* the Dutch state the same historical-social relations could be

stretched furthest within Dutch space and over world space. Premised on a correct understanding of Tilly's findings, Brandon posits a perspective that put at the center social relations through the study of what he calls Dutch «federal-brokerage» solution to the problems the Dutch were faced with in the factual construction of their state in the XVI century⁹⁸. The federal-brokerage character of the Dutch state mirrored the historical process of bargaining which had characterized Dutch society in the long-run, that is, it slipped over both the deep-seated historical nature and organization of Dutch society. Such a social-historical coherence between state and society was a crucial part of Dutch hegemony – at the same time, Dutch decline in the eighteenth century was part of their relational detachment. In very short: *society's complexion* – no matter the state! – endured, *in its own essence*, mostly unchanged throughout the XVIII century and this resilience begot decline. The world rotated and went forward; Dutch capital, flexible as always, went forward, flew away and adapted to the new conditions⁹⁹. Dutch society lagged behind however, nailed down to its own historical ground, dragging with it, in the political-social conflict that emanated from such a stasis, the state and its power. *In the end Capital, state and society disembedded themselves from each other* and this slow process during the XVIII century exasperated Dutch power.

Regardless, the Dutch state became a device to propel social relations, and the underlying logic which gave lively colors and formal body to those social relations, and thus to state power. For Brandon, similarly the present writer, the Dutch logic and power were those of capitalism that as a consequence determined and defined rulers' behavior and contributed to shape the state structure. But as Brandon suggests in passing, Dutch social relations had their origin in a different point in time. Brandon's perspective is embraced here, stretched back in time and then re-projected forward up to connect what the present writer argues to be the true origin of Dutch power in the XIV century to the formation of the Dutch state and its organization *within society through*

capital in XVI-XVII century. The Dutch world expansion and European hegemony of the XVII century, it is argued throughout this study, was the result of a very long-run process of interlocking embeddedness between capital, society and state which in the end spawned the hegemon, whence, indeed, hegemony and world power fed off.

4. A brief history of the Low Countries, XIV-XVII centuries

To contextualize and introduce the analysis that follows, it is pertinent and useful to give a brief overview of the history of the Low Countries in the XIV-XVII centuries – the span of time under examination – with a relative focus on Holland and Zeeland¹⁰⁰.

By the end of the thirteenth century, agricultural expansion had transformed the ecological landscape by putting under cultivation a quantity of land never seen before. There was less woodland than at any time before the nineteenth century. To check the movement of deforestation that the need for timber and firewood had brought, lords, abbeys and village communities abandoned marginal lands wherein yield was getting scanty. The landscape was also transforming owing to flooding, and to sand drifts: on the Flemish coast alone over 1000 hectares of agricultural land disappeared beneath the dunes. Territorial transformation and soil deterioration begot malnutrition, occasional famines and epidemics. In 1302 as a result, the peasants of Flanders revolted. From 1323 to 1328 peasant struggles wiped out maritime Flanders. The Black Death reached Flanders in 1349 and the rest of the Low Countries in 1350 but mortality was far lesser than in the other countries. There were nine serious floods in the course of the century, three in the years 1373-1376 that hit strongly Holland and Zeeland. On 19 November 1421, flood submerged 34 parishes in the vicinity of Dordrecht. Flooding, famine and disease, with war and economic downswing, characterized the fourteenth-century Low Countries¹⁰¹.

During the XIII-XIV centuries, towns were caught in the crossfire of craft guilds and patricians who struggled for power. In Flanders such a struggle was a success for the economic powers and the guilds compelled the patricians to share, or even surrender, civic power – in 1312 in Liège the patricians’ claim to power turned into a coup d’état in which the Butchers Hall was set on fire. The coup failed and the conspirators ran away in the tower of the church of St Martin which the artisans set fire to in turn. Patrician power “died out” in Liege. In Brabant artisans obtained similar results and gained power as early as 1303. In Utrecht the artisans seized power in 1304. This historical movement of artisan empowerment swept across the entire territory of the Low Countries with diverse moments and degrees of success. By virtue of the artisans’ ascent to power, city laws and civic militias were used then to propel the sphere of interests concerning capital holders, and in Flanders, notably to master craftsmen and their families. This gave rise to a polarization of economic-political power whose core was continuously riven by factional struggles – in Ghent in 1345, for instance, fighting broke out between weavers and fullers. Notably in Holland, trade expansion in the late 1300s gave rise to deep rivalries between towns, but once capital holders took a firm hold on government, civic militias battled to put down competition: the internal power struggle in Holland was checked by the institutionalization of the Hooks and Cods factions which for a century or more regulated and normalized the conflict between the towns and noble families of the county.

The government became thus a business of the upper echelons of these groups whose governmental dynamics was phased by the alternation of patricians and craft guilds to power. Power polarization was accompanied by the formation of town bureaucracies and professional administrators which constituted a permanent layer of civil servants that gave continuity to the administration – differently from the referred-to rulers whose fate was decided by elections. One of the most famous was Jan van

Boendale, clerk to the aldermen of Antwerp who was writer and historian. Clerks supported the secretary who had important tasks such as drafting edicts, keeping records and managing the official correspondence; finally, the pensionary or *syndic*, who were a lawyer, had the assignment to advise the magistrates and represent the town.

This economic-like governance had the result of expanding the economy of the Low Countries, especially Flanders – notably in Bruges and its fair¹⁰² – and Holland with Zeeland. Brewing and Fishing – hopped beer and salt herring – were the stronger suits of what became an internationally-oriented economy. The Dutch advanced in brewing in the early fourteenth century, when hopped beer replaced spiced ale. By 1340 the Dutch were exporting beer and after 1396 they were the leading merchants and producers in the international market – such a dominance lasted until the seventeenth century, when brandy and gin began to displace beer. Already in the late thirteenth century, Dutch fishermen adopted and perfected a Swedish technique for salting herrings. They shipped their products across Europe by way of the development of special boat, the *buis*. This allowed for an unprecedented market expansion which brought the Dutch to the shores of north and south Europe.¹⁰³

All the while, the counts and dukes of the Low Countries tied up their networks of international power by means of an intertwining of marriages, crown purchases and inheritances which spelt continual aggrandizement. Since the 1290s, this was the case especially with the English royal family. Edward III in 1328 married Philippa of Hainaut, a daughter of William of Avesnes, count of Holland, Zeeland and Hainaut. By contrast Edward never allied with the count of Flanders, Louis of Nevers. This occurrence had important consequences concerning international commerce for both Flanders and Holland for it tipped the scale of English wool trade against the Flemish cloth industry in favor of the textile industry of Holland. In the same year William married off another daughter, Margaret, to Louis of Bavaria, Holy Roman Emperor, and

his own brother-in-law, Philip of Valois, unexpectedly inherited the kingdom of France. In 1345 William IV of Holland and II of Hainaut died, opening up the succession to Holland, Zeeland and Hainaut. In the end these territories were ruled by the House of Bavaria from the 1350s to the 1430s.

This was a century of great importance for Holland and Zeeland, in which the intelligent rule of the Count paralleled and spurred on the growth of towns with their hinterland. The international policy of the Prince implied wars and prestige which was braced by a fiscal-financial strategy based on the support of a self-governing towns-countryside network and of nobility, both underpinned by a formal recognition of the so-called Privileges¹⁰⁴. These represented a true contract between rulers and subjects in which for the first time came to be implemented representative assemblies – the earliest of which however was the Council of XXII in Liège and the Council of Kortenberg in Brabant. During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries representative organisms took the form of actual parliamentary institutions, the so-called States or Estates. In Brabant indeed, the Duke was compelled to cooperate with the great abbeys, the nobility and the four cities Leuven, Brussels, Antwerp and s-Hertogenbosch, especially in fiscal matters; in Holland both cities and nobility instead gained great influence and power; in Utrecht and Liège, as well as in Luxembourg after 1378, cities and nobility shared power with clergy whereas In Hainaut, Namur and Guelders the nobility won the day

Since 1379, the aims of Urban VI in Rome and Clement VII in Avignon, the rebellion of Ghent and the English attack to Flanders in 1383 destabilized the power of the rulers. In 1384 Louis of Male died. His daughter Margaret succeeded, but power laid with her husband Philip of Burgundy. This House became in fact the most important force of rule in the history of the Low Countries since the Carolingians. In one form or another, the link between the Low Countries and the Burgundy was to last for 300 years. The power of the House of Burgundy was greatly expanded by Philip whose

strategy combined military supremacy and generous clemency. This represented the actual first step that allowed for the Burgundian power extension, thereby enabling the consolidation of the House's rule over most of the Low Countries. The historical reorganization that ensued from centuries of tug-of-war between rulers and subject literarily reshaped the balance of power, and the typology of such a balance, in Western Europe. In short: the rule of the dukes of Burgundy implied a movement of territorial agglutination and a process of power unification and absolutist expansion throughout the fifteenth – then carried on with the Hapsburg in the sixteenth century – whose apex by contrast ended to tear the Low Countries asunder with a historical-structural and relational fracture between historical rulers and historical subjects.

After a web of marriages across decades, Philip's elder son, John the Fearless (1404-1419) inherited Burgundy and Flanders; then Philip the Good (1419-1467) turned the kingdom into a European power. This turn paralleled the acquisition in 1433 of Holland, Zeeland and Hainaut – forerun by a dynastic struggle for the inheritance of the Low Countries branch of the House of Bavaria, rulers of Holland and Zeeland, whose last independent *ruwaard* was Jacqueline of Bavaria. This political move brought about financial-economic consequences of great relevance for the economic infrastructure of the Low Countries: in 1434 the first common currency was minted, the *vierlander*, which was to be of the same size, weight and value in Flanders, Brabant-Limburg, Holland-Zeeland and Hainaut.

The financial restructuring started off in 1386 with Philip the Bold who began to consolidate the administration of Burgundy's finance. This process kept going through the politics of dynastic expansion that aimed to unify the numerous counties and duchies into a loosely federalized state (1464). This was indeed the year of the very first meeting of what was to be called the Estates General: that committee gathered representatives of the Estates of Brabant, Flanders, Walloon Flanders, Artois, Hainaut,

Valenciennes, Holland, Zeeland, Namur, Mechelen and the Bourbonnais to Bruges for a joint consultation. Such meetings became increasingly frequent, and were held almost annually from 1477 to 1576.

Charles the Bold (1467-1477), Philip's son, inherited Burgundy, Flanders, Artois, Namur, Brabant, Limburg, Holland, Zeeland, Hainaut and Luxembourg at the father's death. Charles, a ruthless ruler and warmonger, launched an ambitious program of territorial expansion – he took Sundgau and Breisgau in 1469, Guelders in 1473, Lorraine and Bar in 1475 – and power consolidation – in December 1473 the Edict of Thionville created four central institutions: the Parlement (supreme law court) at Mechelen, the Chamber of Accounts, the Chamber of the Treasury and the Chamber of Subsidies. The centralization and rationalization of the financial administration of the state was the obverse side of Charles's endless pursuit of power through war that demanded an incessant stream of resources to be carried on.

And this pursuit eventually slew him in 1477. His death allowed several towns to rebel in order to garner power against the central institutions and organisms. The potent thrust of revolt from towns and countryside brought Mary of Burgundy, Charles's successor, to abolish the centralizing institutions and to invigorate the old privileges: states and estates won the right of gathering on their own initiative and the power of veto related to war. The towns obtained amplest privilege as well. It was the *Groot Privilege*. Mary obtained formal recognition thereon but at the cost of weakening the central power against both internal contenders and external enemies – the duke of Guelders, the city of Liège and the king of France. Mary died in 1482, leaving Maximilian as regent to ferry the boat in an interregna of ten years until their son Philip, born in 1478, came of age in 1493 (1493-1506). Philip managed to put into place a new program of centralizing policies, at the same time giving up the historical warlike complexion of the Burgundian Politics in favor of a retrieved peaceful strategy of inter-

marriages. The retrieved policy had great results. In 1496 he married Joanna of Castile, heiress to the Spanish kingdoms of Castile and Aragon. Dynastic overturning led Maximilian's grandson, Charles (1500), to power. Charles' era (1515-1559) was to be one of most splendid ages in the history of the Low Countries in which the arts and, above all else, science flourished: Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam, Rudolph Agricola (grammarians), Andreas Vesalius, one of the most remarkable figures of Renaissance science, along with Rembert Dodoens, a great physician; great cartographers such as Gerald Mercator and Abraham Ortelius, all lived under Charles and embodied the bright lights of Renaissance.

Since 1515, Charles V ruled the largest world empire in history, becoming one of the most successful protagonists of the entire human history. He was the heir of Burgundy and Habsburg; by his mother, Joanna, he inherited the Spanish kingdoms of Castile and Aragon, and their imperial appendages in the Americas and in southern Italy. About Low Countries, Charles wiped out any would-be competitors to power thereby completing the Burgundian conquests. In 1515 he had the lordship of Friesland and in 1524 that of Frisian; in 1528 he won the resistance of the bishop of Utrecht and in the end, after duke of Guelders's death, Charles of Egmond, in 1538, he garnered the rule of the lands of Utrecht. Only the prince-bishopric of Liège escaped from his grip. After bitter religious struggles against the reformation, he, in 1550, managed to impose a unified heresy law on the whole territory of the Low Countries. Before retiring in the end, in 1555, he obtained to bequeath his entire empire – comprised of the Netherlands, formerly recognized as independent jurisdiction in 1549 – to a single heir. The Pragmatic Sanction of 1549 ensured the continuity of his power and unity thereof. His heir, Philip, indeed was to rule the most powerful composite agglomerate of territories, powers and resources in history.

However, in this age, something less resounding than artistic masterpieces, scientific knowledge and the Emperor's winning bid for universal power transformed the world. It stepped silently into the «hidden abode» of history since the sixteenth century in Europe, and through Europe throughout the space of the world. It was something more opaque but by a great deal “formative”. It was the universal bid for world capitalism¹⁰⁵. As far as it is concerned here, on the one hand, Holland's towns steamrolled the European competition in northern commerce and production and became *active* centers of exchange, production and capital accumulation; Antwerp, on the other side, gained the upper hand against Bruges which relinquished the crown of center of capital and commercial *gathering* in Europe at the end of the fifteenth century. Both performed a different but crucial role in propelling the European structural transformation¹⁰⁶. Postponing Holland's role to chapter 3, from 1501 Antwerp became the northern staple for the colonial goods of Portugal simply because it managed the largest quantity of bullion – emanating from the mines of central Europe – that was required to propel Asian trade, especially spices. Antwerp was also an important market of exchange for wines from France and the Rhineland, nonprecious metals from the German mountains, sugar after 1508, grain and timber from the Baltic, Spanish leather, and soon Spanish colonial goods. Since 1520s, Antwerp was also a major centre of international finance which gathered merchants and financiers who traded in credit, loans and maritime insurance. It was also an industrial center especially for cloth-dyeing, fish-curing, soap-making and sugar refining and for printing.

The development of printing industry made the religious texts and literature available for anyone. The expansion of this market was cause and consequence of an expanding demand of books, which was related to the religious transformations of that time, and despite the anti-heresy law. This law, as well as the restructuring of the Bishoprics in 1559 allowed an intensification against the reformed people, utterly

violating the historical civic privileges that the Dutch had garnered and jealously maintained. Malaise swept over society which was also hit hard by the already commenced economic decline of the Southern Netherlands. The decline of wealth provided the material thrust to rise up against the thrust of inner disciplining of the Catholic church¹⁰⁷. A retaliation was in sight.

In April 1566 a petition was presented by a group of lesser noblemen to the regent Margaret of Parma. The main request was the abolition of the heresy laws. The Beggars, as they were called, encountered however the support of the most important nobles. One of them, the count of Egmont, moved to Madrid to win Philip II's resistance, but to no avail. The heresy laws were further reinforced. In August 1566, the Iconoclastic Fury was the natural upshot of the blind politics of the Spanish rulers. The King's rejoinder was blinder than ever: Alva. Alva's arrival marked a crucial moment in the history of the Low Countries since the violence of his operations was geared, not only to wipe out those responsible for the major assault on royal authority – the Council of Troubles, or Council of Blood, sentenced thousands of people to death: it was in essence a *Massacre of the Innocents* – but above all else, to tear down the constitutional framework shielding the Dutch since the middle ages. This was an unbearable provocation for the Dutch.

The Revolt thus took off in 1568 when William Orange, Dutch *Pater Patriae*, invaded the Netherlands from Germany. The rebels' first victory on 23 May at Heiligerlee in Friesland was only a false dawn. Alva turned the situation and set about towering through unprecedented terror and coercion. Religious repression now coupled with economic oppression: the new fiscal policy was inordinate and unconstitutional at once. New taxes – the most infamous 10 per cent sale tax, the so called "Tenth Penny" – were planned, imposed and made permanent without the Estates' consent. In the end,

the intolerable fiscal pressure alienated any support for the royal cause. The revolt entered in its most acute phase¹⁰⁸.

In 1579, an important step followed. The provincial States of Holland and Zeeland joined with Utrecht, Friesland, Gelderland and Groningen in the Union of Utrecht. To this first union of forces also joined some towns in Flanders and Brabant which came under Calvinist control in those years, including Antwerp, Brussels and Ghent. The Union covenant became thereby the true constitution of the fledgling Seven United Provinces. They were indeed wobbly. After the perilous descent of the great Parma who exposed their weakness, throughout the 1580s and especially after the abjuration of 1581 of the Estates General – the act of Philip’s deposition –, the Dutch – Holland and Zeeland first – requested for protection and rule of would-be “suzerains” – the duke of Anjou and Leicester on behalf of the Queen of England – but, in fact, the Dutch demand never encountered the foreigner supply¹⁰⁹. In so doing, the monarchical bid for power withered away, and sovereignty came to be embedded into the very fabric of the historical process of coagulation of the Provinces and formation of the Dutch state. Formal sovereignty lay in the Hague, the decisional center wherein the Estates based. Orange was elected Stadholder of Holland and Zeeland, and captain-general of the Union – the stadholder was now not the lord lieutenant of the king, but executive officer of the sovereign States. Political and financial power was in the hands of the States, made up of representatives of the nobility and the towns. The Regents (urban capital) *maintained substantive sovereignty*. This patrician oligarchy indeed was to rule the Republic, as the United Provinces were called, with or without a Stadholder, for the next 200 years.

Contrary to the North which continued the trajectory of development that had started centuries before, centered on towns and countryside as sparring partners¹¹⁰, in the Habsburg Netherlands a new noble layer arose while the traditional one came to be

displaced from the governing councils: the historical layer of bourgeois which bought the status and shifted its interests and activities.

The arrival of the archduke Albert of Austria paralleled a Dutch invasion of Flanders. After an initial involvement of the Archduke Albert in person, in 1603 command was handed over to Ambrogio Spinola. Spinola was a Genoese nobleman from a banking family who was determined to use his wealth to seek military glory – in pure medieval style. He remained the foremost military commander in the Low Countries until 1627. By 1605 the war was depleting the forces of states and armies. The States General were in financial dire straits. No allies now supported the Dutch publically for the same reason. France had made peace with Spain in 1598 and England in 1604, although volunteers from France, Scotland and England continued to fight in the Netherlands. Spanish royal treasury was even more exhausted. In 1607 a truce came in sight but with specific conditions: the Dutch demanded formal independence; on the other side, the Spaniards demanded a colonial empire free from the Dutch and freedom of Catholic worship in the Republic. In 1609, in Antwerp, a Twelve Years Truce, then ratified at The Hague few months later. But it honored the Dutch resistance not the Spanish power.

Thanks to English and French interposition at the negotiations, seven Provinces united by war forced a world emperor to recognize their sovereignty; they compelled a world emperor to tolerate Dutch world trade in the Spanish overseas possessions; at the same time the Provinces presented themselves to Europe as a protestant country, and the freedom of catholic worship was denied – this stance in fact was reinforced in 1618-1619 with the National Synod of Dordrecht. Furthermore, the wartime politics concerning the Scheldt lasted unchanged: the States of Zeeland declared the closure of the inter-regional commerce from Antwerp. This was a hard blow to Antwerp and the South Netherlands from which they never recovered to the full. It also demonstrated the

political power and determined self-interest of the merchants of Holland and Zeeland, already making the Dutch Republic the leading commercial power in Europe¹¹¹.

In the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century financial and commercial concentration in the North marked the emergence of new industries and financial-commercial operations – an instance of the former is Tin-glazed pottery: it had been made in Antwerp since before 1512. By 1670 there were 28 faïence factories in Delft alone, with more in Haarlem, Rotterdam, Gouda, Dordrecht and elsewhere. As we have already said, the medieval expansion completed in the sixteenth century enabled Holland and Zeeland the dominion of international shipping and fishing: the cod and herring fisheries supplemented with whaling in northern waters became unrivaled. At the same time, Dutch linen weavers and brewers were already exporting internationally: Leiden was the largest centre for handcrafting and manufacturing woolens in Europe, as Haarlem was for linen. They also developed new technologies such as the ribbon frame, an improved loom. Dutch cloth, especially worsteds and linens, became also an important bargaining chip for exotic products and slaves in the Americas and Africa. By the middle of the seventeenth century, Dutch cheese and butter dominated the related market in Europe.

Dutch dominance in shipping resolved into the command of a Dutch-made European trading network, from the Baltic to Western and Southern Europe and the Levant: the international grain trade was the lynchpin and the flat-bottomed *fluyt* its main carrying device. The Dutch were among the best fed populations in Europe¹¹².

After 1585 Amsterdam became its core and node of redistribution, world entrepot of colonial trade, financial center on which Kings and states relied, and a cosmopolite metropolis in which the bright lights of the arts shone along with the more opaque twinkling of money¹¹³. The Wisselbank (1609), the first central bank in history, established a new financial world order; the layer of industrialists and traders came to be

bankrolled by the Amsterdam Bank van *Lening* (loans bank) which provided the whole of individual credit integral to the world development of the Dutch economy. Banks and insurance were however a refinement of Antwerp's techniques – stemming from the Italians in turn. Now, at any rate, the financial organization of Dutch trade took a different shape, scale and scope through the foundation of long-term joint stock companies, that is, listed multinational corporations. Amsterdam became the propelling core of an expanding world system of capital valorization¹¹⁴.

In 1596 The Dutch arrived in Indonesia. In 1602 the very first multinational, *Vereenigde Oost Indische Compagnie*, VOC, set forth. The pursuit of power and capital the state company embodied made it master of the Moluccan spice trade. Jakarta, Batavia, in 1619 became Dutch wherein was established the administrative centre of the Asian trade. The Portuguese were driven out. Ceylon and Malacca were seized by Anthony van Diemen. By the end of the century the main Asian centers of exchange and production were Dutch, all under the direct or the indirect control of the VOC. Pepper, nutmegs, cloves and other spices were in the hands of the Dutch. In 1624 the VOC founded Fort Zeelandia on Formosa (Taiwan). In 1636 the VOC seized trading posts in Bengal, thereby the trade of silk and opium fell under the command of the VOC. Portuguese were completely expelled when in 1658 the Dutch captured the Sri Lankan coast. In Japan, the only European traders admitted were the Dutch. They gathered in the island of Deshima in Nagasaki. Japanese silver was the main business¹¹⁵.

In 1621 the second greatest multinational was launched: the WIC, the West India Company. Its operations headed westwards explicitly to contrast and dismantle the Spanish power in the Americas. The first settlement was New Amsterdam in 1624 on the Hudson river; then WIC seized Bahía on the Brazilian coast (before long lost) and during 1630s the Caribbean space became a Dutch network of trading and productive posts – Guyana (1625), Brazil (1630-1654), Surinam (1667) and Demerara (1667)

became commercial plantations. What had brought the Dutch was salt, but what kept them there was sugar. From 1663 to 1701, the Dutch commanded the network of Atlantic exchanges and transportation of slaves to the Spanish colonies, both to supply the commercial plantations with labor and to make money directly from the sale of slaves¹¹⁶.

World economic expansion bounced back home. The more visible side of the Golden Age was of course Dutch painting, architecture, arts, philosophy, literature that polished money; and meanwhile war started over.

The lapse of the truce started the other round of Dutch wars. From 1621 to 1648, the Dutch battled at home as well as abroad, since the Siege of Breda in 1624-25 and the battles the WIC was engaged in across the Atlantic and on the American ground. The Spanish strategy of commercial warfare proved unproductive if not counterproductive: Spanish silver was even captured off Cuba in 1628 by a WIC flotilla commanded by Piet Heyn. The loss of the silver in turn bred a deep crisis of credit in Antwerp by which the Spanish Army was financed: it was paralyzed as a result. Hence, In 1629 Frederick Henry, the *stedendwinger* (forcer of cities), began a series of conquests and dealt a hard blow to the Spaniards by re-capturing 's- Hertogenbosch. France entered war in 1635, in the moment of major crisis of Spain. This was a crucial step towards the Hapsburg's defeat which was in sight already in 1643-1644 – the international conference began at Münster in those years – but eventually sealed only in 1648¹¹⁷. Admittedly, peace was not a straightforward decision for the Dutch. Zealanders refused to sign, but the peace was a *fait accompli* which they would have to accept.

The First stadholderless period, 1650-1672, began. Frederick Henry died and in 1647 his 20-year-old son, William II, succeeded him as stadholder of five provinces and captain-admiral-general of the union. Constitutional problems concerning his power and position within a Republic in peace surfaced as well as Holland's obstreperousness

against him. At the stakes was money and finance: the costs of the army in peacetime had to be cut down. The States of Holland disavowed the stadholder, and by-passed the States General by calling a Great Assembly in The Hague, where cities and provinces were represented directly. The States of Holland made their intentions clear, so their financial-economic dominance forced the other provinces to ratify the decision. The stadholderless period from 1653-1672 saw the rise of the Pensionary of Holland Johan de Witt.

While the Anglo-Dutch rivalry peaked, the economic recovery in the Habsburg Netherlands pressured the North. Rural industrial expansion and agriculture upswing made the countryside the new lynchpin of the southern economy. Economic competition coupled with politico-military pressures. France's territorial aims since 1668 forced to constitute an international Triple Alliance consisting of the Netherlands, England and Sweden but French territorial expansion was relentless – Louis XIV also forged alliances with the bishops of Münster and Cologne, the eastern neighbors of the Republic. In the *Rampjaar* (Year of Disaster) 1672, the Third and victorious Anglo-Dutch conflict on the sea paralleled the disastrous French and German invasion of the Republic on land: the eastern provinces were overrun and Utrecht was occupied. This invasion called for new military powers.

William of Orange, aged 22, became stadholder – named William III – and admiral-general. Both appointments were ratified by the States of Holland and by the States General. The “prime minister” De Witt and his brother Cornelius were both lynched. The new stadholder began to win and retrieve Dutch space. He defended Holland, and lured Spain and Austria against France. He overran the lands of Cologne and took Bonn, cutting the logistic link between French and German, forcing the French withdrawal from the Netherlands. Peace with England was made in 1674. Utrecht in 1674, and in the following year, Gelderland and Overijssel, declared William

Stadholder whereas the States of Friesland maintained their separate stadholderate. The Stadholder's power was expanded like never before within the Republic. The next Anglo-Dutch engagement since 1688 topped off his power and an age of unprecedented accomplishments: the Dutch William became ruler of the United Provinces and of the British islands at once. From a space with no sovereignty to a space with inter-national sovereignty.

Chapter 1

Debates on the transition from feudalism to capitalism

The third chapter will show the patterned network of wealth, production and exchange, formed during the late middle ages, which constituted the *basic* matrix of value relations whence the Dutch hegemon fed off.

The second chapter will posit the Hegemon's perspective. Within the capitalist world-system, the historical uniqueness of a hegemon does not stem merely from its capability to develop the most efficient capitalist economy, and/or from the capacity to master the world economy or the world of international relations. It is to be argued that capitalism itself is not mere power of market and production. The hegemon's *overtness*, that is, hegemony, is the *historical* product of an *internal coherence of power* which distinguishes the hegemon. Hegemony will be thence the projection thereof throughout the system. We elaborate on these concepts in the next chapters.

To do so, we need to explore the theoretical-historical controversies pertaining to capitalism and capitalist development. The attempt to understand the Dutch hegemon

within the capitalist world-system calls for the exploration of the hallmarks of the historical-theoretical debate related to the transition from feudalism to capitalism; then, it will be showed briefly how scholars addressed the conundrum of Dutch capitalism and Dutch “transition” to introduce the lineages of the Dutch hegemon.

1.1 The general debate on the transition to capitalism

In the early academic fray concerning the transition in Europe, two general theoretical-historical stances pitted against each other, representing the kernel of the issue. From Dobb to Sweezy, up to Brenner, the question was: which was the «prime mover» to “capitalism”¹¹⁸? Was it a historical transformation in relations and forces of economic exchange in Europe or a historical change of relations and forces of production in some European states? Regardless of the vector of transition, both stances asserted that, at any rate, capitalist relations and forces rose once the fetters of feudalism were weeded out¹¹⁹. Only later, a third, seditious position, that put forward by Immanuel Wallerstein, became integral to the intellectual struggle.

The mind-bending relationship between the structures of daily life – the feudal “rules” – and the sphere of circulation came at the forefront¹²⁰. One of the most eminent Marxist observers seems to cast serious doubts on the fact that «the transition from the old order to the new [...] finds the dominant causal sequence within the sphere of exchange between manorial economy and the outside world». The very core of the question for Maurice Dobb lies «in the internal relationship of Feudalism as mode of production»¹²¹. His thesis is phased. In very short: petty production progressively grew eroding the foundations of feudal society from within. The growth of productivity broke down feudal obligations engendering the gradual system’s disintegration, that is, the dissolution of the manorial system and the collapse of the system of direct exploitation

of the seignorial demesne. Upon such a basic economic framework of analysis, a wider historical dynamic is grafted: demographic trends and migrations, systemic production inefficiency and a downswing of ruling class revenues compounded together drove the system to failure. According to the American student, the feudal system fundamentally lacked the overall momentum to expand itself¹²².

A crux remains: what the role of the factual «increasing percolation of money into the self-sufficiency of manorial economy»? According to the scholar, trade seems to be a vector of change, but insufficient to make a qualitative shift by itself. Nonetheless a contradiction stands out in his musings: the sphere of circulation is mere ancillary to the feudal system – «an alien body within the pores of feudal society» – and yet, in fact, Dobb says, it comes «*to sap* the strength of feudal economy», dragging it to demise¹²³. This is an inconsistency altogether reasonable which does not undermine the importance of Dobb's analysis. By contrast, it has the virtue of exposing a fundamental problem upon which the entire debate *implicitly* is to pivot: the conceptual and analytical issue concerning the unit of analysis taken into account to fathom the transition. That is, Dobb's inconsistency exposes the historical and conceptual issue of singling out the relational plane over which the forces of historical conflict and change rage. Reverting to the point in short: the lack of focus upon the unit of analysis muddies Dobb's argument¹²⁴.

Robert Brenner stepped into the academic fray and reinforced the Marxist-derived rationale. Heedless enough thereof, he simply got rid of the market percolation problem by cleansing the logic from its circulationist impurity, narrowing the analytic focus on lord-serf relation, rate of exploitation, class struggle and state's role in late medieval and early modern times – rather than on developments in forces of production in pure Marxist terms¹²⁵. For Brenner in short, transition was a conflict upon the structural *politics* of feudal economy¹²⁶. Whereas money percolation is not seriously taken into

consideration in his frame of musing, neo-Malthusian models get caught in his crossfire¹²⁷. Upon the blind spots of such a demographic history, Brenner's thesis avers that

the breakthrough from "traditional economy" to relatively self-sustaining economic development was predicated upon the emergence of a specific set of class or social-property relations in the countryside – that is, capitalist class relations. This outcome depended, in turn, upon the previous success of a two-sided process of class development and class conflict: on the one hand, the destruction of serfdom; on the other, the short-circuiting of the merging predominance of small peasant property¹²⁸.

How did such a historical watershed come about? In central-east Europe, according to Brenner, motionless economic forces inherent in the feudal system brought to the effacement of the privileges and liberties previously enjoyed by peasants, and to the wringing of their relation of power and extraction with the lord. In the stall of natural economy, lairds longed for far more revenues that were raked by squeezing the rent out of peasant communities, *too weak* to resist against the landowning class's thrust. «In sum, the contradictions between the development of peasant production and the relations of surplus extraction which defined the class relations of serfdom tended to lead to a crisis of peasant accumulation, of peasant productivity and ultimately of peasant subsistence», and, in the east, landowners overruled harshly¹²⁹. By contrast, the intensification of class conflict within the crisis of medieval economy brought about different upshots in the west for they turned out to be contingent to the balance of forces within the western class struggle and «certain *historically specific* patterns of the development»¹³⁰.

Considered that, in early modern France, peasant communities were strong and such a strength came to be bound up with «the particular *form* of evolution» taken by

the French state: the monarchy was to set up itself as an independent extractor of surplus, and to expand its own agency against the landowners' class by binding their rents and rights to the growth of monarchical taxation. «Thus in France strong peasant property and the absolutist state developed in mutual dependence upon one another. The state increased its own power by virtue of its ability to get between the landlords and the peasants, to ensure peasant freedom, hereditability and fixed rents, and thus to use peasant production, via non-parliamentary taxation, as the direct source of revenue for royal strength and autonomy»¹³¹. The outcome, according to Brenner, was not capitalism but

renewal of the old Malthusian cycle of underdevelopment [:] given the strength of peasant property, supported by the exploitative state, the landlord could not usually take advantage of increasing prices for land and agricultural products by improving and by increasing output, because this usually entailed the very difficult task of consolidation. The landlords therefore took the only course generally open to them: to try to obtain an ever greater share of a constant or even declining total product.¹³²

In England, the developmental path diverged greatly due to the different composition of structures of power and property relations. The diversion began after the Black Death, when lords, in the attempt to sharpen rents and payoffs, saw their power crumbled away by peasants' revolts and flight. The conflict brought English serfdom to an end in the course of the XV century. However, peasant unrests failed to gain independent access to land. Indeed, at the end of the XVII century, lords garnered control of 70-75 per cent of the land, a fact that, according to Brenner, constituted the condition to the development of capitalist class relations and the self-sustaining growth of economy in the long run. «The landlords were able to engross, consolidate and enclose, to create large farms and to lease them to capitalist tenants who could afford to make capital investments [the introduction of new technologies and a larger scale of

operation]». Such a scenario entailed exactly a shift in lord/peasant relationships unto capitalist forms of farming¹³³. The new form of farms, larger and more efficient, broke down the constraints of feudal economy in England. «It was indeed, in the last analysis, an agricultural revolution, based on the emergence of capitalist class relations in the countryside, which made it possible for England to become the first nation to experience industrialization»¹³⁴. If so, the English state advanced as a “partially-dependent” structure of value appropriation whereof the landowning class was the centre of the dynamic. Such a dependency thwarted the attempt of the English state to play the role the French one did in the struggle for freehold during the long sixteenth century¹³⁵.

Yet, both lines of argument blatantly shun delving into the problem of the historical role of money and market in Europe. Moreover, they dodge the undisputable fact that extensive trade aided in constructing, shaping and expanding market-based social relations and competition *within* and *among* jurisdictions. Both intra- and inter-state competition and market-driven agency petered into centrality for Europe’s world supremacy to be sure. With important variations, Sweezy and Wallerstein tackled the impasse inherent in the traditional Marxist interpretation – according to which only a change in relations of production and/or in organizing production was to make the transition to capitalism – by hauling in trade and market forces as part and parcel of the constitutive process of capitalism¹³⁶.

In his analysis, Paul Sweezy argues the resilience of feudalism to change¹³⁷. Counterintuitively, the feudal system proved resilient to collapse precisely owing to its own contradiction, thus the prime mover to dissolution had to stem from a surfeit of forces alien to feudality. Trade and feudalism were consistent with each other up to the extent that the former, engendering «production for the market», did not overrule the «production for use» inherent in the dynamics of feudalism¹³⁸. According to the

American economist, the expansion of towns and long-distance commerce set in motion a process by which centrifugal forces of market and money – notably the search for luxuries – pushed the system far from equilibrium¹³⁹. Such a thrust was essentially «external to the system»¹⁴⁰. The upshot of this disequilibrium was not to be capitalism, but a «pre-capitalist commodity production» in the transitional phase during the thorough demise of the feudal system. It eventually led to the reorganization of social space towards capitalist forms of production in the seventeenth-eighteenth century¹⁴¹. In particular, for Sweezy, capitalism and industrial capitalists did not originate from medieval merchants and petty producers but from a process which «starts out as both a merchant and an employer of wage-labour». Such a combination permitted to set up fully-fledged capitalist enterprises¹⁴²; all the while, commodity production was not to inevitably entrain “modern capitalism”, even if highly developed. At odds with Dobb, a concrete incentive to the dissipation of feudalism in western Europe was «the inability of the ruling class to maintain control over, and hence to exploit, society's labour power»¹⁴³.

Whereas Sweezy did not delve into the new phase of historical development to account for the actual dynamic of transition, his supposed heir was to focus almost exclusively on the very new phase of historical development instead.

Several are the general, prefatorily (and treasonous), contentions which Immanuel Wallerstein contends by way of his different mode of analyzing world social history, but only one here is strictly pertinent: the centrality of the systemic unit of analysis as a variant leading to the understanding of the foremost historical-social issue in his agenda, the modern world, the capitalist world-system¹⁴⁴. The terms of the question came to be entirely twisted thereby: «Discussion of the so-called transition from feudalism to capitalism is confused because three separate phenomena are compounded together: the initial and unique transformation of the feudal variant of a redistributive world-empire

into a capitalist world-economy, subsequent incorporations of outside arenas into this latter system, and the extension of the proletarianization of labor and the commercialization of land within the ongoing capitalist world-economy». Words, concepts and meanings changed outright, turning the classic debate into something different¹⁴⁵.

As far as the question of transition is concerned, under the rubric of «world-systems», Wallerstein attempts to understand feudalism and capitalism in Europe, not as separate, contrasting and subsequent forms of human organization merely based on different logics, rationalities and rules, but as one seamless geo-history. In short: according to Wallerstein, there was no “transition”, but «transformation»; there was no a “world transition” but an «incorporation» into the expanding European network of capitalist world accumulation; and, sequentially, there was no a “world social transition” but a destructive «extension» of, and forceful submission to, the logic of the ever-expanding capital. I set out to narrow the focus on the first issue¹⁴⁶.

Wallerstein argues that the modern world system is a capitalist world-economy. A world-economy is a particular variety of world-system. A world-system is a historical-social system which displays a specific logic of historical development and a specific historical nature. A world-system which is a world-economy is a historical-social system which is driven forward by its systemic economic development. That is, in a world-economy, the economic plane of systemic interaction becomes structurally all-pervading and all-binding¹⁴⁷. According to Wallerstein, several world-economies existed during history, but, owing to their own nature or logic of operation, these world-economies were swiftly shifted into what the American scholar calls «world-empires», that is historical-social system characterized by redistributive logics of power and wealth – i.e. China or the Roman empire. By contrast, what allowed for the rise and

world expansion of the world-economy in early-modern Europe was its capitalist nature (or systemness). Capitalism enabled this world-system to survive and thrive¹⁴⁸.

The «medieval prelude» to modern world witnessed the gradual transformation of feudal Europe into the center of expansion of such a capitalist world-system, between 1450-1650 ca¹⁴⁹. In Wallerstein's scheme, feudalism «was not natural economy, that is, an economy of self-subsistence». Feudalism in western Europe was a «civilization» growing out of the implosion of the foregoing Roman world-empire. This characterization of feudalism compels Wallerstein to move on the problem of “transition” *in its classic form*. In keeping with the logic of world-systems analysis according to which the unit of historical analysis is crucial to understand development, units of historical development which are not world-system cannot accomplish a historical transition in classical terms. In other words: there was no world-systemic transition in Europe because feudalism was not a world-system, but a general civilization. Something different happened¹⁵⁰.

Wallerstein sees the surfeit of trading forces as something subversive of feudal dynamics, but not long-distance commerce as such. Feudalism and expanding trade are consistent with each other inasmuch as long-distance commerce does not overcome the local one. The *Fernhandel* has always been trade in luxuries, propelled by the whetted appetite of wealthy and rulers, notably in towns, but limited in social scale and scope. With the rise and world expansion of a European-based system of capitalist world accumulation – which, according to Wallerstein, was the main outcome of the inter-state competition escalated during the long 16th century in Europe – long-distance trade began to change. It began to involve and include increasing quantities of bulks and staples, thereby feeding into and boosting the «*process of expanding production*» at *world-systemic level*. According to the scholar, «Food needs dictated the geographical

expansion of Europe» and the expansion of the structural network of the economy as a whole¹⁵¹.

In other words: capital accumulation *started out* being replenished to the full through basic products, thereby extending incrementally the web and the processes of capital accumulation to primary resources, that is, *unto* and *onto* society as a whole. In Europe, feudalism was displaced owing to the historical proneness of European capital breeding *centrifugal* thrusts of accumulation for solving the continental dearth of resources. In this respect, according to Wallerstein, world-social spaces which were characterized by different logics of social reproduction became capitalist *inasmuch as* they were bridled by, and incorporated within, the world-system of capitalist accumulation in expansion. They thereby were compelled to operate according to the systemic logic of social reproduction – the logic of endless capital accumulation – to feed the European world-economy.

In view of this overview, we can summarize three general levels of analysis that came up during the debate on the “transition from feudalism to capitalism”¹⁵². The first level pertains to Dobb-Brenner who regard: trade and town growth as outgrowth and/or integral constituents of feudalism; the response of nobility to the growth of trade and towns as highly uneven in space; the structural compulsion to increase surplus when lords coped with market as minimal – by contrast the upshot was the squeezing out of peasants. If the transition is to occur, such an interpretation implies a confined alteration of local historical structures and processes internal to the dynamics of feudalism, *within* rising national frames. Transition stems from: class struggle; the thrust of peasants to increase productivity; nobility competition for power against other nobles as well as against peasants.

Questions arise: How did such local alterations crumble away the feudal framework of Europe? How have localized changes of structures succeeded in building up the globally-integrated world system we live in? Which was the belt which connected the space of historical change of a nation to the other one?¹⁵³

The second kind of analysis, the one offered by Sweezy, made a spatially-unidentified vortex of accumulating trading forces the main vector of feudal dissolution. This solution comes with the theoretical and historical concept and definition of social system, an issue which the scholar actually does not address. However, by not delving into the “second phase of development”, the Marxist economist does not single out the unit of analysis in which the change operates and this fact hamstrings his imposing analysis. In the same vein as Henri Pirenne, towns were the centres wherein the drive to hoard and expand was highly sharpened; by the same token, the far-flung web of trading towns accounts for the rise of a continentally-integrated commercial economy. Trade was a «creative force» to be sure¹⁵⁴. Although trading economy is not enough to understand the transition to capitalism¹⁵⁵. While Sweezy suggests as crucial the lack of landowner’s political power to immobilize and force peasants to land in an ever-increasing exploiting pattern leading to feudal dissipation, how both political power – essential device to the development of the capitalist system – and the logic of capitalism crisscrossed remains untold. By the same token, the role of capital in the process of submission of workers to the logic of capitalism remains untold as well¹⁵⁶.

Wallerstein, taking Sweezy’s lead, views the expansion of trade, exceeded a certain amount, an important vector of feudal dissolution, but, as far as the terms of the debate are concerned, what led to historical-social change was the entanglement in, and the growth of, *world-systemic* processes of production, that is, the incorporation of sites of agro-industrial production throughout the world into a systemic network and logic of capital accumulation. Such a mechanism of development was to bring about different

social outcomes – as well as different political and economic upshots – in the several regions of the modern world-economy according to their relation of power with the capitalist core of the system. This was, according to Wallerstein, the basic (not the only) workings of capitalist expansion of (and within) the modern world-economy¹⁵⁷. Swelling trade was only half of the mechanism to the development of the structural networks of capitalist accumulation, on the other side based on world-systemic, core-oriented, chains of productions¹⁵⁸.

Both scholars, albeit in different fashions, disregard a crucial fact: if patterns of historical development came up pursuant to the combustion of exceeding (non-feudal?) forces, how did those forces take off? Where did they come from?¹⁵⁹

In short: we can say that the general theoretical-historical conundrum, which is untold, and upon which the entire debate has unfolded is: capitalism as mode of production or capitalism as system of accumulation¹⁶⁰? As far as we are concerned, the way we address this dilemma determines and shapes Dutch history and the history of “Dutch capitalism”, and how such a story is told – admittedly, also the entire history of the capitalist world system as well.

Marx answers in *Capital*'s third volume – albeit his argument and argumentations are both quite muddy: commodity production or capital accumulation by themselves are not enough to jam the functioning – «the solidity and the articulation» – of a previous mode of production. Regardless, «The economic structure of capitalist society has grown out of the economic structure of feudal society»¹⁶¹. To Marx, the United Provinces were not (properly) “capitalist”¹⁶². After all, they were a «land without feudalism».

1.2 *The Dutch transition in the scholarly debate*

Apart from Marx¹⁶³, we have seen in general terms the hallmarks of the debate concerning the transition from feudalism to capitalism – and which whoever is engaged in untangling such a conundrum has to come to terms with. Posing the question of how has the Dutch enigma been tackled by the scholars? For the most, it had theretofore been dodged.

Eric Hobsbawm – a Marxist practitioner –, by focusing on the economic side of the analysis, famously termed Holland as a «feudal business economy». The Dutch economy was not the first capitalist economy for «Dutch profits did not depend greatly on capitalist manufacture. Hence the Dutch economy to some extent did a disservice to industrialisation in the short run: to their own, by sacrificing Dutch manufactures (until 1816) to the huge vested interests of trading and finance; to that of the rest of Europe, by encouraging manufactures in feudal and semi-colonial areas where they were not strong enough to break out of the older social framework»¹⁶⁴.

An analysis akin to this one led Wallerstein to the opposite end: capitalism grew and expanded exactly for its own capacity to generate ongoing profits – accumulation and expansion – by exploiting productions “in feudal and semi-colonial areas”, by contrast immediately converted and turned into capitalist periphery and filled with the capitalist law of motion¹⁶⁵. Was Holland not capitalist but the world-economy, pursuant to its own political-economic-social structure and geographical structural differentiation. According to Wallerstein indeed, talking of capitalist states is total nonsense; only the capitalist system is the unit of capitalist expansion and analysis. Therefore, taking Hobsbawm’s story as valid, i.e. that the Dutch were *merchant* capitalists at most, for the American scholar merchant capitalism is “Capitalism” – «historical capitalism». Nonetheless, this is not enough. Not only “merchant capitalism”

is “Capitalism”, but for its own historical development and dynamics toward semiproletarianized relations of social reproduction at systemic level, merchant capitalism is the “most efficient form” of capitalist historical development¹⁶⁶. The Dutch, in very short, were capitalists by virtue of their position of greatest exploiters *strictly abiding by* the general rule of the ever-expanding accumulation of capital whereon the European world-economy had been established and developed.

Dobb, for his part, deals very rapidly with the Dutch in his imposing *Studies in the Development of Capitalism*. The only notice worthy to be reported is related to the classical Marxist stance according to which the primacy of commercial-financial interests in Holland were to obstruct the growth of industry and the “transition to capitalism”. Indeed, «The fortunes to be made from dealing in foreign stocks seems to have diverted capital and enterprise from industry». Holland was «entirely eclipsed» by the progression of industrial production in England in the XVIII century. By using Charles Wilson’s investigation on the Anglo-Dutch connections, Dobb asserts that the Hollanders doomed their industrial sector to a dynamic of submission to overwhelming trading and financial interests, and to their relationships with foreign rulers and states¹⁶⁷.

Sweezy references Holland even less¹⁶⁸. Brenner, in his original contribution on the *Agrarian Class Structure and Economic Development in Pre-Industrial Europe*, barely mentions Holland¹⁶⁹, whereas in his following in-depth examination, he devotes some more pages to the issue, alas with no news to offer. His framework had been already set and its rationale deployed. As he correctly noted, the agrarian structure of Holland – foundation of any capitalist development according to the scholar – was largely different from the one developed in Europe, even in the West. It lacked fully-fledged manorial demesnes to exert pervasive extra-economic power of extraction, and, pursuant to this, the landowning economic function became highly dependent upon economic rents. Market-based relations were broadly developed within society, even in

the rural areas, «enforcing the tendency to competitive market production» for tenants and farmers that catered to their subsistence needs through market. This non-dependent tenancy-based structure, in close association with the trading bias, thwarted any chance to develop capitalist property relations. Moreover, structural brakes were to be reinforced by the crucial fact that, according to the scholar, any Dutch development had been externally-induced, that is, «spurred by and dependent upon the general growth of the European economy during the sixteenth and into the seventeenth century». In sum, the Dutch «hardly constituted an economy in its own right [for] it grew up as an integral part of the overall European economy and naturally shared its fate»: once the European economic downswing (the so-called Phase B) materialized in the seventeenth century, self-sustained growth was a historical chimaera for the Dutch¹⁷⁰.

Quite recently Dutch history has been discussed at length instead. The Netherlands came to the fore as the actual contender of England for the designation of “first historical capitalism”¹⁷¹. Brenner would have had a lot to say about that new strand. We shall briefly refer to some parts of it, and notably to two leading Dutch scholars.

Jan de Vries calls attention to what appears to be crucial in explaining “Dutch capitalism” in the light of the Brenner’s theses: the character and dynamics of feudalism in the Northern Low Countries, notably Holland; the character of peasants-householders; consequently, the role of small peasant property and the trajectory of rural economic development; in the end, the role of towns and cities¹⁷².

Feudal constraints had always been rarefied and during the XVI century they broke down well-nigh completely. Serfdom, if it existed at all, vanished in the XVI century: peasants were free. The feudal rule of lords over territory politically weakened and economically disappeared for they lacked concrete and enforceable landownership

and a fully-fledged manorial demesne backing their power; by the same token, extra-economic means of subjugation gave way to property rights and widespread market-based and businesslike relationships, affecting both peasants and lords' behavior alike. The colonization movement unto the virgin lands of the region was an important vector to feudal dissipation through drainage, livestock raising and urbanization. The new settlements were entirely premised on peasant farms, and parcellization of land was an outgrowth of such a peasants "expansion". Especially in such new areas of dwelling, «society [...] offered no significant role for noblemen»¹⁷³. All the while, important role had the inconsistency of communal institutions such as open fields and guilds. This feature was conducive to peasants' full freedom and feeble institutional limitations. «We do not exaggerate much in asserting that the only factors they had to take into account were nature and the market» since the late middle ages¹⁷⁴.

In particular: according to de Vries, the embeddedness of peasantry in a thick network of (internal and international) markets, and the strong market bias, stimulated what for Brenner were factors conducive to capitalism: specialization, innovation, accumulation *in agriculture* toward industry and trade, pushing maximized value at the center. In short, what de Vries calls «specialization model»: market dependency, capital investment (productive factors innovation), specialized productive units (specialized household agricultural productions) and occupational differentiation. On such bases, favorable historical-institutional settings were conducive to social differentiation. Specialization and social differentiation fed into processes of polarization and proletarianization in the countryside that were sharpened by the farmers' bias toward capital-intensive investments that eventually led also to the expansion of protoindustry. Greater and wider run of outputs came out from investment and specialization in the rural areas¹⁷⁵. The outstanding rate of urbanization of Holland endowed in turn the region with extraordinary market possibilities feeding an «healthy» relation between

towns and countryside, that, differently from the rest of Europe, was premised on «the avoidance of a polity of urban exploiters» and of strong monopolistic policies subjugating rural areas¹⁷⁶. According to De Vries, this led to the development of a regional economy of capitalist sort¹⁷⁷.

For his part, van Zanden articulates a different «road to capitalism», based on the advancement of proto-industrialization as a consequence of ecological crises in the period 1350-1550 that impeded the medieval agricultural trajectory¹⁷⁸. Since the fourteenth century, but especially starting from the fifteenth, ecology and soil compelled Holland to rely heavily on grain imports and to commercialize the remaining lands¹⁷⁹. Agriculture – especially for subsistence – was getting increasingly sidelined¹⁸⁰. As a result non-agricultural energies were freed, preparing the ground for capitalism. Non-agrarian activities like fishing, shipbuilding, spinning, and particularly in Holland after 1400, international carrying trade and peat cutting, became mainstays upon which the rural (and urban) work and life subsisted on. Strengthened by demographic growth¹⁸¹, the combination of wage-based industry and agriculture sparked off profitable dynamics whereby the rural industries «neither imitated nor competed with the urban export industries [...] because the almost complete absence of sharp social tension between town and country», thereby bolstering the economy as a whole¹⁸². According to van Zanden, Dutch protoindustrial dynamic – in combination with the dense market world linkages – is the key to fathom Dutch capitalism, i.e. merchant capitalism: «Merchant capitalism is [...] the phase in the development of capitalism in which the [...] entrepreneur combined commercial activities with intervention in the production process, and thus in labor relations, although the commercial activities (still) outweighed the latter». In view of this, the secret of the Dutch economy was the capacity to realize surpluses from production thanks to the ability to keep labor costs – the remuneration of labor – at bay, that is, below the reproduction costs of labor and not

(only) from mere price differences¹⁸³. According to van Zanden, the unfolding of Dutch capitalism was therefore entirely premised on semiproletarianized labor.

However, if the foundations for the Golden Age were to be laid by this very process, the Golden Age demise was part and parcel thereof at the same time. At the end of the sixteenth century «the marginal peasant class that had been the base of proto-industry» disappeared¹⁸⁴. Dutch protoindustrial mechanism gave rise forcefully to a process of enlargement of market-oriented capital-intensive farms and to a remarkable increment of the pace of urbanization, followed by further concentration and centralization in non-agricultural lines of production. Both continued to accelerate the rate of proletarianization that in turn was replenished by demographic concentration¹⁸⁵. At some point of the process, the surplus extracted from the initially merchant-capitalist chains of production came to deplete itself because the same process of protoindustrialization, that pushed unto full proletarianization, ate away the margin of profit inherent in the exploitation of partially proletarianized laborers. That is, profits generated were not high enough to cover both the production and reproduction cost of labor. In other words, this specific mechanics of development turned out to be self-defusing¹⁸⁶.

In the light of this¹⁸⁷, Brenner comes to refining his argumentation on the Low Countries. As far as his conceptual framework is concerned, it has been reframed as follow: the feudal system is resilient to change. It is a self-reproducing system whose rules are consciously implemented by lords and peasants, and, for it is «in their own interest», they tend to behave according to feudal social-property relations. Feudal rules of reproduction – premised on the logic of “safety first” (peasants), and on political accumulation and productive extension (lords) – thus *tend* to be self-sustaining. Towns play the role of feudal actors that, on the one hand, endow lords with means to reproduce the polity of political accumulation, and, on the other, facilitate the

reproduction of peasants by feudal rules¹⁸⁸, since commercial agriculture and protoindustries, *in the context of self-conscious reproduction and enforcement of feudal social-property relations*, Brenner says, represent «an unavoidable outgrowth and expression of their fundamental rule for reproduction, viz. to produce for subsistence».

Therefore, in view of this, Brenner contends now that the emergence of capitalist social-property relations from feudalism can *only* occur «as an *unintended consequence* of lords and peasants pursuing feudal type economic behaviour in order to achieve feudal goals». In short: pursuant to its own self-reproductive thrust, feudalism tears itself asunder. Upon the economy of feudalism, the outcome of (Brenner's) class struggle inherent in the reproduction crises of feudalism itself was to unintentionally break down, at some point, any structure of surplus extraction by extra-economic means, promoting in turn the peasants' dispossession of their full means of subsistence, leading to Brenner's original scenario. As a consequence, this was to give rise forcefully to new rules of reproduction, that is, «*on pain of extinction*», social actors now set about systematizing their productive efforts by means of economic rules of production within market – competition, profit maximization, specialization, innovation and profit investment for further productive expansion. In other words, at this point they find «in their own interest» making accumulation by production via economic compulsion and market framework; they now set about rationalizing the economic behavior, propelling the «*positive correspondence* between what is required for the ongoing, economy-wide increase of agricultural productivity, indeed modern growth more generally [self-sustained growth], and what economic actions individuals find it in their own self-interest to choose». The reproduction of feudality was stopped thereon and the self-sustaining mechanism of feudalism broken. Capitalist social-property relations and a new kind of general market dependency emerges out of the self-broken feudal structure of social-property relations and feudal market dynamics¹⁸⁹.

In view of this refinement, Brenner is now poised for analyzing the Low Countries. Were they, and notably Holland, capitalist before England? By contrasting north and south, inland and maritime spaces, the student brings out the divergent paths undertaken in the historical process of structuring and evolution of the social-property structure of relations, and of the economy as a whole – i.e. the «subsequent agrarian-productive trajectory». In short: inland southern and inland northern Low Countries did not develop the aforementioned positive correspondence since both, according to Brenner, maintained a structure of social-property relations of feudal sort, constituted in essence by parcellization, diversification and labor intensification, making for declining labor productivity, poverty and restricted rural markets, despite the proximity of the latter to ample market networks¹⁹⁰. By contrast, maritime northern Netherlands came to develop a situation in which producers lost their means of subsistence but retained their means of production – protoindustry; this made for socio-economic differentiation, specialization and investment, the growth of labor productivity and rural markets. By the same token, in maritime southern Netherlands (Flanders, as well as Zeeland), the agrarian-productive trajectory consolidated the dominion of large landowners who rented large plots to big tenants, complying essentially with the original scenario sketched out by the scholar. But to Brenner, capitalism is first agrarian capitalism wherein the production of surplus in grain-producing areas is crucial to spawn the framework for «modern growth».

Did Holland abide by Brenner's path of development of agrarian capitalism? Ecological problems were the main drive that, combined with the weakness of Dutch feudal dynamics, made easier to the Hollanders extending their field of operative subsistence. However, arable farming was getting increasingly restrictive and hard to put into operation to make a living. Thereby, contrary to early Brenner's theory but according to the last findings, «as an unintended consequence of the acts of

reclamation» abiding by the self-conscious thrust to extend feudal social-property relations onto the margin of the European terrain, at some point, they were compelled both to give over the means of subsistence and to enter the transformative path towards capitalist relations, that is, they became «market-dependent *capitalist farmer*» with high intensity of capital investment, Brenner says¹⁹¹. But farming also came to be hampered by ecology. This further limit shoved farmers toward a broader market dependency because it forced their entanglement with the wider urban complex of regional industrial and commercial activities¹⁹². Protoindustrial development was hence complement of the particular capitalist structure of Dutch agriculture, and whereby the expansion of regional and international trade became at one time necessity and propellant. «The subsequent process of interconnected agricultural, industrial and commercial development, in which the expansion of one industry tended to bring increased demand and lower costs for others, could hardly have been more capitalist in its essence». Nevertheless, since, in Brenner's theory, the presence of ever-bigger landowners in junction with dispossessed peasants and tenant farmers stands out as the operative precondition to a proper capitalist society, and Holland in actuality lacked the former the scholar says, did Holland develop capitalism in fact?¹⁹³

the fundamental point is that the rise of regions dominated by such small-scale [such as Holland], specialized production would have been unthinkable without the production of surpluses in grain-producing areas, which implied, on a system-wide scale (*though obviously not in those relatively small, privileged regions that had access to cheap grain imports*) the growth of labour productivity in food grains, and thus the transformation of agrarian social-property relations somewhere in the system¹⁹⁴.

For the American scholar, as a result of the constraining ecology that impinged on the activities of the agriculturists by forcing them «to maximize exchange value through specialization, accumulation and innovation [...], subordinating all other goals to

exchange value maximization», what allowed for (and impelled) Dutch change towards capitalist dynamics – pivotal to the overall development of the Republic as well – was the easy access to cheap grain imports¹⁹⁵. In view of this, cities and towns were pivotal pursuant to their role of centres of concentrated market relations, and expanding centers of market economy in the region.

What may seem an abrupt turn in Brenner's ideas, it is not in the end. Holland was not the first capitalist "society" Brenner says. The historical path of Holland's decline comes up against the articles of faith of capitalism as ever-mounting, state-contained industrial-based, economic growth. Despite his broader premises, and in keeping with his Marxist credo, Brenner remains loyal to his early assessment: an exporting economy articulated with and within feudal spaces across Europe made unfeasible national self-sustaining industrial growth in the long run:

The ability to complete successfully the cataclysmic transition from arable subsistence economy to market dependent, export-oriented economy was greatly facilitated by the spectacular growth of grain imports from the Baltic [But at the same time,] it was fatally bound up with the surrounding European economy that remained unshakably Malthusian [...] it could not achieve self-sustaining growth because its fate was inextricably bound up with a European economy – and especially a European agriculture – that was almost entirely pre-capitalist. [...] but, articulated as it was with an untransformed trans-European economy [...] it lacked the capacity to transform its own ultimate foundations in Europe's pre-capitalist economy¹⁹⁶.

And yet, this seems to be a logical straining in view of his new analysis of capitalist development based on unintended consequences and changed social-property relations: since an unintended change in property relations towards capitalist ones occurred in Holland, a path unto self-sustained growth should have occurred regardless. In other word, for Brenner, capitalism is, first of all, self-powered growth on national

scale; the base of capitalist self-powered growth is premised on a specific structure of social-property relations; According to Brenner, the qualitative leap forward towards such a structure did occur in Holland, regardless of how it came about in actuality; nevertheless, Dutch growth manifested impassable limits due to European feudality, he argues. But in view of his historical mechanics, theory and conceptual premises, this historical turn of events is unworkable, *notwithstanding* the Dutch engagement in European feudalism¹⁹⁷.

Chapter 2

Hegemony or Hegemon?

Today, the historical-social sciences acknowledge three historical instances of world hegemony in the history of the modern world system: Dutch hegemony, generally during the XVII century; British hegemony, in the XIX century; and US hegemony in the Twentieth. Compared with the British and the US one, Dutch hegemony is depicted as a pale version of power deployed throughout the world by the next two. Precisely this alleged paleness – whose obverse is the uneven role and importance given to the Dutch in world history – signals a crucial feature of the way the concept, the analysis and the history of modern hegemonies have been addressed: hegemony has been analytically defined by the *degree of power projected unto the system*. Thus, hegemony has heretofore been treated *as a projection of power in world space*, that is, the way a state or a group influences and/or dominates the world of inter-national relations. This is of course true but downright partial if we are to understand a world hegemony. Rarely indeed, the framework of the analysis is pushed so farther to encompass the hegemon itself by way of a systematic theoretical-historical explanation and exploration of *internal* factors and vectors engendering hegemonic power. In this respect, what is seldom acknowledged is that a hegemon, before projecting power outward, *must*

develop an internal formula. In other words: it is «*not overt power that defines a hegemon but its infra-structural power*». Hegemony, before being a projection of power, is an *inner social formula*¹. This chapter attempts to elaborate a perspective of analysis to elucidate the referred-to suggestion. To do this we are faced first with the issue of hegemony as a projection of power and to probe the most relevant theories of hegemony. This avails us to better contrast the established perspective on the hegemony and the perspective to be posited. It behooves to stress that both of them are not at odds with each other or mutually exclusionary, but they describe the two different facets of a single process. The latter is the obverse of the former and vice versa.

The second section sets forth the hegemon's perspective. This perspective argues that hegemonic power *within* the modern world system is the product of the trialectic unity of state, capital and society (in nature) constituted and defined through relations of power, accumulation and wealth premised on the commodity-centered logic of power re/production or, borrowing from Miachel Mann's *The Source of Power*, on «multiple overlapping and intersecting sociospatial networks of power» of capitalist sort².

In the next chapters, this perspective is to be rephrased historically to explain the Dutch regime, and thus to understand the Dutch hegemon.

2.1 *Hegemony as projection of power*

The word “hegemony” stems from the ancient Greek “*hegemonia*”, namely, “rule” or “leadership”. Thucydides was the topmost analyst and interpreter of hegemony and of its significance in ancient times applied to relations among independent city-states within their inter-state system. Its classical meaning was essentially of politico-

military domination of one state on another. State inter-relations are the locus and focus of analysis³.

Present-day studies have broadened such a concept to encompass, in general, the unrivaled control of the economic networks of the world economy (i.e. control over raw materials, markets, and capital, and competitive payoffs in highly valued productions), or a power or control of cultural-political sort on international relations. In whatever approach, hegemony is always a *relational* concept, an advantage and an asymmetry of power in the relations among subjects, a peerless power factually deployed and/or perceived by the actors in the system of international relations.

Hegemony pertains first to the sphere of IR as academic subject, but involves many other academic territories such as the world-system analysis (sometimes formalized as IR's systemic school). Herein, the formal academic partitions are to be disregarded⁴. The narrative is phased in two sections, both comprising four instances of hegemony.

2.1.1 Pattern of hegemony 1

Four leading IR theories of hegemony are taken into account in this section: the one of Robert Keohane, Robert Cox, Robert Gilpin, and John Ikenberry with Charles Kupchan⁵. Let me introduce the subject.

The classic perspective on post-war IRs was coarsely realistic. Realism affirms the autonomy of the political sphere from the economy because it aspires to understand world politics – a realm of rules based on interests and power which are not either economic or moral. The economy serves politics in sum⁶. Crude realism sees, in essence, international conflict as natural outgrowth of the pursuit of power which is the

ultimate goal of states themselves. In this context, political hegemony – organized violence, both normative and physical – is the stabilizer of the international system.

Nonetheless, the very first attempt to systematize the issue comes from Economics. The early formulation of the so-called Hegemonic Stability Theory (HST) is our case. HST argues in sum that hegemony is pure dominance in the sphere of world economy. Such thorough material power by itself would enable the hegemon to bolster and run the system of rules in the international relations. Charles Kindleberger can be accounted the father of such an insight of hegemony. First elaborated in the 1973 book *The World in Depression: 1929-1939*, the eminent American economist argues the utter necessity for the world to have a «stabilizer» (a state) which runs the world economy, thereby stabilizing the interstate system within its own «life cycle of growth and relative decline». With no hegemonic control or primacy in world economy, the interstate system is bound to plunge into chaos⁷.

To the present writer this materialist version of HST – as well as Realism – proves to be simplistic and reductive to understand both hegemon and hegemony as well as the modern world system and the impact of a hegemonic lead on the historical trajectory of it. Both early perspectives indeed came challenged and surpassed.

Realism was under attack in the late 1970s by an approach that, according to its proponents, came «closer to reality than does realism» itself. It was called «complex interdependence». Keohane and Nye developed such a ideal type of «seamless web of world politics» in the attempt to account for the factual growth and the material necessity of interdependence among core countries – transnational, intergovernmental, and transgovernmental interrelationships. Hegemony in the context of international interdependence is not structured power but situational power, that is, a situation in which a state «is powerful enough to maintain the essential rules governing interstate relations, and willing to do so»⁸. Elaborating on this early theoretical framework, Robert

Keohane set forth his own theory of hegemony in the 1984's book *After Hegemony*. This came to challenge the first HST formulation instead.

The kernel of Keohane's argument is «hegemonic cooperation», premised on capability and willingness as foundation of any stable international regime. Hegemonic cooperation is interlocking interaction of cooperative behaviors and behavioral frictions whose balance rests on the asymmetry of relations. «Asymmetrical cooperation» is thus the source of hegemonic power. Cooperation, in this respect, is not absence of conflict – harmony does not foster cooperation Keohane says – but controlled discord, that is, a process that taps the inter-state frictions to create international agreement around core-values. Hegemony thus is not simply asymmetric power but a shifting ensemble of leadership and deference, consent and threat, leading to a driven definition and concerted application of the international system's rules. Against the early IR theories such as realism and first HST, material supremacy by itself does not give rise to a stable system nor an effective leadership. The would-be hegemon needs to invest resources, both material and ideological, in the building of an apposite institutional scenario to ensure the other countries will follow its preferred rules. To do so, he is to translate its power into a research strategy of shared interests and mutual advantages which curtails inter-national transaction costs, mitigates uncertainty, and bolsters the stability of the system. In sum, cooperation, and hence hegemony, rests on «expectations, on transaction costs, and on uncertainty» all at once. Therefore, «Hegemony and cooperation are not alternatives; on the contrary, they are often found in symbiotic relationships with one another»⁹.

It seems clear that Keohane's hegemony comes not to be engendered by peculiar structural and organizational features of the hegemon itself whose organic deployment gives rise to the greater power, material and cultural-ideological alike. The kernel of Keohane's theoretical framework pivots on the *translation* process of resources, both

material and ideological-cultural, *into* international rules that foster the «right kind» of cooperation for the Hegemon itself. Hegemony *is* the best translation process.

Robert Cox headed another direction instead. Drawing on Antonio Gramsci, Cox conceptualized the first overt instance of hegemony in IR as value-based leadership. The nub of Gramsci's musings, referred to class or national hegemony, is the following:

the supremacy of a social group manifests itself in two ways, as "domination" and as "intellectual and moral leadership". A social group dominates antagonistic groups, which it tends to "liquidate", or to subjugate perhaps even by armed force; it leads kindred and allied groups. A social group can, and indeed must, already exercise "leadership" before winning governmental power (this indeed is one of the principal conditions for the winning of such power) ; it subsequently becomes dominant when it exercises power, but even if it holds it firmly in its grasp, it must continue to "lead" as well¹⁰.

In a nutshell: Cox applies such a concept of hegemony to states and world order. Hegemony is a condition in which a state sorts out and protects a world order of states which find – or believe so – useful and profitable the hegemonic order itself because of in line with their own interests. But, according to Cox, world order is «universal in conception». It comprises international system + civil society, therefore hegemony does not proceed to regulate inter-relations among states alone but it must penetrate and permeate global civil society as well. World hegemony, «in its beginning», is the projection of the hegemon's social structure of power and production relations, consent and coercion, that becomes «pattern of emulation abroad»¹¹. This projection is to set the world parameters of international behavior, accepted and adopted both at the core and at the periphery with different degrees of penetration, adhesion or contention. Hegemony is first «a dominant mode of production which penetrates into all countries and links into other subordinate modes of production». It conjoins then the social classes of different nations by way of the (re-)formulation of a whole set of economic, social and

political – «universal» – values and norms, institutions and mechanisms – «the intellectual and moral leadership» – according to which states and civil societies are to behave. The international organization is the means whereby «*la direzione*» comes spread out on universal plane. The international organization is both product and expression of «the rules which facilitate the expansion of the hegemonic world orders», a device of legitimation, the instrument for elites' cooptation, notably in the periphery (*trasformismo*), and the first and foremost barrier against counter-hegemonic thrusts¹². Hegemony «means dominance of a particular kind where the dominant state creates an order based ideologically on a broad measure of consent, functioning according to general principles that in fact ensure the continuing supremacy of the leading state or states and leading social classes but at the same time offer some measure or prospect of satisfaction to the less powerful»¹³.

In essence Cox's hegemony resembles a historical bloc on a world scale: the projection of power unto and onto the web of state relations stems from the articulation of social and power relations of production which involve the further and consequent projection of the «contradictory and discordant ensemble of superstructures», that is, of values and norms which ultimately are to define a world hegemony. But no systematic theoretical-historical analysis and explanation of articulation of social and power relations of production, and of the intertwined fabric of «structural and superstructural» constituents, both internal to the hegemon and integral to a world hegemony, is provided¹⁴.

Some years later, Robert Gilpin put forth a theory of hegemony which is instead a theory of systemic change in world politics, that is, of the dynamics of international governance's change. In essence, according to Gilpin, at the roots of a hegemony, and of a hegemonic order, lies «the differential growth of power in the system». To Gilpin,

hegemonies rise and fall pursuant to changes in the differential among unities, whose oscillation in time causes challenges, disorder and war¹⁵.

The core of the process of hegemonic constitution and succession lies in the underlying process of power distribution, concentration and redistribution on international scale which is entrained by competition through emulation¹⁶. Once a hegemony is established, an international hierarchy of power comes into existence as well. But such a system of competition through emulation is bound to generate in time a slow but inescapable process of power de-concentration and hierarchical destructuring. The scattering proceeds from the hegemonic center to the system, and notably to those states which successfully succeed in emulation. Emulation sets about destabilizing the international order by giving rise to a mounting «incompatibility» between the world structure of the established hegemony and the new formations of power which commence putting forward. The international arrangements thus become progressively unstable owing to the narrowing of inter-state differential gaps. «In time, the differential rates of growth of declining and rising states in the system produce a decisive redistribution of power and result in disequilibrium in the system»¹⁷.

The incipient redistribution of power gives rise to an incremental cost escalation for the retention of the international order to the incumbent hegemon, and the progressive cost curtailment for the making of a new international configuration to the would-be hegemonic states or, arguably, to the better equipped state which leads the confrontation. Within a destabilized order, the latter hence «begins to appreciate that it can increase its own gains by forcing changes in the nature of the system»¹⁸. As the equilibrium of forces peaks, the disequilibrium in the international order climaxes. This contradiction is bound to create in time the further intensification of challenges and disorder whose resolution is found in the outbreak and intensification of what becomes

a war for hegemony, «a hegemonic war», a systemic war for power that alters the international order in depth.

The most important consequence of a hegemonic war is that it changes the system in accordance with the new international distribution of power; it brings about a reordering of the basic components of the system. Victory and defeat reestablish an unambiguous hierarchy of prestige congruent with the new distribution of power in the system. The war determines who will govern the international system and whose interests will be primarily served by the new international order. The war leads to a redistribution of territory among the states in the system, a new set of rules of the system, a revised international division of labor, etc. As a consequence of these changes, a relatively more stable international order and effective governance of the international system are created based on the new realities of the international distribution of power.

In sum: the hegemonic war is the value carrier of the order that is to come and hegemony is the bringer of the «ideas and values [that] will predominate, thereby determining the ethos of succeeding ages»¹⁹. In essence, this final remark places the nub of Gilpin's hegemony near to Cox's one. Gilpin views a systemic hegemony as structured on power deployment, on material incentives and payoffs, but also on the values which it brings with it and radiates. In other words, it is by means of the intermeshing of coercion and consent at international level that a hegemony rises and endures²⁰.

Thus far, the research queries which lie at the roots of all these accounts have been in essence the following:

How do hegemons assert control *over* other nations within the international system? Through what mechanisms does control get established, and by what processes does it erode? How is compliance achieved, and how is it maintained?²¹

The question of how the hegemon *generates* power – internal factors, vectors, and inner dynamics – to assert this control over other nations is completely ignored. The above questions are archetypical. They conceptualize the power of the hegemon as given, that is, the hegemonic power is already there and the problem is to see how the hegemon will project his power to master the other states as well as the hows, and in what measure, the other states will accept his power.

Ikenberry-Kupchan's theory of hegemonic socialization is the blatant instance. The core lies on the process of socialization – i.e. cooptation – of the other state's leaders to the «substantial beliefs» which the hegemon *has* produced, and the degree of hegemonic values internalization and factual re-articulation, both at home and on the international stage – «acquiescence». It is a process of inter-national learning in essence. As Ikenberry-Kupchan say, «*The exercise of power [...] involves the projection by the hegemon of a set of norms and their embrace by leaders in other nations*». Power as socialization, normative or material alike, is the source of hegemony.

The two students probe the workings by which hegemonic values and behavioral norms come to be accepted and then embedded into societies and elites. The theory posits that such a process occurs notably within periods of crisis (i.e. war), both national and/or international, in which states, governments and masses are destabilized and weak, and thus fertile enough to be receptive to new and alluring prospects of prosperity. The instability hence makes the international system prone to structural and normative alterations. Indeed, hegemonic socialization is premised on it and by way of it that the hegemon succeeds in swiftly establishing and consolidating its position within the interstate system. A new international order gets established based on the new set of institutions, norms and values formulated and put forward by the hegemon and which are to structure international relations and elites' behavior. But socialization needs material inducement to come about: «That is, socialization is distinct from, but does not

occur independently of, power manifest as the manipulation of material incentives». Material manipulation and beliefs implementation are the two constituents of hegemony.

The hegemon buys into systemic material inducements which in turn entice masses and elites to buy into the hegemon's vision of world order and order of society. Therefore, material power is the obverse of hegemonic values and normative leadership at systemic level, and both of them are part and parcel of the same process of hegemonic international ordering. But only once values become internalized by the secondary states' elites, that is, once those states set about operating according to the hegemonic rules, socialization is fulfilled. «Power is thus exercised through a process of socialization in which the norms and value orientations of leaders in secondary states change and more closely reflect those of the dominant state». In turn, international socialization consolidates hegemony: «rule based on might is enhanced by rule based on right»²².

Ikenberry-Kupchan posit three mechanisms through which socializations works: normative persuasion, external inducement and internal reconstruction. All three of them work by way of an uneven amalgam of coercion and consent. Normative persuasion is put into operation by means of ideological thrusts and diplomatic agencies – «cooperation through legitimate domination». It operates primarily when hegemonic power succeeds in presenting itself as alluring and masses see the hegemonic pact as the way of seizing wealth and stability. In this case then, secondary states' elites wittingly set about aligning themselves to cater to the masses' expectations and to achieve the opportunities of payoff the hegemonic power offers; in the second case, material incentives are needed if elites are to adopt the "upright" hegemonic policies and to adjust their relational strategies – «compliance through coercion». In this case, «Belief in the normative underpinnings of the system emerges gradually as elites seek to bring

their policies and value orientations into line»; finally, internal reconstruction involves a direct intervention of the hegemon which reorganizes the secondary state's structure and institutional infrastructure. This form of coercion implies a compliance through imposition, whereby the process of socialization takes place once elites in the secondary state become accustomed to the new institutions and gradually come to accept them as their own²³.

For the present discussion, the purport of Ikenberry-Kupchan's theory is crystal-clear on its own and no further elaboration is called for. What is arresting in such an ensemble of remarkable studies is that all the theories of hegemony are not any different in their *conceptual core*. All of them profile hegemony as a projection of power; all of them profile hegemony as an uneven and shifting conflation of consent and coercion in essence. What truly changes is the process – and the description thereof – according to which this power projection is put into operation, that is, the hows hegemony is projected towards and into the international system, states, elites and masses. But this is only the overtness of a hegemony. It is the hegemony *perception*.

2.1.2 Pattern of hegemony 2

Whereas the focus of the foregoing has been on the theories developed, all in all, within the political sciences and IRs studies, the present section probes the theories of those students which are engaged in world-systemic studies, within and without the political sciences and IR. Four leading scholars shall be taken into account: George Modelski, Joshua Goldstein, Giovanni Arrighi and, finally, Immanuel Wallerstein. As

we shall see, whereas the first three of them deploy a conceptual framework in essence akin to the one already discussed – although premised on different bases and developed through which a different theoretical articulation –, Immanuel Wallerstein lends a different characterization of hegemony. The American scholar shall be thus the stepping stone to argue the hegemon's perspective²⁴.

System perspectives posit that the most useful unit to investigate the framework of human relations in time – political, economic, social, and so forth – is the social system, in brief, an arrangement or organization of human space which typifies the reality within and over which it unfolds. Here, we are interested in two specific ways to see an organization of human space: the first one views it as spanning the world as a whole by its own. This is a world system, or global system, an open-ended system with no given spatial boundaries if not the limits of the planet itself, and whose functioning – cycles, trends, rhythms and workings – is not strictly defined by an all-encompassing self-contained logic (nature); by contrast, we can view such arrangements as though encompass and characterize only a part of world space (and time): within given, but not fixed, spatio-temporal limits, such an organization is to deploy its logic of operation, mechanisms of functioning and patterns of development. This is a world-system in essence, a social system whose *internal* reality operates as mostly self-contained and governed by a specific logic (nature) which defines its functional and spatio-temporal movements and workings as a whole. Regardless, the focus of the analysis is organization: parts, trends and cycles are investigated to elucidate the whole. Regardless, the world(-)system hegemony is viewed as part and parcel (property) of the same historical process of systemic development, and important, if crucial, moment in the systemic functioning. As epitomized by a state, hegemony is a part of the system; as depicted by a curve of historical power, hegemony is a trend; as distinguished by the trajectory of its own rise and fall, hegemony is a cycle.

George Modelski falls into the first category of WSA. According to the American scholar, hegemony is, in a nutshell, legitimate leadership of a global power within the modern world system and its organizations of global interactions. Legitimate power thus enables to run the so-called global polity – upon which Modelski’s analysis is focused. Differently from Hegemony 1, Modelski’s pattern of hegemony can be seized only in the intertwining of global powers and system dynamics. In this respect, the history of the modern world is thus molded by the unfolding and the demise of global powers’ cycles whose succession in time defines the shape and history of the modern world system and its sub-systems.²⁵

Within the modern world system, global powers have always been nation-states²⁶ integral to the global political system, «the topmost political structure» of the world system. The global polity is «the structure for the management of global interdependence» among nation-states, and as a whole, the global political system is a-territorialized – a global power is «weakly institutionalized», that is, the global political system has never had an overriding authority able to deploy centralized politics within a centralized polity. In other words, world powers have never produced world states²⁷. The global powers are «entities uniquely dominant» which lead the global polity, and whose cycles of power and patterns of interaction structure the global polity and constitutes a long systemic cycles of global politics – Modelski’s hegemonic cycle. The cycles are an inherent property of the system which builds up itself through their own succession in time. This is what distinguishes Modelski’s theory: the cycle of global politics and power «is an endogenous model of periodicity in the global system; explicating how cycles in effect are the product of the structure and properties of the system itself rather than of the environment within which it operates»²⁸.

Therefore, the cycle – a time bout defined by regularity and evolution – is the basic functional-temporal unit of the system and pattern of systemic order. It comprises

two systemic long phases, the ascending and the descending one, which move the system through time. The two phases are parted into four intra-phases of leadership constitution and dissolution: global war, world power, delegitimation and deconcentration. As for Ikenberry-Kupchan, and in essence like Gilpin²⁹, any long cycle of world politics is sorted out in periods of international weakness and instability, and sealed in a global war which eventually crowns a new world power, and lays the foundations for a new order of world politics. The global war – akin to Gilpin’s hegemonic war – is thus crucial because it represents a «systemic decision» and a creative political-systemic moment³⁰.

As in any hegemonic cycle, also a cycle of power concentration spawned emulation and thus competition which in time undermines the foundations of the order and wears out the capability of the global power to run the system. It is in this moment that «the system moves into multipolarity. Rivalries among the major powers grow fiercer and assume the characteristics of oligopolistic competition. Gradually, as order dissolves, the system moves toward its original point of departure, that of minimal order and a Babel of conflicting and mutually unintelligible voices»³¹. Oligopolistic rivalry, impelled by the structural inability to redistribute systemically the proceeds of global status, is bound to create in time the conditions for the next global conflagration. Or, in other words, the cyclical fluctuations that move the system from periods of power concentration to periods of power deconcentration are the outgrowth of «the most vital of all secular» tendencies of the modern world system and world politics: the cyclical (because a state rises and falls within cycles) and the incremental (as world system trend) formation and strengthening of nation-states.

Differently from Gilpin and Ikenberry, underlying the rise and fall of a leading power lies thus the oscillation in time of the *systemic differential as a whole*. For inherent in the oligarchic and hierarchical system’s logic of development, it is the

system itself which in essence breeds its own leading powers, because it is the system as a whole which demands leadership. That is, the system needs a leading power to develop and endure, for a global power itself responds to systemic problems and functions that must be confronted if the system is to work³². The system thus *selects* leadership Modelski says. The systemic fluctuations as overall dynamics engender hence the conditions for the birth of a leading global power, whose *order* displays four recurrent, and thus historically proven, properties: global ordering from global war; monopoly rents from global military-coercive leadership; functional specificity from specific global assets and operations³³; the global power's functional network – that is, «maximum global functions with minimal territorial burdens»³⁴. Such properties depict, in actuality, the global power's scheme of systemic operations, its historical nature as well as the nature of the global power's leadership.

The systemic school of the political sciences lends thickness and striking complexity to the analysis of the dynamics of the modern world. Joshua Goldstein is arguably the foremost instance. Despite such an extraordinary complexity, the concept of hegemony remains, in essence, the same: «hegemonic power is a core state that commands an unrivaled position of economic and military superiority among the core states and is thus able largely to shape the operation of the international system»³⁵.

Hegemonic power is a systemic commanding relation in an ensemble of international relations which mold the operational structure of the modern world system. More specifically, hegemony is one of the two end points of a systemic «sequence» of power relations among states defining the power continuum within the interstate system, and within which the interstate power oscillates according to a pattern that historically ranges from hegemony to rivalry. The systemic fluctuations own an inherent cyclical scheme also: the time span that goes from a situation in which power is *systemically* polarized – hegemony – to a situation in which power is *systemically*

scattered – rivalry – encompasses and defines an entire hegemony cycle. But cycle is not synonym of mere repetition: any historical cycle owns its own structural, relational and operational features. Evolution and repetition are systemic feature of hegemonic cycles whose developmental «spirals embodies both types of motion cyclical and linear. The end point of a long cycle is not the same as its beginning . Long cycles are not a mechanical process but a repetition of themes, processes, and relationships along the path of an evolving social system. The world system itself is not only changing through time in a quantitative sense but also passing through qualitative stages of development over time»³⁶.

What truly distinguishes Goldstein’s theory however – regardless of the historical instantiation which is not the point of this chapter – is the time scale according to which a hegemonic cycle unfolds, and the historical pattern that intertwines a hegemonic cycle and long waves of economy and politics. According to Goldstein, the span of time that uses up and rounds off a hegemony cycle – that is, the peak in the process of power scattering – tends to outreach both political and economic long waves inherent in the same cycle (Kondratieff – Modelski as instance). Indeed, Goldstein numbers the hegemonic cycles at three in the history of the modern world system (Holland, Great Britain and US), of roughly 150 years each, comprising in fact nine cycles of political-economic long waves in a span of time that goes from the end of the XV century to 1945³⁷. Interestingly, Goldstein does not find any strong historical evidence to assert a direct connection between the causal dynamics of a hegemony cycle and long waves. «They are not synchronized, and there is no exact number of long waves that “makes up” a hegemony cycle. Rather – Goldstein says – I see the two cycles as playing out over time, each according to its own inner dynamic but each conditioned by, and interacting with, the other»³⁸.

Different systemic outcomes originate from the end of a long wave and the depletion of a cycle. According to Goldstein, the end of any long wave, economic or political alike, tends to bring on a power fluctuation which in turn tends to breed a kind of war that simply readjusts the international power structure and the polarization of power in the continuum «*without* bringing in a new hegemony»³⁹. The kind of war that starts at the end of a long wave is not a war for hegemony such as the one starting at the end of the cycle – it is qualitatively different since the fluctuations have not peaked yet as well as the process of rivalries' accretion and hegemonic decline. As a result, the structure of international relations succeeds in re-balancing itself around the incumbent hegemon that keeps wielding power. Only once the power fluctuations make the system of hegemonic relations completely unstable and destabilized – namely, hegemony is irretrievably worn out and (as) the process of rivalries' accretion climaxes – hegemonic war begins. A hegemonic war is to be the historical peak of the process of hegemonic decline and moment of systemic change in which a new configuration of power sets about unfolding and a new would-be hegemon arising.

Goldstein insightfully does not regard power, and hegemonic power for example, as something that is generated in self-contained realms – economic, political, military, and so forth – but as an entwined domain of politics and economy that bestows the ability and capability on the hegemon to formulate and dominate in turn norms and the international arrangements. Premised thus on the greater military-economic power, hegemony becomes systemic ability to arrange international relations to cater to the hegemon's interests, that is «the ability of one country to center the world economy around itself [and] to dominate the world militarily». This capacity is deployed unevenly accordingly to the up and downswings of systemic long waves and the related wars. Also, it is not possible to pinpoint a single trigger factor to account for a hegemony, but economic and military power concentration is regarded as a single

though differentiated bundle of power relations⁴⁰. However as in all the previous instances, Goldstein provides no systematic theoretical-historical explanation of such bundled trigger factors breeding hegemonic power (from the inside).

We have just seen the two main instances of systemic studies in IRs, and, along with the previous four, they arguably represent the main studies on hegemony – and the most influential ones as well – pertaining to the sphere of the Political Sciences. The ensuing, instead, represent the main instances of hegemonic theory pertaining to the world-system analysis. We begin with Giovanni Arrighi.

Giovanni Arrighi conceptualizes world hegemony in its Gramscian purport. But, differently from Robert Cox, he views a hegemony explicitly as *a way* to account for expansion and change of the capitalist world-economy *as a whole*. He thereby aims at illuminating the mechanism through which the *structure* of the modern world-system changes over time. A world hegemony becomes thus integral to the mechanism of structural change inherent in a structurally variant capitalism⁴¹.

The concept of "world hegemony" [...] refers to the power of a state to exercise governmental functions over a system of sovereign states. In principle, this power may just involve the ordinary management of such a system as instituted at a given time. [...] however, the government of a system of sovereign states in practice always involves some kind of transformative action that changes the mode of operation of the system in a fundamental way.

Hegemony becomes thus the «*additional power*» that enables to undertake such a profound transformative action. Arrighi elaborates on the Gramscian complexion of world hegemony to understand what such a additional power implies and where it comes from⁴².

Arrighi is pure Gramsci. Hegemony is leadership. Hegemony is a *function* of the world-system operations: a hegemonic state leads the *system* of states in a direction that allows to cater to hegemonic interests and aims, *whose pursuit* are perceived as universal – that is, as fulfilling the general interests of the system of states as a whole. By virtue of this perceived universality, such a status turns out to be self-defeating for «over time it enhances competition for power rather than the power of the hegemon» – the Schumpeterian «leadership against one's own will», Arrighi says⁴³. Hegemony is thus power deployed, self-replenished by systemic perception and defused by its own projection. Hegemony becomes a condition of «power inflation», whose unfolding within the modern world-system is always bound to produce the condition of its own «deflation» (Talcott Parson). Whereas the latter entails forms of coercion and material violence which evade the hegemonic function, the former «ensues from the capacity of dominant groups to present with credibility their rule as serving not just their interests, but those of subordinate groups as well»; or, more precisely, it ensues from the hegemonic achievements which lend the status of “model” to a world power, triggering emulation and thereby drawing the other states onto the hegemonic path of development. In short, world hegemony is the world credibility of a model of development and power. «A state may therefore become world hegemonic because it can claim with credibility to be the motor force of a universal expansion of the *collective* power of rulers vis-à-vis subjects»⁴⁴. As a consequence, a hegemon will lead the system and this lead will heavily mark the time ahead – the transformative action – (Gilpin-Modelski-Cox).

In this respect, world hegemony is part of a systemic mechanism that drives the capitalist world-system forward. The systemic trajectory of world hegemony consists of two interlocking moments or joints that permitted the articulation of the phases of hegemonic rise, decline and breakdown, and the succession of cycles. As a whole, it is

integral to the overall systemic cycles of power accumulation, change and expansion that characterizes the history of the modern world-system – and that pivoted on the Dutch, the English and the US hegemonic complexes⁴⁵. Herein, we can only sketch them out roughly⁴⁶.

The first moment is characterized by a systemic shift: from a *general* condition of power inflation to a *general* situation of power deflation. This marks the historical pattern and path of world hegemony. The initial condition of hegemonic power is characterized by a structural weakness of competitive pressure buttressed thanks to the universal reach and perception of the world power that enables and underpins the hegemonic function. However, in time hegemony stirs up competition and emulation that set about defusing the same function at world-systemic level by intensifying systemic pressures, interstate rivalries and social conflicts on world-systemic scale, thereby spawning new interstitial configurations of power – a general condition of structural intensity of competitive pressure on the hegemonic power which the same pattern of power inflation-deflation activates. In sum, such a condition signals the scattering of the hegemonic power and peculiarities towards the system as a whole⁴⁷. The *conjunctural* shift from one situation to another marks the historical-systemic trajectory of ascent and wane of world hegemony⁴⁸.

This shift occurs within the recurrent systemwide financial expansions of the capitalist system⁴⁹. They are integral part of hegemonic crises and hegemonic collapses, but they have a contradictory impact on the power of a world hegemony and on its crisis. The pattern of power inflation-deflation owns a *tendential and uneven* character in fact:

on the one hand, [financial expansions hold crises and collapses] in check by temporarily inflating the power of the declining hegemonic state. As the "autumn" of major capitalist developments, financial

expansions are also the autumn of the hegemonic Structures in which these developments are embedded. They are the time when the leader of a major expansion of world trade and production that is drawing to a close reaps the fruits of its leadership in the form of a privileged access to the overabundant liquidity that accumulates in world financial markets. This privileged access enables the declining hegemonic state to contain, at least for a time, the forces that challenge its continuing dominance. [...] Thanks to its continuing centrality in networks of high finance, the declining hegemon could turn this competition to its advantage and thereby experience a reflation of its waning power⁵⁰.

This reflation enables the declining hegemonic state to contain, at least for a time, the forces that challenge its continuing dominance. But,

On the other hand, financial expansions strengthen these same forces by widening and deepening the scope of interstate and interenterprise competition and social conflict, and by reallocating capital to emergent structures that promise greater security or higher returns than the dominant structure. Declining hegemonic states are thus faced with the Sisyphean task of containing forces that keep rolling forth with ever renewed strength. Sooner or later, even a small disturbance can tilt the balance in favor of the forces that wittingly or unwittingly are undermining the already precarious stability of existing structures, thereby provoking a breakdown of systemic organization⁵¹.

Hegemonic transition – the second moment – is the turning point for the *systemic* change instead – that is, it *not* a conjunctural moment. It is the point in which hegemonic organization and hegemonic command disintegrate and systemic chaos sets in. But it is also the moment in which a new hegemony comes to be forged:

Increasing systemic disorganization curtails the collective power of the system's dominant groups. And the greater the curtailment, the more widely and deeply felt the demand for system-level governance. Nevertheless, this demand can be satisfied and a new hegemony can emerge only if increasing systemic disorganization is accompanied by the emergence of a new complex of governmental and business agencies endowed with greater system-level organizational capabilities than those of the preceding

hegemonic complex. [...]therefore, the ensuing self-reinforcing disorder can be overcome, and the conditions of a new systemic expansion can be created, only if a new complex emerges that is endowed with greater systemic capabilities than the old hegemonic complex⁵².

When a new hegemony arises, the cycle dynamic winds back. But any new cycle represents a completely new chapter in the history of the capitalist world-system, premised on completely new operational and organizational foundations. According to Giovanni Arrighi, the dialectic state-system is intrinsic to the history and dynamics of the modern world, and world hegemony is, at one time, the greatest lead, a systemic condition of order and relation and a leading pattern of system dynamics. As such, hegemony spurs on the capitalist world-system as a whole to change. This is to be led, structured on and organized by, hegemonic complexes whose growing historical complexity, scale and scope is the obverse of the greater historical complexity, scale and scope that the capitalist world-system shows in the succession of its phases of historical development, and vice versa⁵³. A systemic phase of development, and the spatio-temporal trajectory thereof, comes thus to be defined by the general organizational characteristics that distinguish a hegemonic bloc of governmental and business agencies and by the operational «strategies and structures through which these leading agencies have promoted, organized, and regulated the expansion or the restructuring of the capitalist world-economy»⁵⁴. Such a dynamic, for the Italian scholar, is part and parcel of the historical pattern of power accumulation, change and expansion which distinguishes the history of the capitalist world system.

Thus far we have discussed three instances of hegemony theory: Modelski detects the political complexion of global power's hegemony which is inertial derivative of the global system and of its dynamics; Goldstein maintains that hegemony is a relation of command entailing polarized power within a fluctuating sequence of systemic power

relations; Arrighi posits hegemony as additional power that universally legitimates the pursuit of its own interests and underpins and leads the dynamics of historical-systemic development. Arrighi alone argues the centrality of hegemonic organizational and operational capacities, but both always remain *function and relation of the world system as a whole*. All three of them are then anything but different in their *conceptual core*: hegemony is primarily if not entirely function of the world(-)system and *it can and must be analyzed only as such*: it is power projected towards the system and through the system. It is correct of course, but, again, partial; a moiety of a more comprehensive ensemble of power relations which envelope territoriality and globality⁵⁵. Arrighi enters the issue but does not delve into it. His focus is and remains the investigation of the history of the world capitalist system and its structural-historical development as a whole.

Arrighi homed in on the direction that Wallerstein had already taken more than a decade ago. Although, with his coworker and friend, the prime mover remains the understanding of the modern world-system as a whole, Wallerstein emphasizes the whys and the hows a great power becomes an hegemony *from within*⁵⁶.

According to Wallerstein, hegemony is *firstly* inner power and *then* capacity to funnel the same power unto the system, representing «*a way of organizing [the] perception*» of world-systemic processes⁵⁷. The key to unfold hegemony is the internal «degree to which the political rules reflect the balance of interests among owner-producers such that a working “hegemonic bloc” (to use a Gramscian expression) forms the stable underpinnings of [a] state». Likewise to Cox, hegemonic power can unfold as a result of the more suitable *political* agreement between the state and its capitalist bloc, making «the politics of the class struggle» crucial⁵⁸. In fact, according to American student, the hegemonies of the capitalist world-system are primarily the result of an internal conglomerate of *economic* factors that provide motor force to deploy state

power over space. By virtue of such an internal arrangement, hegemonies manage to organize and run world trade, production and finance. At its roots, hegemony demands the greater efficiency of the agro-industrial complex of a state. This leads to world trade supremacy. Supremacy in world trade enables ultimately to control world finance – banking (exchange, deposit, and credit) and investments (direct and portfolio). «These superiorities are *successive, but they overlap in time*»⁵⁹. The politics of class struggle stands out as decisive to produce such successive superiorities. The agro-industrial productive bloc constitutes condition for dominance at large, notably in the sphere of economy, albeit the *pre-condition* to constitute a hegemony lies on class struggle⁶⁰. Therefore, agro-industrial efficiency, premised on a proper balance of interests among capital and labor within the state, *is condition* to hegemony in the world-economy⁶¹.

From the perspective of the world-system as a whole, Wallerstein, before Goldstein, sees hegemony as a systemic relation of command, the end of «a fluid continuum which describes the rivalry relations among great powers to each other», oscillating from power balance to hegemony, whereof the latter is an unstable and momentary condition⁶². Hegemony is a temporary situation in which a single great power overrules any other rival so largely to impose its command in any domain of human experience (economic, social, cultural, political and so forth). But, regardless, «The material base of such power lies in the ability of enterprises domiciled in that power to operate more efficiently in all three major economic arenas-agro-industrial production, commerce and finance. The edge in efficiency [...] is one so great that these enterprises can not only outbid enterprise domiciled in other great powers in the world market in general, but quite specifically in very many instances within the home markets of the rival powers themselves»⁶³. Rivalry is therefore wiped out because such an inner arrangement of forces bestows power to overrule any competitor. In sum:

hegemonic power – the efficiency edge – begets systemic hegemony. Without the former the latter cannot exist.

Wallerstein poses an apt question to elucidate this equation state-system:

What is there in the functioning of a capitalist world-economy that gives rise to such a cyclical pattern in the interstate system? I believe this pattern of the rise, temporary ascendancy, and fall of hegemonic powers in the interstate system *is merely one aspect of the central role of the political machinery in the functioning of capitalism as a mode of production*. [...]. In fact, capitalism is defined by the partially free flow of the factors of production and by the selective interference of the political machinery in the "market." Hegemony is an instance of the latter. What defines capitalism most fundamentally is the drive for the endless accumulation of capital. *The interferences that are "selected" are those which advance this process of accumulation*⁶⁴.

The process of state interference sets the conditions for systemic hegemony which in turn rests on the internal efficiency edge. Transitively, the efficiency edge allows an effective interference in the world market that ultimately enables to run world-systemic processes of capital accumulation. State interference has tremendous costs which only by way of the amplest edge of efficiency can be carried out.

To sustain a systemic process of hegemonic constitution, the state is to rake and organize resources from its national economy; it is to re-employ them by putting into operation the most efficient political-economic strategy in order to select the best entrepreneurs and to foster the more efficient capital accumulation, Wallerstein argues. The state must manage thus internal flows of capital, goods, prices and labor, and create the best fiscal base to operate more efficiently – subsidies, restraints of trade, tariffs, guarantees, maxima for input prices and minima for output prices, etc., are instances of internal interference. If state fiscality and management of flows, that is, the political economy of a state, is so efficiently activated to succeed in affecting the internal rate of

accumulation to bolster processes of competitive selection, the more efficient oligopolistic agro-industrial bloc is to form. The combination of competitive thrust and constant state interference is to give rise to continuing pressures towards capital concentration that will provide the capabilities to interfere effectively in the world market.

This very process is of course a systemic process of power production, that is, many core states employ, in different ways, the best strategy to gain power. And it is in this way that rivalry escalates and a world war is bound to start. A world war, that usually lasts thirty years ca., will decide which state has put into operation the best strategy of power re/production. To be sure, the struggle can be «very dramatic militarily and politically. But the profoundest effect [is] economic. The winner's economic edge is expanded by the very process of the war itself, and the post-war interstate settlement is designed to encrust that greater edge and protect it against erosion». Such an encrustation, according to Wallerstein, is premised on the most efficient strategy to maintain order and peace (within a capitalist world-economy), at systemic and state level: global and internal liberalism:

A given state thus assumes its world "responsibilities" which are reflected in its diplomatic, military, political, ideological, and cultural stances. All conspires to reinforce the cooperative relationship of the entrepreneurial strata, the bureaucratic strata, and with some lag the working-class strata of the hegemonic power. This power may then be exercised in a "liberal" form given the real diminution of political conflict within the state itself compared to earlier and later periods, and to the importance in the interstate arena of delegitimizing the efforts of other state machineries to act against the economic superiorities of the hegemonic power.

However, the appeasement has its obverse: the diffusion of hegemonic peculiarities and strategies. Once the process of emulation starts, the hegemon is bound

to decline for its own edges *vis-à-vis* the other core states set about vanishing – notably with the diffusion of technology, the economic and then the military edge are both strongly flattened. The decline is inevitable at systemic level but also at level of the hegemon's organization: «the *internal* political price of liberalism, needed to maintain uninterrupted production at a time of maximal global accumulation, is the creeping rise of real income of both the working strata and the cadres located in the hegemonic power. Over time, this must reduce the competitive advantage of the enterprises located in this state. Once the clear productivity edge is lost, the structure cracks» and, in doing so, hegemony comes to be eroded at any level.

In essence, Wallerstein argues that the economic edge, which is encrusted at world-systemic level through the world war, engenders the necessary political edge to expand the material power of the state. It comes about by way of a mixture of consent – «global liberalism» and internal liberalism – and coercion – military power and “legislative” threats – which boost in turn the internal and systemic economic advantage. Such a mixture breeds hegemony and simultaneously its own demise. Hegemony is thus a «process in time» whose payoffs are obtained not simply by means of the most efficient processes of capital accumulation, both internal and systemic, but also through strong political pressures and cultural sway. It combines the internal organization of the state and the external leadership in the system as dialectically constituted – the former, requirement for the latter⁶⁵.

From the most strenuous proponent of the world-systemic gaze comes the most comprehensive perspective on hegemony. Wallerstein's framework outlines the complexity of a historical phenomenon that, for its own character, needs to be investigated as «seamless» to be understood. Such a phenomenal seamlessness, in general, is exactly the scientific cutoff which Modern Science – inasmuch Newtonian (and Cartesian) mode of knowledge production – has always disowned and never

grasped⁶⁶. In turn, the artlessness of Wallerstein's narrative has dimmed his trailblazing way of seeing reality and unfolding analytic enterprises, banishing or ostracizing it as simplistic or even unrigorous. But it is far from being the truth. As we have seen, and as far as we are concerned here, Wallerstein puts forth a complete hegemonic scheme that deserves to be further elaborated. Wallerstein envisaged something that lasted mostly unexplored in any analysis on hegemony. A moiety of the hegemonic scheme has been widely studied – hegemony as a projection of power. What the remainder of the chapter will show is a perspective that endeavors to flesh out what Wallerstein sketched out in 1980.

2.2 The Hegemon's Perspective

2.2.1 *The Trialectic of State, Capital and Society*

Hannah Arendt in *The Origin of Totalitarianism* reasons on the theme of power, state and capital. Her arguments represent the early inspiration for the present perspective⁶⁷. In Chapter 5, devoted to bourgeoisie's ascent and Nation-states' expansion, she makes engrossing assertions concerning the relationship between economy and politics within the framework of imperialist-capitalist expansion and power.

Let me start out by noting that Arendt sees the contradictory link between the topmost and best form of political spatial differentiation and social oppositional segmentation in history, that is, the nation-state – as jurisdictional space of legitimate conflict and spatial unit defined by strong and legally-established geographical and

operative boundaries – and the unique sake for the expansion which is inherent in the operations of nation-states as a crucial operative unit of the capitalist world system's dynamics.

That a movement of expansion for expansion's sake grew up in nation-states which more than any other political bodies were defined by boundaries and the limitations of possible conquest, is one example of the seemingly absurd disparities between cause and effect which have become the hallmark of modern history. The wild confusion of modern historical terminology is only a by-product of these disparities. By comparisons with ancient Empires, by mistaking expansion for conquest, [...], by neglecting, in other words, the difference between export of [...] people and export of [...] money, historians tried to dismiss the disturbing fact that so many of the important events in modern history look as though molehills had labored and had brought forth mountains ⁶⁸.

Meaning that the world expansion of nation-states can only be seized as *world* expansion of capital; and the world expansion of capital can only be understood as *world* expansion of nation-states, since the survival of both modern state and capital, due to being inextricably dovetailed, is inherently unconceivable with no world interlocked unfolding of their own. Such world-historical contradiction – firmly- and legally-established spatial boundaries vs. ceaseless spatial expansion – has defined the political, economic, socio-cultural and ecological complexion of western Modernity's global expansion within the world system. This linkage brings us to another

The global expansion of western Modernity made the link between capital and state not only necessary hence, but inevitable, for to bolster the ceaseless pursuit of power and capital inherent in an expanding world system of relations committed to the valorization and accumulation of capital, the power of state and the power of capital themselves were to be interlocked and sealed in a single though multifaceted process of capitalist power accumulation:

Money could finally beget money because power, with complete disregard for all laws – economic as well as ethical – could appropriate wealth. Only when exported money succeeded in stimulating the export of power could it accomplish its owners' designs. *Only the unlimited accumulation of power could bring about the unlimited accumulation of capital* [...]. The [capitalist] concept of expansion, according to which expansion is an end in itself and not a temporary means, made its appearance in political thought when it had become obvious that one of the most important *permanent functions* of the nation-state would be expansion of power⁶⁹.

Within a system of independent states whose power of both state and system is premised on capitalist accumulation of capital, the ongoing pursuit of power *is* the continual and enlarged reproduction of capital and vice versa. The reproduction of capital and the production of power are a single capitalist bundle of relations whereof the state embodies its operational agency and a mode of spatial organization within the modern world system⁷⁰. The permanent function of the nation-state is thus the capitalist expansion of power which is the capitalist expansion of capital.

Then the test of achievement can indeed become meaningless and power can be thought of as the never-ending, self-feeding motor of all political action that corresponds to the legendary unending accumulation of money that begets money. The concept of unlimited expansion that alone can fulfill the hope for unlimited accumulation of capital, and brings about the aimless accumulation of power, makes the foundation of new political bodies [...] *well-nigh impossible*⁷¹.

This leads us to a further observation that tops off herein the outline (of part) of the modernity's master process of capitalist power accumulation and world expansion. With Hobbes, Arendt argues that the national pattern of capitalist accumulation and modern body of power relations was put into operation since the seventeenth century

«under the guise of *necessity [and] chance* [...]» – in a context in which the elevation of the pursuit of capitalist power to state-national level was compulsively thrust out unto world space. Necessity and chance in turn gave rise to a struggle for stability in Europe that raged on the plane of universality. This universal conflict may be construed as the classical infighting between two historical systems, feudalism and capitalism, but it should be better interpreted as the outgrowth of their continental conflation⁷². Regardless, what the struggle brought was the stabilization of the capitalist world-economy and the general *formulation* – but the *limited* implementation within state structures – of the modern rules of power⁷³. With none of both – the European-based capitalist system and the nation-state – western society would have been «built on the sand» – as it arguably was since the nineteenth century, when the referred-to implementation started to be effectively put into operation at continental level to penetrate in depth the structure of the European nation-states; as a consequence indeed, the rootedness of capitalist territoriality allowed for intensive and extensive expansion of the capitalist system onto the terrestrial limit of the planet. Only at that time, indeed, the «Great Divergence» became crystal-clear.

Only few were capable to avert the quicksand of such a conflict and contradiction during the seventeenth century.

Since power is essentially only a means to an end a community based solely on power must decay in the calm of order and stability; its complete security reveals that it is built on sand. Only by acquiring more power can it guarantee the status quo; only by constantly extending its authority and only through the process of power accumulation can it remain stable⁷⁴.

But state power accumulation is only part of a master process of modernity formation that saw, in Europe, the accumulation of capital and the accumulation of

power as dialectically constituted. While, during the long XVI century, great part of Europe was not poised for such a unity of state and capital, because of still in essence permeated by processes of «political accumulation»⁷⁵ – the *would-be* absolutist state, that is, the unlimited accumulation of power *with no* unlimited accumulation of capital – , the forming Dutch Republic was since the origin structured on, and assembled in order to buttress, capitalist processes of power accumulation and expansion – the unlimited accumulation of power *with* the unlimited accumulation of capital⁷⁶. Drawing on Hobbes thus, Arendt maintains that

power as the motor of all things human and divine [...] sprang from the theoretically indisputable proposition that a never-ending accumulation of property must be based on a never-ending accumulation of power. [...].*The limitless process of capital accumulation needs the political structure of so "unlimited a Power" that it can protect growing property by constantly growing more powerful. [...].* This process of never-ending accumulation of power *necessary* for the protection of a never-ending accumulation of capital determined the "progressive" ideology of the late nineteenth century and foreshadowed the rise of imperialism⁷⁷.

It is to be argued that the Seventeenth century Dutch Republic embodied *firstly*, *but not lastly*, the dialectical constitution of state and capital that Arendt asserts to be the harbinger of western modernity, and its global expansion; the investigation of the Dutch hegemon, explored according to the perspective to be argued, is to provide the historical portrayal of Arendt's general assertions⁷⁸.

Along with Arendt's theoretical underpinning, the second eminent source the present perspective draws on is Karl Polanyi, who will avail us to start out accounting also for some of the Dutch historical prerogatives⁷⁹. Arendt's coextensive constitution of state and capital as a single process of power formation and accumulation intertwines Polanyi's pivotal concept of «double movement», which in this respect can be rephrased

as follow. For Polanyi, in sum, the unabated expansion of capital and market calls for a countermovement of society protection «checking the expansion *in definite directions*». State and capital coextensiveness allows for capitalist processes of power accumulation but the direction the expansion is bound to take is intrinsically embedded in *their specific historical* intertwining with society. It is to be argued that this interlocked embeddedness was thus not distinctive of the nineteenth-century British «market fundamentalism», but of any hegemonic regime of accumulation leading the systemic cycles of power accumulation, expansion and change of the modern world-system, with its own peculiar features and historical dynamics. But let me start out from the inception.

Firstly, it behooves to note that Polanyi readily acknowledges what represents the central tenet for the historical development of capitalism – and not simply of the market –, the core tenet according to which the capitalist world system operates: the «commodity fiction».

The crucial point is this: labor, land, and money are essential elements of industry; they also must be organized in markets; in fact, these markets form an absolutely vital part of the economic system. But labor, land, and money are obviously not commodities; [...] In other words, according to the empirical definition of a commodity they are not commodities. [...] The commodity description of labor, land and money is entirely fictitious. Nevertheless, it is with the help of this fiction that the actual markets for labor, land, and money are organized⁸⁰.

Such a fiction has operated unevenly in time and space according to the specific historical development of capitalism. As we shall see, the capitalist logic unfolded on the Dutch ground along four centuries and this unfolding brought about consequences such as the central role of the cash nexus and the market dynamics since the late middle ages. What is to be noted is that as a result, labor, land and money began to be

commodified – appropriated and/or capitalized. The historical analysis to be argued, in essence, makes Polanyi's account more than a specific depiction of nineteenth-century liberalism. When the cash nexus, which is part of the capitalist logic of power, *overrules* other socio-ecological nexuses and logics, the commodity concept becomes the mechanism according to which the market is geared to social life in any time.

The commodity fiction, therefore, supplies a vital organizing principle in regard *to the whole of society* affecting *almost all its institutions* in the most varied way, namely, the principle according to which no arrangement or behavior should be allowed to exist that might prevent the actual functioning of the market mechanism on the lines of the commodity fiction⁸¹.

However, a corrective is always needed to regulate the functioning of this mechanism, for «to allow the market mechanism to be sole director of the fate of human beings and their natural environment indeed, even of the amount and use of purchasing power, would result in the demolition of society». In this respect, as we shall detail in chapter 3, since the late middle ages the institutional framework of the Dutch had the central role of regulator of social life in accordance with the cash nexus and the market dynamics that was developing in the region. Since labor, land, and money are essential to any market economy, and to social life as well, Dutch commercial society was not only “protected” by its own institutional landscape, but the power of this developing market economy was funneled by way of it into bundles of relations patterned after the logic of capitalist accumulation and re/production. With no protection, no society, Polanyi says, «could stand the effects of such a system of crude fictions even for the shortest stretch of time unless its human and natural substance as well as its business organization» is protected as it was in a primordial but however effective way in Holland. «The extreme artificiality of market economy is rooted in the fact that the

process of production itself is here organized in the form of buying and selling. No other way of organizing production for the market is possible in a commercial society» as in Holland, it is argued, since the early formation of its capitalist ground. When money, land and labor began to be commodified, «the fiction of their being so produced became the organizing principle of society»⁸². But what does it mean?

Here we step into Polanyi's most contentious concept: embeddedness. That is, in sum, the idea that relates economy and society – plus state admittedly – as a single bundle of relations. Three leading interpretations are called forth herein. The first one – we can call it “the classic interpretation” – argues that Polanyi would have seen the historical normality of the embeddedness shattered by the resounding advancement of the self-regulating market, factual aim of nineteenth-century liberalism and theoretical pivot of the classical economists. Polanyi thus would have viewed the Great Transformation of the XIX century in the ungluing and unhorsing of economy from society, the former now having a motor force of its own. The self-regulating market became autonomous but at the same time it produced permanent and crushing social changes. In sum, this interpretation contends that, according to Polanyi, the rise of capitalism in the nineteenth century disembedded market economy from society and the former came to dominate the latter by virtue of its own separated capitalist motion. The XIX century represents the very breaking point of the dynamics that kept market economy going throughout history. To the writer, this is a radical misinterpretation which misconstrues and mistakes Polanyi's thought from the roots.

The second interpretation is the one put forward by Fernand Braudel. In Volume II of his magnum opus, *Civilization and Capitalism*, the French historian seems first to interpret Polanyi in a classic fashion: «the economy is only a 'sub-division of social life, one which is enveloped in the networks and constraints of social reality and has only disentangled itself recently (sometimes not even then) from these multiple threads» by

virtue of the emergence of its capitalist complexion. That is, the process of disembedding is launched in the nineteenth century as upshots of the industrial expansion. But Braudel goes on: «If we are to believe Polanyi, it was not really until capitalism burst fully onto the world in the nineteenth century that the 'great transformation' took place, that the 'self-regulating' market achieved its true dimensions and subjugated the social factors hitherto dominant. *Before this change, only controlled or false markets, or non-markets, could be said to exist*». In view of this, Braudel's interpretation seems to own nuances of ambiguity: Does the market free itself from the social fetters, detaching itself – becoming «disentangled» – in the XIX century, or, by achieving its «true dimensions», it subjugates – incorporates and determines – «the social factors hitherto dominant»?⁸³.

The third and most interesting interpretation is the one of Fred Block and Margaret Somers. According to the two students, what Polanyi in actuality posits in *The Great Transformation* is the harsh critique to the classic economists' utopia according to which the self-regulating market is the most efficient mechanism of social regulation and equilibrium. By rejecting the theoretical strategy of the “invisible hand”, he avers the necessity to delve into the actual factuality of history instead. Against the classical economists, Polanyi would hence argue that the history of market economy is the story of the perennial and conflicting balance between the self-regulating thrust of the market and the countermovement for the protection of society against the «satanic» effects of the market itself. It is in this sense that the history of market economy is shaped by a «double movement», Block-Somers contend: «Polanyi demonstrates persuasively that, throughout the whole history of market society, the strength of protection effectively embeds the economy. He suggests that functioning market societies *must* maintain some threshold level of embeddedness or else risk social and economic disaster». In all this, the nineteenth century represented another moment of historical double movement.

Only once liberalism triumphed within the western governments' circles, and thus it acquired a proper systemic momentum to carry out its operations throughout western society, the *concrete attempt* to make the market completely self-regulating crumbled away world society, and along with it, the systemic breakdown, epitomized by the thirty-years period of world wars and fascism, occurred⁸⁴.

Despite their eminency, none of them is to be espoused here. By contrast, the writer shall put forth in short a further interpretation that views *capitalism as the most successful attempt of embeddedness in history*⁸⁵. Such an insight, it is contended, is the one which Polanyi himself ultimately asserts. In so doing, we can appreciate the historical-social complexity of capitalist development across history, and in keeping with it, the capitalist development of Dutch region as it is to be posited historically in the next chapter, providing furthermore underpinnings to understand the hegemon's perspective.

In fact, the crucial question regarding the embeddedness pivots on the *concept* of capitalism, which, as far as it is concerned here, outdistances Braudel from Block-Sommers and thus from Polanyi. According to Braudel, differently from Polanyi, capitalism is not the market economy, but, by contrast, the «counter-market», the accumulation zone *par excellence*, the *heights* of command of the *world* economy. In view of this, Braudel thus would detect a conceptual distortion in Polanyi's arguments that would view capitalism, by contrast, as something which is historically, *temporally*, separated and subsequent to the market economy in any of its historical forms: «*Before this change, only controlled or false markets, or non-markets, could be said to exist*». For Braudel, it is space, not time, as Polanyi instead, that defines the different planes of maneuver of capitalism and market economy, that is, the historical fields within which the two terms unfold their operations, not separated but in unison. Capitalism and market are two distinct structural levels of one single story, of world History; they stand

distinct but bound together. Fernand Braudel saw world trade as device capable of joining world space by way of world networks of capital accumulation before the XIX century. The *Fernhandel* was in fact the first and foremost device of accumulation, a cliquish way to power, «the superlative commercial activity [and] a zone of free operation, *par excellence*» capable of organizing functionally the world. According to the French historian, this was in essence not a device to give power to masses, but to accumulate, concentrate and centralize power of command at the heights of (*western*) society⁸⁶.

Braudel's *initial* account becomes, by contrast, the historical groundwork to Polanyi's account as to be construed here below.

Indeed, once in the XIX century the industrial production – mode and relations – became the *topmost* structural device for capitalist world accumulation within the world system *in place of* the *Fernhandel*, the *descent* within society and hence the progressive socialization of the logic of the commanding heights of the world economy – the logic of ceaseless capital accumulation – was the inevitable consequence, since processes of production, which now mainly led systemic processes of capital accumulation, became of course *societal* processes of production and reproduction *as a whole*. This meant that the capitalist logic set about ordering extensively and reproducing intensively the dynamics of society; it thereby realized itself in the radical expansion of market dynamics and the commodity fiction within society; as a result, the same logic and fiction set about bridling mechanisms and processes of society, enveloping its structure as a whole.

The capitalist descent within society – whose logic *had* typified the zone *par excellence* and height of command, but now became the motor force of society as a whole – moved the capitalist system from its elite form of power accumulation to a system of power accumulation whose roots became intrinsically clung to the lower rank

of society itself. Society came to be slowly but progressively reconfigured from the grassroots and molded. In other words: capitalism (logic and rationality in very short) started out to play an *active societal role*, *activating* the process of embedding of societal relations through a motion of *vertical* penetration. The vertical percolation of the capitalist logic can be regarded indeed as the intensive dimension of historical capitalism. And this is what Polanyi ultimately may argue in the Great Transformation: up to the nineteenth century,

The economic system was submerged in general social relations; markets were merely an accessory feature of an institutional setting controlled and regulated more than ever *by social authority*. [...] As a rule, the economic system was absorbed *in* the social system, and whatever principle of behavior predominated in the economy, the presence of the market pattern was found to be compatible with it. [With capitalism by contrast] *the control* of the economic system by the market is of overwhelming consequence to the whole organization of society: it means no less than the running of society as an adjunct to the market. *Instead of economy being embedded in social relations, social relations are embedded in the economic system.*⁸⁷

This was the great transformation in essence. The market became a place (not the sole one!) where the *zone par excellence* of the economy encountered the whole society; a linkage (not the sole one!) between the heights of command and society as a whole. The whole economy was to become the order of society itself – *whose polarity became thereby subverted* – in which general social relations, as well as political relations, became immersed, and hence embedded, subordinated and eventually generated by the capitalist order of the “new” economy.

What could be somewhat surprising is that this interpretation of Polanyi’s thought, in the end, would come to match with Braudel’s final articulation and conclusive statement on the true nature of capitalism and of its historical operation, below called

forth. The dialect Polanyi-Braudel makes us prone to appreciate a possible difference in the conceptualization of capitalism, and of historical expansion and development thereof, local and systemic alike. Indeed, by the same token, it is to provide the most eminent conceptual-theoretical underpinnings, firstly, to the foregoing analysis of the Dutch regional cycle of power formation and accumulation and, secondly, to the hegemon's perspective in the ensuing section. This in general represents a challenge to the Marxist, Anglo-centered interpretation of capitalism, both historical and theoretical.

Now, the dialectic Polanyi-Braudel will be pushed to the present point. Indeed, in keeping with the articulation of evidence and concept put forth in the next chapter, could we argue that the process of embeddedness is not solely a historical process originated in, and unfolded pursuant to, the nineteenth century great transformation of the Industrial Revolution, but a very process inherent in the unfolding of the capitalist logic of power and operation in itself when historical contingencies – necessities and conditions, both local and systemic – operates suitably? Braudel, who sees capitalism on the very *longue durèe*, avers in the end that, regardless of time and space:

capitalism is unthinkable without society's active complicity. It is of *necessity* a reality of the social order, a reality of the political order, and even a reality of civilization. For in a certain manner, society as a whole must more or less consciously accept capitalism's values. *But this does not always happen.* [...] There is action and interaction. That rather special and partial form of the economy that is capitalism can only be *fully explained* in the light of these contiguous "ensembles" and their encroachments; *only then will it reveal its true face.* [...] the real fate of capitalism [is] determined by its encounter with social hierarchies⁸⁸

The next account of the dynamics of Dutch power formation and capitalist unfolding purports to bear out Braudel's appreciation on capitalism.

In view of all of this, it is to be contended that the greatest capitalist power – such as the British in the XIX century, or the Dutch in the XVII or even the US in the XX – can develop only in the long run when and where such a historical embeddedness of society and economy occurred in an apposite and specific form accordingly to historical contingencies – that is, according to the systemic, contextual and local historical features of a given era⁸⁹; by the same token, «capitalism triumphs» only when and where this articulation is then arranged and unfolded within, and by means of, a structure of power capable of buttressing capitalist processes of power accumulation, in so doing «checking the expansion in definite directions»⁹⁰. Or, in other words also, capitalism wins the day when and where comes to form the trialectic unity of state, capital and society such as to signal the occurred process of interlocked embeddedness. Braudel sums up:

the modern state, *which did not create capitalism but only inherited it, sometimes acts in its favor and at other times acts against it*; it sometimes allows capitalism to expand and at other times destroys its mainspring. Capitalism only triumphs when it becomes identified with the state, when it is the state. [But], capitalism is *unthinkable* without society's active complicity. It is of *necessity* a reality of the social order, a reality of the political order, and even a reality of civilization. For in a certain manner, society as a whole must more or less consciously accept capitalism's values⁹¹.

What it shall be argued is that the Dutch state, to say with Braudel, acted in favor of capitalism, and this occurred because it inherited capitalism from the historical-social ground upon which it was structured. The foundation of the power of the Dutch Republic has to be tracked down in the long path of embeddedness of capitalism with society – the Dutch regional cycle of accumulation to be posited, whereof the next chapter represents a portrayal. In a nutshell: the late medieval ground of Holland developed and sorted out the societal arrangements according to which, *in view of the*

new historical contingencies – both local and systemic – that came up in the second half of the sixteenth century, the Dutch were in condition and in the position to (have to) construct a state premised on and committed to the capitalist strategy of power accumulation

In sum: the long lasting process of capitalist embeddedness on the Dutch ground interlocked and buttressed the formation of a state that, being faced with the historical context of the XVI-XVII century, was to propel the unlimited accumulation of power *with* the unlimited accumulation of capital (and vice versa) – «The limitless process of capital accumulation needs the political structure of so "unlimited a Power" that it can protect growing property by constantly growing more powerful. [Thus] this process of never-ending accumulation of power [is] necessary for the protection of a never-ending accumulation of capital [...]» - this is a hegemonic regime of accumulation⁹².

The point is: how to explain it? And then: how to show it? The first question is to be addressed below; the second query to be the kernel of the following chapters.

2.2.2 The Trialectic unity of state, capital and society

As has been aptly said, «the accumulation of capital through capitalist production cannot take place either in a vacuum or in chaos»⁹³. This is to say that capitalism cannot develop disembedded from society and the environment wherein it is to unfold. And such an argument holds true at any rate whether we see capitalism from both a world(-)system perspective and a state perspective – perhaps even from the view point of individual enterprises and single capitalist entrepreneurs. It should not be considered merely as an economic system of production and exchange but as a patterned whole of power relations which are indeed capitalist, and whose reach tends to envelope human reality by virtue of the innate complexion, inherent in the capitalist logic of power, to

extend ceaselessly the scale and scope of the operations of its own over and within space – that is, to operate intensively and extensively in human space and nature.

It has been argued that triumphant capitalism does not resolve in hegemony or in the construction of a hegemon. The previous section have never put the two terms close. It has been discussed instead, from the state perspective, the two general features according to which a hegemon *can* develop *within* the *capitalist* world system. Indeed, this section purports to argue that the triumph of a capitalist *economy* (i.e. Wallerstein) is a mere *internal* pre-condition to hegemony (possibility-probability)⁹⁴, and that the hegemon, borrowing from Cox, develops an internal coherence, which, on the one hand, has of course arisen as factual developmental condition of the system historical dynamics, but that has primarily unfolded itself by means of an intersubjectively constituted capitalist reality. From the this perspective hence, the *hegemon embodied the highest internal coherence of an intersubjectively constituted reality premised on capitalist relations of power, accumulation and wealth*. It is in this first respect that the power of the hegemon embodies a social formula of infrastructural power. Capitalism is to be understood thus as the *logical pattern* according to which, and by which, human space – state, economy, ecology, institutions, society – moves through time and space⁹⁵. There is not “structure” nor “superstructure”, but capitalism, as is to be argued in the next chapters, becomes the historical embeddedness of human(-and-extra-human) space to a patterned logic of power and operation which is centered on the reproduction of value through commodity production and exchange⁹⁶.

The hegemon *in* the modern world-system is thus a specific regime of capitalist power accumulation which displays an *organic* movement of state, capital and society (in nature). It shall be called “trialectic unity”. Triialectic unity is a necessary requirement to the hegemon because the hegemon’s premise itself, the greatest capitalist development, is always riddle with harsh conflict and contradictions of its own. In this

regard therefore, the objective and role of the state-capital path, which is inherent in a regime of accumulation, is to regulate and normalize – regulatory and normalizing capacity – human conflict and contradictions to give rise to the *most* adequate societal environment – sufficient stability and predictability for example, in accordance with historical human means and resources – to allow for capitalist accumulation of power. A regime of accumulation embodies, in essence, the modality the flow of power is commanded over human space, and thus the way the organic triple movement between economy, state and society is organized⁹⁷.

In other words: as Polanyi notices, if capitalism stands unchecked, the effects of its free unfolding will be crushing at all level. In this respect, a hegemon hence demands a «mode of regulation» of capitalist processes of power accumulation. And since capitalism is not simply productive-financial capital within the cash nexus, but, in Moore's vein, an organization of human and extra-human capital exploited and/or appropriated to be capitalistically accumulated and expanded, in essence a regime of accumulation is to be understood as the way to hold in check Polanyi's double movement – that is, in Polanyi's idea, the balance between the capitalist thrust for power and the countermovement for the protection of society, and environment, against the «satanic» effects of capitalism itself. In other terms, it is the «scheme of reproduction» of capitalist processes of power production that provides a kind of capitalist command of societal dynamics, conflict and competition – as well as on the environment – such as to channel contradictions and struggles inherent to the capitalist development in directions that are not unduly disruptive of accumulation but greatly propulsive of its own unabated expansion – that is, affords in essence, the *highest coherence* of the process itself and guarantees that the agents conform to its institutional – logical – rules⁹⁸.

In organizational terms of power, structure and process: the state can be defined as the organizational complex of governmental, business agencies, networks of accumulation and operative institutions which commands the panoply of human and extra-human resources within space for the defense and the expansion of power. Accordingly, state power (efficiency and effectiveness for example) is the degree by which the organization attains and fulfills such functions and it is directly correlated with the operative coherence of its agencies, networks and institutions. State power is thus the capacity to implement such functions within, and deploy the same without. In a hegemon, the topmost coherence must permeate the dynamics of the organization of state, capital and society as a whole, whose arrangement pivots on, and comes phased by, the interdependencies and the interactions among the institutions, agencies and networks through which power (economic, political, military, fiscal-financial, socio-cultural, ecological) within space operates and is deployed. The interdependencies and the interactions among the agencies, networks and institutions, represent the nodules of power, or among powers, which interlock, relate and substantiate an organization of human space – state society and capital (and nature as well)⁹⁹. In other words, the hegemon must develop a *compound* structure of power with a *unified* internal structure of its own, which is therefore a composite whole whose intrinsic power amounts to more than the sum of its operative cogs and single powers, as well as the single logistics of them. The multiplier complexion of such an articulated organization of state, society and capital spells that power becomes *overdetermined* by the multiple and overlapping interactions and interdependencies, a resonance, among institutions, agencies and networks that relates the whole organization itself, and that enable to deploy factual power within a territory. No power, or logistics thereof, in human reality/nature is compartmentalized. Each, by contrast, is molded by, and captures, elements of the other. What thereby comes about in essence within a hegemonic regime is a *lifelike* process of

mutual internalization and inter-twined among forces, powers, and the related logistics, which is to define ultimately the power dynamics of the hegemon – such is the central argument of this study on the hegemon and it is to be explored historically in the next chapters through the history of Dutch space and the construction of the Republic¹⁰⁰. What the present writer is calling forth here is Althusser's concept of overdetermination as explicated by Resnick and Wolff:

Althusser's concept of contradiction emphasizes the necessary complexity of all contradiction, as against notions of contradiction that are simply dualistic opposites. Each distinct social process is the site constituted by the interaction of all the other social processes, each contains "within itself" the very different and conflicting qualities, influences, moments, and directions of all those other social processes that constitute it. In this sense, argues Althusser, each social process is the site of, or "contains," the complex contradictoriness inseparable from overdetermination. Each social process exists, for Althusser's Marxism, only as a particular, unique concentration of contradictions in its environment. [...] any object of analysis [...] is approached in terms of specifying its existence as the site of overdetermined contradictions and thereby explaining both its dynamic and its relation of complex mutual effectivity [...]¹⁰¹.

Such an insight can be readily transferred to the perspective here argued. The point is: power production *as* interaction of powers. What the production of hegemonic power signals is a continual (but limited of course) process of power formation, reproduction, and expansion which ensues from the most coherent articulation, interaction and interdependency among key factors, contradictions, conflicts and limits of agencies, institutions and networks; from the whole organization with key factors, contradictions, conflicts and limits of its own; to be sure, from historical contingencies, internal and systemic; and, finally, from the articulation, interaction and interdependencies among all of three. What is crucial to explicit is that the present

concept of “coherence” does *not* spell absence of conflict and contradictions. On the contrary, the hegemon is also the outgrowth of the same conflict, limits and contradictions that characterize the existence and propel the development of human space, of a society and of a sociospatial organization. Harmony does not foster hegemony. Therefore, Althusser’s concept of overdetermination stands out as important, if crucial, determinant for the factual development of a hegemon. In this respect, the history of Dutch seventeenth century is the archetype.

The hegemon’s construction is hence a process of coherent integration-cum-circular causation which has not an artificially pinpointed (and pinpointing) trigger. This is to say that the hegemon cannot be conceptualized and historicized as produced by one single factor or another – or in one domain of human power or in another – but it encrusts, to use Wallerstein’s words, the *most coherent panoply* of factors and vectors which, as a whole, constitute, reproduce and constrain the operations of the trialectic unity, and thus the production of hegemonic power itself. The trialectic of human space *as a whole* is hence accountable for the production of hegemonic power. The hegemon becomes manifest by way of a state which becomes coextensive with capital and with society – as well as with the nature within which capitalism unfolds –, and vice versa. As explored in the next chapters, the concept of coextensiveness conveys also the apt signifier to the historical process of interlocking embeddedness that capitalism propels *under apposite historical conditions, opportunities and constraints*. This process makes human space a capitalist «seamless skein»:

The [four] presumed arenas of collective human action – the economic, and the social or socio-cultural [and ecological] – are not autonomous arenas of social action. They do not have separate “logics”. More importantly, the intermeshing of constraints, options, decisions, norms, and “rationalities” is such that no useful research model can isolate “factors” according to the categories of economic,

political and social, and treat only one kind of variable, implicitly holding the others constant. [...] *there is a single “set of rules” or a single “set of constraints” within which these various structures operate*¹⁰².

What capitalism affords is a *commodity-centered pattern of human behavior* – a «single “set of rules” or a single “set of constraints”» inherent in human reality – according to which, as far as it is concerned here, the highest coherence operates – that is, a logic premised on and embodying the commodity-centered re/production of value according to which the governmental dynamics of society, economy and state unfolds (regime of accumulation)¹⁰³. Once capitalism – i.e. the capitalist logic of power – envelops society, economy and state as a whole – as well as the environment – the composite whole sets about operating as intersubjectively constituted capitalist reality. The complex of governmental and business agencies, networks of power and operative institutions which owns the highest coherence and integration with capital and society, patterned after the capitalist logic of operation, gets hegemonic in the modern world-system¹⁰⁴.

However, as Braudel notices, such a complexity is an opportunity and condition of development which is not – and cannot be merely – a creation of modern state or of modern society, but which is bequeathed by the long-run development of a past organization of human space – such as instance in Holland in view of the next chapter. Therefore, the rise of a hegemonic power – Dutch, GB or US alike – rests heavily upon the historical trajectory of development, but also on the concrete historical conditions, opportunities and necessities that history (the system) displays and processes at the moment of the ignition. Recasting SSA approach hence, we can say that the hegemonic bout of capitalist power can be regarded as outgrowth of «a durable investment that, once installed, pays off over a long period of time. It is durable because much investment *has gone into its institutionalization; and it is successful because it results from the distillation of a long period of experimentation*». The Dutch hegemon, as well

as the British and the US one, stems from exactly such a historical durable investment and bout of experimentation¹⁰⁵. The Dutch regional cycle to be posited embodies this long period of experimentation of Dutch history.

As far as our case is concerned, as we shall see, the capitalist logic unfolded in Holland region, and, as a consequence, the institutionalized development of scattered capitalist power on the ground – a regional space and structure of accumulation – took hold, thereby affording societal conditions conducive to the ensuing construction of the structured complex of concentrated capitalist power, the Dutch state. Its development was at the same time an imperative that history thrust on the Dutch at the end of the sixteenth century. Indeed, the new structure and organization of power that the Republic embodied for the Dutch was, in contrast with the European trend of state formation, deeply compatible with their historical long-run path of development, and hence with the composite complexion of medieval society from which it ensued. This character gave rise to the most efficient regime of accumulation of early-modern era thereon. Dutch modernity was indeed and counterintuitively the continuity of the historical path in a form which made possible reaping all the fruits whose seeds were previously sowed. It was by way of this *continuum* of power formation, accumulation and change that “Dutch capitalism” gathered momentum, gained strength, acceptance and far-flung currency over and within Dutch space, and by way of it, the ongoing accumulated potential energy came unleashed in and through the conflictual arrangement of the structures, agencies, institutions and networks composing the Republic, within society. It was this continuity that gave texture and propellant to Dutch expansion and eased the integration of the very complex and composite structure and organization of Dutch society in a new and unprecedented regime of power. The Dutch State indeed was the first «territorial state» at all, as Marjolein ‘t Hart terms it, to *institutionalize* the imperative usage of capitalist accumulation of power as main strategy of human space

management and power¹⁰⁶; on the other hand, and in view of this, the Dutch state was the first to manage to produce and reproduce the *world* conditions of capitalist accumulation by making human space *directly* useful to Dutch capital¹⁰⁷.

Modernity was not hence the emblem of coercive-intensive regime as organizations of power premised on domination through militarized coercion¹⁰⁸ – inefficient and ineffective because of inapposite state-institutional structures and operational infrastructures and agencies that in their coercive operation of appropriation and coagulation of power disrupted complex social balances with no effective renegotiation of jurisdictional prerogatives¹⁰⁹. By contrast, the *historical* technics of power construction demanded historical compliance with the tiered and composite complexion of historical society – a dialectical (i.e. trialectical) process of development¹¹⁰. In fact, this was the secret of the «confederative federation» of the United Provinces in the end, and of the regime of accumulation that ensued¹¹¹. *Thanks to* the particular mode of regulation of space the Dutch organized, the Dutch Republic was the first *organic* center of modern capitalist accumulation and expansion emanated from the European restructuring occurred during the long 16th century, and hence the first capital-intensive regime in modern era as an organization of power premised on, and committed to, domination through capitalized-value exploitation, which abided by both the world system of modern rules (logic) that was developing since the fifteenth century and, largely, the stratified nature and organization of Dutch medieval society¹¹². As we shall see, the Dutch state owed a multifocal but logically combined structure that furthered, as never happened in history since then, economic(-environmental) rationalization, institutional-political innovation, fiscal-military capitalization, socio-cultural differentiation/stratification, and, power combustion thereon¹¹³. As a consequence, power combustion allowed for the intensification and articulation of the spatial concentration and centralization of the political-economic command in the

sphere of the European economy and the sway on politics of Europe – as well as a waxing commodifying power in nature at home and abroad¹¹⁴ – in a self-sustaining (but limited¹¹⁵) structural mechanism of power¹¹⁶. In short: also in this sense, the Dutch developed infrastructural power.

But we are not engage in exploring the projection of power, the hegemony. This study purports to understand the hegemon. To follow this through, an important step is to understand the state organization that the Dutch put into place. The issue of the Dutch state will be explored in chapter 4. Its constitution was crucial to understand the development of the Dutch regime of accumulation as here understood. In the next chapter instead, we explore the long and crucial bout of “experimentation” that allowed for the construction of a capital-intensive regime.

Chapter 3

The historical formation of the Dutch space of accumulation

This chapter draws on an engaging suggestion made by David Landes in his well-known 1969's *The Unbound Prometheus*: «In any event, it was surely one of Europe's great advantages that its first capitalist entrepreneurs worked and flourished in autonomous city-states, hence political units where the influence of landed wealth was necessarily limited». This chapter explores and expands such a suggestion¹.

Charles Tilly reminds us that: «standard debates about the transition from feudalism to capitalism and the rise of national states have concentrated too heavily on the experiences of France, England, and a few other massive states, while neglecting a major determinant of the *actual* character of states»². Let us see what Braudel, for his part, thinks of the transition debate. His eminency deserves to be fully quoted:

So the rather bitter debate between those who accept only an internal explanation for capitalism and for the Industrial Revolution, seeing them as the result of an on-the-spot transformation of

socioeconomic structures, and those who consider only an external explanation (in other words, the imperialist exploitation of the world) – this debate seems pointless to me. No one can exploit the world simply because he wants to do so. He first must develop his power and consolidate it slowly. But it is certain that, although this power is developed through a slow, internal process, it is strengthened by the exploitation of other parts of the world, and that, in the course of this double process, the chasm separating the exploiter from the exploited constantly deepens. *The two explanations – internal and external – are inextricably interwoven*³.

These are the very general starting points, both conceptually and historically. This chapter is devoted to the understanding of the slow, internal process of formation and consolidation of the Dutch space of accumulation – the «determinant of the actual character of» the Dutch state –, by way of the exploitation of other parts of the world could be put into operation by the Republic in the 17th century. The time frame within which the process that restructured and reorganized Dutch space occurred stretches from the late middle ages to the early modern times – XIII-XVI centuries ca.. Borrowing the idea from Giovanni Arrighi, we may term this bout of historical formation as Dutch regional cycle of formation and early accumulation⁴.

Marx writes:

The advance of capitalist production develops a working class which by education, tradition and habit looks upon the requirements of that mode of production as self-evident natural laws. The organization of the capitalist process of production, once it is fully developed, breaks down all resistance. The constant generation of a relative surplus population keeps the law of the supply and demand of labour, and therefore wages, within narrow limits which correspond to capital's valorization requirements. The silent compulsion of economic relations sets the seal on the domination of the capitalist over the worker. Direct extra-economic force is still of course used, but only in exceptional cases. In the ordinary run of things, the worker can be left to the “natural laws of production”, i.e. it is possible to rely on his dependence on capital, which springs from the conditions of production themselves, and is guaranteed in

perpetuity by them. It is otherwise during the historical genesis of capitalist production. The rising bourgeoisie needs the power of the state, and uses it to “regulate” wages, i.e. to force them into the limits suitable for making a profit, to lengthen the working day, and to keep the worker himself at his normal level of dependence. This is an essential aspect of so-called primitive accumulation.

The Dutch regional cycle of formation here posited conveys in a good fashion Marx’s dialectic between the silent compulsion inherent in the law of supply and demand, regulated through the state structures, and the early accumulation as an *ongoing integrated* force to the capitalist accumulation of wealth and power – admittedly, it becomes a trialectic indeed (at least!), I argue⁵. But the historical portrayal here put forward elucidates also that if «labour is the father of material wealth, the earth is its mother»⁶. Indeed, Marx continues, «Labor-power itself is, above all else, the material of nature transposed into a human organism»⁷.

The method whereby the investigation is to be carried out probes the socio-ecological networks of wealth, production, exchange and institutions *on the societal ground* which set about unfolding since the late middle ages – mostly focusing the analysis on Holland. Such a matrix of value relations hauls in a perspective which in itself gainsays the theoretical formula of historical change called “transition”. The capitalist formation and expansion was not a question of “crossing an edge”. The historical edges are figment of scholars’ imagination. Capitalism has been, by contrast, the historical outgrowth of geohistorical necessities and conditions deployed and harnessed in given moments of time.

The query of the chapter is thus: how were the foundations of Dutch power in the XVII century laid? Capitalism requires «permissiveness by the state. In the West, this permissiveness appeared in varying degrees; it was chiefly owing to socio[-ecological] reasons, reasons deeply rooted in the past»⁸ that Dutch permissiveness could develop,

endowing the region with structural conditions for the power combustion of the XVII century. Here there is an attempt to investigate these reasons by taking a look at those factors and vectors that were conducive to Dutch world expansion in the XVII century. Compounding together these factors and vectors we will understand the lineages of the Dutch hegemon, that is, its historical space and structure of accumulation⁹. This perspective spells strong path-dependency.

As we have seen in chapter 1, Holland region was typified by: manorial marginality (free peasants colonization) and historical agro-ecological disorder. Both, as argued here, eased the shift from control of land as a direct relation of surplus appropriation to control of land as a condition for rising labor productivity within commodity production¹⁰; the correlative trend of peasants dispossession and market-oriented agency; the late but staggering patterned growth of self-governing cities and the trend unto demographic concentration¹¹. Such a historical background drummed up and stirred up the historical proclivity to capital across the entire region that came to be magnified through the resulting formation of a patterned matrix of sociospatial correlations over and within the regional space – a regional circuit of compound growth¹².

In Holland region, compound growth was organic movement of capital and labor in nature deployed in space by virtue of the negotiated understanding and concerted bargaining of local – and then supra-local – capital-oriented agencies – rural and urban governments and private businesses alike – penetrated and interrelated through largely institutionalized markets, rules and practices. Coordinated organization resulted in the formulation of spatial, organizational and operational strategies which delivered Dutch space to the logic of capital accumulation – that is, enabled and propelled the historical embeddedness thereof within societal arrangements. Compound growth was thus the

organic conflation of human dynamism and historical opportunity, man's ingenuity and the energies and constraints of nature and history.

Here it is argued that capitalism unfolded on the ground as historically co-produced through a unique panoply of historical-regional factors and vectors which allowed for a unique persistence of growth across four centuries. «The growth process did not so much 'sow the seeds of its own destruction» but the germs of its own reproduction¹³. Moreover, it will be argued that precisely such a co-production of capitalist power on the ground in the late middle ages made for the Dutch state and regime in the 17th century. In such a story thence, in short, what the Hollanders did at the origin was to free up, socially and ecologically, what Michael Mann aptly called «congealed labor (i.e., capital)» and to unleash the latent value-relations of capitalist sort incorporated in it¹⁴.

3.1 Urban-rural complex as early unit of capitalist development: a study

Since the onset of the time period here questioned, the historical co-presence of medieval Malthusian friction, sharp inter-city competition, agro-ecological disorder and commodified market-dependent rurality, thrust on urban centers to put into operation sociospatial networks of wealth, production and exchange premised on commodity-centered value-relations operationalized through market with the respective surrounding rural areas. This developmental contingency, in junction with the related and already consolidated sway of the territorial lord¹⁵, restrained the customary urban thrusts toward the institutionalization of relations of value extraction and predation from rurality premised on politico-military coercion¹⁶. In view of such an appreciation hence, the chapter understands the urban-rural networks of power that resulted in fact as a

capitalist alteration of the socio-ecological pattern of value production and exchange which started out to relate and envelope Dutch space as a whole¹⁷.

The local framework of potency, the public sphere of government and the institutions that penetrated the urban-rural web of relations, were to substantiate a coherent space of activity and agency, with common rules of sociality which embedded the socio-ecological alteration of capitalist sort, and whereby it gained far-flung societal currency¹⁸. For the institutions did not pop up in history out of the blue, they are the very projection of human beings' leanings, of the prowess to regulate power infightings and coordinate disparate interests and, ultimately, of the drive of the most prominent among them, both public and private alike¹⁹. The capital-oriented articulation of such institutional constituents ensued from the geohistorical conditions and constraints of the region: in general, the status of frontier space of the European manorial system – i.e. freedom – along with the specific pattern of urbanization and the unruly ecology, were essential to shape people's behavior, and sequentially, the institutional quality and public activity²⁰.

The eminent Dutch Historian Bas Van Bavel, for example, offers us an enticing explanation according to which workings and orientation of institutions were arguably the upshot of a balance of power between different social interests and the political organisms in the process of decision-making. Such a balance compelled to arrange compromises and to expand cooperation based on voluntarism and horizontal associations of equals. Such a cooperative involvement set in both in rural and urban spaces as a consequence of freedom, early peasant self-appropriation and the self-governing power of the cities²¹.

The institutional landscape in Holland was crucial to translate the market-oriented behaviors or leanings into effective and binding social norms premised on transactional impersonality, relational and contractual formalizations. Capital intensity and the

flowing circulation of capital, as well as the easy access to markets, was boosted and buttressed hence through an interlocking set of institutional devices prone to reducing risks via property rights security, market exchanges safeguard, transactional transparency and formal protection, and designed to control and defuse rent-seeking behaviors²² – the upshots were in short: the lowering or the regulation of transaction costs, market openness and accessibility, and the growth of trade attractiveness and competitiveness²³. The public agencies thrust out thence a societal arrangement of institutions that aided to disseminate the new and inchoate form and condition of power within market: this institutional proclivity thereby bestowed formal body and lively color on the socio-ecological shift from the manorial strategy of “safety-first” to the market-based strategy and agency premised on the commodity-centered logic of value re/production – the capitalist logic of power²⁴.

The adaptive institutional framework was the hallmark of Holland in contrast with the «rigidity» of the European landscape²⁵. By way of this institutional flexibility, a capitalist network of accumulation, wealth and power could innervated and lubricated the societal arrangements since the onset; in so doing, the web of relations propagated in the space within and between towns and countryside, propelled by both at once through the sociospatial correlation, integration and dynamics of market²⁶ – the market, Mann says, «is itself a form of social organization, a mobilization of collective and distributive power» of Parsonian remembrance, and in Holland, this was a function it assumed swiftly²⁷.

To account for capitalist expansion moreover, a compound dynamic of development regional-wide can be identified. In keeping with evidences and concepts to be put forth, two interrelated movements of development can be inferred: *within* an urban-rural complex, sociospatial relations were to operate through a structural inconsistency of competitive pressures leading to the joined expansion of market and

profit drive in virtue of the coherent landscape of institutions and public potency that protected capital and capital accumulation. The result was the combined and contextual growth and interrelation of urban and rural commercial networks of production and exchange²⁸; on regional scale by contrast, sociospatial relations *among* urban-rural complexes were to operate through the structural intensity of competitive pressures, premised on and led by inter-city competition, opening up the way for an efficient and cost-effective regional structure of market – labor, capital, goods and land – that contributed to wiping out any spatial and logical feudal barrier²⁹. This dual condition of a single development was to replenish, to expand and to entrench the drive for profit, toward profit reinvestment and the accumulation of power through capital expansion within the whole regional space – *both public and private*³⁰.

Profit primacy and drive innervated therefore the rise of a capital-intensive structure and network of production and exchange that enabled the region to focus, since the late middle ages, on intensive capital accumulation rather than *mere* intense labor exploitation³¹. Due to being shielded by a capital-oriented institutional framework arranged by local public bodies, market competition stimulated the formation of early *flows* of cheap capital that favored the density of capital-intensive accumulation strategies; capital intensification allowed for intra-regional specialization and production diversification that boosted the intra-regional trade in goods, semi-fabricated and raw materials-energies – which in turn tended to encourage further the institutional checks – as well as the well-nigh free viability of labor³².

The interlocked growth of institutions, markets and productions, both in urban and rural areas, took place between the XIII-XV – Institutions by the mid of the XIV century took a better shape; land-lease and capital markets developed in the course of the XIV century; (proto-)industrial activities swelled after the second half of the XIV century (goods and labor). After the second half of the fourteenth century, the Dutch

economy as a whole was re/structured – and thus society as well. These centuries were *the* «period of very rapid structural change [...] dominated by structural transformation»³³. Dutch societal expansion was contextual also to a primordial wave of nature's appropriation – which is to be accounted in section 4 – upon which the development of economy and society was premised and could unfold.

The constitution of the commodity-centered complex of rural-urban value-relations propelled the early moment of Dutch accumulation. Thereby, it delivered Dutch space to the logic of capital accumulation for it institutionalized the sociospatial networks of capitalist wealth, production and exchange as the way of organizing society and nature. In other words, the capitalist logic of power became the Dutch strategy to manage human space. Such a historical movement signaled therefore that an incipient and *underlying* process of embeddedness of the commodity-centered logic of power re/production within the political, economic and social structures, networks and institutions of the region occurred. The capitalist-regional praxis was, hence, the complex entanglement of local geohistorical conditions and constraints, both human and natural, and as such it to be explored in the rest of the chapter³⁴.

If cities are concentration of wealth and power, the organic movement of cities and rurality is their (potential) magnification³⁵.



Figure 3.1 Holland and Zeeland in 1433

3.2 Accumulation by checked dispossession

Dense capital intensity sharpened, and in turn was fed into by, the dialectic moment between the movement unto peasants' dispossession and the strategic check thereof.

As Jan van Zanden suggests, the Dutch proto-industrial landscape was really variegated³⁶: metallurgy, dyeing, bleaching, lime burning, brick production, brewing, cloth, line, peat-digging, shipping, water transport and fishing – the most important sectors in Holland – as well as dairy production and oil pressing, were carried out mainly in rural areas. But the regional headway of the economy as a whole brought most sectors, such as shipbuilding and transportation, peat-digging, brick-production and lime-burning, and the cloth industry to be logically subjected to processes of scale enlargement and capital intensification. In view of the proto-industrial complexion of production, the hold of urban capital became incrementally pervasive at any level of the economy, as well as the presence of waged labor³⁷. Its steady command upon flows of capital and the capital-intensive framework of the economy increasingly demanded costly investments in fixed capital that provided in turn ample possibilities for profiting from the surplus-value of rural and urban (proto-)waged labor³⁸. Furthermore, capital intensification spelt diversification and specialization that allowed for both urban and rural concentration of industries and the management of large-scale-cum-labor-extensive productions. These processes were underpinned by both the ease of retrieving fuel, natural energies and raw materials and by means of technological advancement – industrial watermills, better kilns, windmills, and greater loom – and the improved water management and functional landscape transformation. Investments in capital-intensive technology, both in urban and rural productions, was a witting strategy of

capital expansion by labor-saving techniques, labor-cost reduction and ecological manipulation³⁹.

The expansion of capital accumulation processes allowed urban capital to buy heavily into the surrounding land, coming to wear out further the rural eco-agricultural landscape of Holland⁴⁰. A pivotal driver for a capitalist investment into, and rational exploitation of, land was the formalization of the related market and of the relations of market. Market transparency and security, but also openness and flexibility, was the correlative of it, and whereof the lease system was part and parcel⁴¹. The lease system became, especially since the sixteenth century, «the dominant mode of exploiting landownership» – especially short-term lease (ten-years term was predominant⁴²) – by way of the formalization of contractual protection and transparency⁴³. The early safeguard of property rights and of land transactions through public courts of justice shielded against any arbitrary claim or confiscation: contracts had to be written and registered, and «books or protocols had legal validity and evidentiary value». This practice became the normal procedure in towns where it firstly set in, and then in the countryside since the XIV⁴⁴. From the late XIV century it was extended to villages also. Since 1529, Holland made compulsory the judicial conveyance and registration of transactions in public registers on penalty of transaction nullification. An appropriate fiscal policy – related to the check of tax declarations or a more accurate taxation of land as well as of sales or leases – was at the base of the institutional policy of enforcing the registrations publically⁴⁵. However, the expansion of lease was by the same token propelled by the expansion of the burghers' acquisition of land: the utilization of lease was the device to make land profitable. Such a thrust was furthered by the more precise definition of landownership, property rights and the increased adherence to the terms of leasing arrangements, and facilitated by the absence of taxation on sales⁴⁶. All of «This contrasts sharply with the situation in other parts of 16th-century Northwestern Europe

[...]. The main underlying cause was the high degree of personal, legal freedom in the Netherlands, which was in place already in the high Middle Ages»⁴⁷. The Dutch leanings towards formalization signals thus, on the one hand, the factual need of rules protecting and spurring capital accumulation; on the other, it emphasizes how concrete the behavioral shift was and how it affected human behavior and social relations.

Thus, small farming was replaced by larger-scale urban landownership that bulked the production by way of capital intensification and specialization, whereof the greater efficiency and the higher returns on investment afforded relevant capital accumulation⁴⁸. The displacement of the small farming, «much more than the subsidence of the soil in the 14th century, *really swept away* the link between non-agricultural activities in the countryside on the one hand and small farms and some subsistence farming on the other». Fringes of peasants came to be dispossessed through this process of replacement and, as a result, waged labor expanded along with the extension and the contractual formalization of the labor market⁴⁹. Up to 45 percent of rural workforce was engaged in proto-industrial activities and 29 percent ended up being bridled within full wage-labor schemes during the sixteenth century – a percentage alien to other countries – *within a regional pattern of semiproletarianizing processes*⁵⁰. The labor market was almost freed by institutional medieval-like constraints and, indeed, the insistence of wage labor was the strongest it had been in Europe since the late middle ages⁵¹. The growth of the institutionalized networks of production and exchanges enabled towns to incorporate, within an extended wage-based framework of urban labor cycles, large quantities of rural workforce. The formalization of labor in the fifteenth and in sixteenth centuries, both in towns and in the hinterland, developed through market-driven arrangements «based on a cash wage, paid daily, weekly, or monthly. Labor contracts in these areas were mostly formal and short-term»⁵².

The importance and the presence of formalized waged relations was prominent in the most typical proto-industries inherent in the economic and ecological landscape of Holland such as bleaching and peat-cutting, brick production and lime-burning⁵³. Urban capital bought heavily into these sectors that demanded costly fixed capital goods and technologies and extended its own command by way of the strategic organization of managerial layers to check wage laborers⁵⁴. Managerialism and notably wage labor in water management as instance was widely adopted, and due to the increasing necessity to create new arenas for profitable activities, the proletarianization process advanced and coupled with the higher degree of monetization of the work relationships. Jobs pertaining to ecological manipulation such as in water management – digging and diking – were for two-thirds waged in Holland⁵⁵. Fishing labor under wage-based relations grew for urban capital invested also there, from the lease of fishing rights – «increasingly monopolized by wealthy burghers» – to fishing equipment such as nets or ships. The increment of the operation scale – herring was a case – demanded capital which only urban investors could provide.

The capitalist strategy of power and relation was working and it set about regulating the workings of society as a whole⁵⁶. The expanded urban-rural capitalist accumulation provided an entire set of opportunities to the advancement of the early processes of value exploitation through proletarianization by setting up conditions, in time, to increase concentration, centralization and polarization of the rural labor forces' *surfeit* within higher capital-intensive unities of production, both in urban-rural industries and in larger market-oriented farms. The lower social substrata came to be fleshed out by dispossessed men and crosscut by market-driven hiring processes, in towns and country alike. Capital expansion resolved into the acquisition of the means of production and the enlargement of the wage-based scheme of reproduction for the workers that moved «30–40% of the labor force from low productive agriculture to high

productivity activities in the secondary and tertiary sectors», thereby allowing for an increase of 15-20% of GDP per capita. «Total growth was much more, however, almost 60% in per capita terms» in the sixteenth century⁵⁷. The command of urban capital however enfolded but not coerced Dutch space in virtue of the coherent orientation and activities of institutions and public authorities that fostered the societal diffusion of the capitalist logic of operation. The result: the capital-intensive structure of relations, production and exchange of the region expanded and came to be entrenched in the span of time that run from the XIV century on the eve of the Golden Age. In other words:

While capitalism transformed independent household labor processes into a *unified “social process”*, it also created a spatial separation of the workplace from the household. At the same time, capitalism joined together independent workplaces into an ever expanding set of market relationships. In the words of Nassau Senior, “Nature seems to have intended that mutual dependence should unite all the inhabitants of the earth into one great commercial family”⁵⁸.

But proletarianization was only part of the wider capitalist movement on the societal ground which could unfold in the long run instead only through the shifting combinations of labor systems in space that the proto-industrial pattern of expansion enabled, and that cushioned the costly impact of mounting fully-waged labor⁵⁹ on the reproduction processes of capital – the semiproletarian was the best investment⁶⁰. Inherent in the proto-industrial process of labor reproduction, the deployment of an uneven labor composition and of uneven accumulation strategies in the region as articulation of the capitalist pattern of re/production and accumulation, enabled the Dutch a rising rate of exploitation and the check on proletarianized reproduction⁶¹. This was, on the other hand, part and parcel of an interpenetrating movement of capitalization-cum-appropriation of socio-ecological energies which seizes in fact the

history of world capitalism and which also typified since the onset Dutch space, and pursuant to which the Hollanders managed to enlarge their organized basin of accumulated capital⁶². It was indeed by virtue of this mixture of labor strategies, cautious investments and environmental manipulation as we shall see – «tricks and plans» in Braudel's terms – that the Dutch arena *as a whole* managed to turn in time into a heavily industrialized and commercialized space⁶³.

In short: *here*, what appropriation of regional semiproletarianized labor-value spelt and permitted – that is, the great part of labor-time unpaid by capital, a variant that hence impinged on the circuit of capital reproduction by boosting the rate of accumulation in virtue of the curtailment of part of the labor reproduction cost – was to downsize or to check the tendency of the value composition of capital to rise in the mirror-context of rising technical composition of capital. In other words, all-out dispossession and proletarianization

would not be in the best interests of capital. Instead, capital would manipulate the extent to which workers relied on self-provisioning in order to maximize its advantage. [To capitalism hence,] wage labor and nonwage labor are, indeed, inextricably linked [...]. The greater the reliance on pre-capitalist economic relations, then, the more successful capitalism is in raising the rate of surplus value⁶⁴.

	c. 1350	c. 1450	c. 1550
Cloth industry	2,000	6,000	3,000
Linen industry	2,000	1,000	1,500
Bleaching	50	100	150
Brick-ovens	200	500	1,000
Lime-kilns	200	350	500
Brewery	[800]	[600]	[800]
Cheese	[500]	[1,500]	[3,000]
Hemp-processing	[500]	[1,000]	[1,500]
Peat-digging	5,000	3,000	6,000
Peat-transport	3,000	2,000	4,000
Other transport	[1,000]	[1,500]	[2,000]
Herring-fishing	1,000	2,000	4,000
Coastal fishery	[800]	[1,000]	[1,200]
Other fishery	[2,000]	[2,000]	[2,000]
Shipbuilding	500	1,000	750
Total all-year labor	12,500	16,950	19,050
Total seasonal labor	7,050	6,600	12,350
Total Man-Years	16,025	20,250	25,225

Table 3.1. Labor-input in non-agricultural activities in the countryside of the Holland region (in man-years),

1350-1550⁶⁵

Table 3.2. Estimates of labour inputs (in man-years) and shares of wage labour
in the main branches of proto-industry in Holland^{a66}

	<i>Labor Input</i>	<i>Share of wage Labor (%)</i>	<i>Man-years in wage labor</i>
Brick-making ^b	1,000	100	500
Lime kilns	500	100	500
Bleaching ^b	150	95	71
Herring-fishing ^b	4,000	80	1,800
Peat-digging ^b	6,000	75	2,400
Coastal fishery ^b	[1,200]	75	450
Other fishery	[2,000]	75	1,500
Woollen industry	3,000	75	2,250
Linen industry	1,500	60	1,125
Peat transport	4,000	60	2,400
Other transport	[2,000]	60	1,200
Shipbuilding	750	50	450
Brewery	[800]	40	400
Cheese-making	[3,000]	15	1,200
Hemp-processing	[1,500]		225
Total, all-year labor input	19,050		
Total, seasonal labor input	12,350		
Total man-years	25,225 ^c	65	16,471

a Square brackets signify less certain estimates.

b Seasonal labour (=6 months of the year).

c Total of all-year labour input+half of the seasonal labour input (=6 months).

	year	total capital (1000 guilders)	capital per capita(guild.)
Amsterdam	1505/7	1018	73
Delft	1508	536	36
Haarlem	1495-1500a	444-553	32-40
Leiden	1498	919	55
Leiden	1502	805	49
Gouda	1492	216	23
Enkhuizen	1514	200	51
Hoorn	1514	332	54
Edam	1514	147	54
Total		3810	46
Haarlem	1483	973	70
Alkmaar	1532	547	78-99
Edam	1462	317	60-80

Table 3.3. Estimates of per capita wealth c. 1500 (in guilders Holland pounds of 40 groten)

a - seven different estimates ranging from 444 to 553⁶⁷

Reverting to the section point. A last contingent factor deserves to be mentioned: mass production proclivity. Mass production proclivity was stimulated by a cumulative structural effect: the combination of structural intensity of competitive pressures among rural-urban complexes and structural inconsistency of competitive pressure within a rural-urban complex. The reticulations of urban-rural centers tended to lowering prices and to expanding the corpus of inputs and outputs as a whole, cheaply and readily forthcoming for production, and to reducing transaction and transport costs as well as times and timing of exchanges – in this respect, the coherent complexion of the institutional setting protective of capital accumulation and investment was fundamental; meanwhile, the development of a low-cost, semiproletarianized economy as a whole enabled extended production to be absorbed in consumption by the improved purchasing power of the middle layers of society (artisans, retailers, civil servants) in

the cities, but also of the larger farmers in the countryside as well as of the workers as a consequence of the displacement of the living strategy from the “safety first” toward the capitalist one⁶⁸. Wealthy burghers and tenant farmers as well as the (proto-)industrial substrata could engender thus a further source of regional accumulation, and sequentially a further rootedness of the logical thrust to profit⁶⁹.

To round off: paraphrasing Harvey, the general process of accumulation by dispossession was the early socio-ecological mainstay whereon local and regional economy and the institutional framework as a whole – and their articulations over and within Dutch space – could expand. The contingency of dispossession underpinned, fostered and propelled the reinforcement of the *constraint* to accumulate power and wealth through market networks and the rational economic imperative, calculus and flexibility of both rural and urban actors. But the dispossession (i.e. proletarianization) strategic check, at the same time, turned out to be the best terrain upon which the same capitalist accumulation could unfold and expand (semiproletarianization praxis). Moreover, the strategy of checked dispossession spurred on the urban-rural spaces to compound and knit stocks and flows of (human and extra-human) resources together, turned as a whole under the command, the strategies and the energies of urban capital and the rising capitalist agriculturists. Town-country credit facility and market networks along with mass production proclivity within a formalized set of juridical relations made the «urban-agrarian symbiosis» a structural vector on the societal ground conducive to the Dutch combustion in the seventeenth century⁷⁰. Adapting Moore’s illuminating concept of commodity frontier hence, we can say that the production and the extension of an incipiently commodified human space, bred and interrelated «the production in one *place* and the expansion of capitalist *space*» on regional scale⁷¹.

The urban-rural agglomerates represent institutional nodules of formalized relations of wealth, production and exchange whereon and whereby the capitalist

network of power accumulation became structured and gained momentum across the centuries, as well as the logic hereof⁷².

3.3 The early European networks of Dutch accumulation

The eminent Dutch historian Jansen introduces: «in the period 1350-1400 Holland was completely transformed from a largely agrarian and rural society to an urban, commercial, and industrial one, and that only during these years did Holland acquire a dominant position in the foreign trade and commerce of the Netherlands». The process of accumulation by dispossession and commodified space extension, embedded within the Holland system of government-based control of export industries and importation, afforded also the internal base for the articulation and the expansion of primordial networks and processes of accumulation across Europe – the enlargement of the commodities and market frontiers in the bout under exam as base for the coagulation of an expanded capital within the Dutch State and regime, and the world expansion of the Dutch networks in the 17th century. According to Jansen indeed, (proto-)industrial and market development seem having had their correlative in the expansion of networks of market and production unto the continent – through exploitation and/or appropriation of the European natures, soil/grain/forests⁷³.

Urban capital maintained the main stages of rough production of the main line of products, that were expanding on the European markets, in the countryside. This was the crucial strategy which enabled the Dutch to be competitive at European level since the late middle ages: in a nutshell, commodities to be sold off abroad were mostly produced through semi-proletarian cycles of labor which allowed entrepreneurs and merchants to have a better hold on the rate of reproduction of circulating capital – reproduction costs of labor and costs of production. This enabled hence to check and

downsize the impact of circulating capital on the rate of capital reproduction boosting capital accumulation⁷⁴. In time, since 1350, accumulation of capital along with the expanding European circuits of imported raw materials and semi-fabricated spurred on a major urban and then rural focus on specialization and capital-intensive production stages, the sequential retrenchment of the inefficient labor-intensive processes of production, and the consequential valorization of the higher value-added of capital⁷⁵. Such a further strategic concentration led the organization of the higher capital-intensive production towards capitalistic-industrial forms by way of technological improvements, the larger scale of outputs and the formation of rough scale economies⁷⁶. A profitable circuit of importation-production-exportation premised on capital valorization was put into operation in the higher capital-intensive specialized industries. As a result, exports became competitive⁷⁷. Moreover, the trend of increasing conflation of urban capital with land and commercial agriculture impinged on the agrarian landscape of Holland for it compelled urban investors, as we have seen, to bolster the shift of the agrarian social-property relations in order to expand profit and the return on investments: the process of spatial extension of urban landowning in time made household proto-industrial productions drop and small tenant farmers gradually disappear, meanwhile it gave rise to larger export-oriented capital-intensive tenant farms being rented out⁷⁸.

The rural labor-intensive sectors of industrial production were affected by urban capital expansion: in dairy production for instance, a curtailment of labor input by means of capital injections was put into operation by urban entrepreneurs as a strategy to profit. By way of such a process of rationalization, dairy commercial farming expanded until the XVI century and conquered international markets: «the cheese sector was generating a chief export product of the Holland countryside»⁷⁹. Another example of internationally successful proto-industry was the brick industry. Brick industry underwent the enlargement of the scale of production thanks to higher thermal energy

employment, eased by the expansion of fuel markets and the quickness of commodity circulation due to market regional integration, and it was export-oriented: the IJssel bricks and paving-tiles found markets in England with cargoes ranging from 10,000 to 35,000 bricks each brought by Gouda and Rotterdam ships to Newcastle, Great Yarmouth and Chichester. Also large quantities were shipped to Denmark and the Baltic region during the XV century and swelled strongly in the XVI. Van Bavel tells us that «in the period 1540-1565 yearly some 1.5 million tons of turf were abroad exported from Holland»⁸⁰. Brewing developed more rapidly from the XIV century in the Dutch market as well as abroad thereafter. Urban capital bought into technology, specialization, concentration and sizeable scale enlargement in more urban-centered unities of production thereby marketizing at the expense of rural producers⁸¹. «By far the most of the Holland beer exported to non-regional markets, perhaps some 90 %, was produced by larger urban brewers»⁸². Linen production was spatially-synergetic. The linen industry for the most employed raw material such as flax or hackled flax imported from abroad and worked, at different stages of production, by both country- and town-workers and whereof a good portion came to be destined to the exportation to Italy, England and Spain⁸³. But it was fishing the leading example of Dutch market-organized expansion⁸⁴:

Fishing was often linked with transportation, since fishing-ships were also used for carrying cargo, at least until the end of the 16th century, when specialized types of ships gained more and more ground [...].The strong development of shipping and fishing in Holland in the 15th and 16th centuries not only resulted in a growing demand for rope, nets and canvas [...] but also in an increasing demand for ships. Part of the shipbuilding was done in the countryside, along the rivers. Ship carpentry was a highly developed skill and increasingly so through the 15th and 16th centuries, as ships became bigger and more complex. Simultaneously, and connected with this development, a process of capital intensification,

scale-enlargement and concentration took place. This process went together with a shift of the sector to the cities, which also exercised some political pressure to this end.

Dutch herring became in that span of time a pivotal exportation and during 1300s it had already tapped into the English market and then into Flanders and Brabant⁸⁵, the Danish market, in Germany – Rhine, Cologne, Basel – Spain, France – Saint-Malo, Dieppe and Rouen to Paris and then Franche-Comte, Toulouse, the Dauphine and Avignon –, and finally reached the Mediterranean shores. «Herring was one of the typical products of the North which formed the basis for the commercial connection with southern Europe. Herring was therefore naturally in the cargoes of the northern European ships which invaded the Mediterranean in the sixteenth century»⁸⁶. Indeed, the actual burst was between 1450 and 1590 and it occurred as a compound growth. Its initial nature of seasonal proto-industrial activity enabled: to hire out low-waged workers; cheap, peasant-produced equipment; shared ships-owning; efficient protection of herring fleets; well-organized markets; reduced costs of information; urban-rural authorities' regulation and backing; quality; good packing. Only in the XVI century, when herring fishing cut its proto-industrial base off by cycles of capital injection, productive growth, specialization and a major employment of wage labor-force, this industry managed to bulk further the scale of operation and the opportunity for profit although, at the same time, the same very processes of expansion started out to gradually fret its rate of accumulation by increasing production costs⁸⁷.

But what needs to be emphasized is that any of such developmental correlatives for Holland's economic advance could *only* be developed by virtue of the feasible and factual estrangement from subsistence that the European circuit of food grains importation and circulation – viz., the European circuit of capitalization-appropriation of natures – allowed and endorsed. Ludovico Gucciardini in 1567 beheld that:

Di si fatta maniera che, da quel' tempo in qua, pare che il terreno restando coli basso. Se sopraffatto dall'acque, che il più del tempo vi regnano, habbia molto mutato di natura & conditione: onde per tanta bassezza & aquosità quello paese fa pochissimo grano, & manco segale, nondimeno n'ha tanta abbondanza, che ne provvede piu Provincie, ma vi fono portati da più bande, & specialmente di Danimarca, & d'Ostarlante⁸⁸.

Ecology molded the formative path of the Dutch structure of accumulation and its constituents in space. The need for grain to feed the Low Countries after the Black Death was «staggering» owing to the next demographic upswing, populace concentration in expanding towns and the intrinsic constraints of agriculture and soil⁸⁹. In other words: soil scarcity beset Dutch history⁹⁰. It was in the XV century that Holland, as one would have expected, commenced relying heavily on imported grain, notably long-distance grain trade, whose volume was «impressive»: the quantity of rye alone was about 5,500 metric tons in the 1460's and up to well over 20,000 tons each year by the end of the century. By the first half of the 17th century the average for all grains was more than 150,700 metric tons per year. The maximum reached in 1618 was around 220,000 tons⁹¹. Grain production was declining since the XIV century and, by the sixteenth century, wheat and rye cultivation «became almost impossible»⁹². Only soft grain was cultivated and in the XV-XVI century bread grain almost disappeared from the crops. «If grain imported were halted, Holland and particularly Amsterdam would have serious difficulties as the domestic (Holland) grain accounted for less than a tenth of the total required. According to this, the Dutch population depended on foreign imports for more than 90 percent of its needs». The most important source of grain from the Baltic was with no doubt Gdansk: 79 percent of importations emanated from there⁹³.

Year	Last	Hectoliters
1490	10,00	301,000
1491	0	177,600
1492	5,900	316,000
1530	10,50	541,800
1557	0	897,000
1562-1569	18,00	1,363,500
(average)	0	
	29,80	
	0	
	45,30	
	0	

Table 3.4. Grain export from Danzig according to the harbor records of Danzig (1490-1557) and the Sound Toll tables (1562-1569)⁹⁴

Baltic grain circuit undoubtedly had a decisive role *in helping* to substitute the subsistence strategy inherent in the feudal rules of reproduction with an economic rationality that was to base the source of socio-ecological power on the imperative of capitalist accumulation. The precocity of the shift of Holland's agrarian, industrial and commercial landscape *as a whole* was *an* outcome thereof: capital-driven (proto-)industrial activities as well as commodification of land and nature – we saw above and we see below –, capital-intensive farming and proletarianization, took roots and expanded. Holland, the Baltic, and Poland as instance, came to be strongly correlated with patterns of intense trade exchanges since the late middle ages, owing to their own capitalized ecologies⁹⁵. The span of time from XIV century to XVI century indeed is proven to be

crucial to the jump-start of Holland⁹⁶. Concurrently, the shipments of grain from the Baltic to the Low Countries began by the 14th century and, over time, became the most important pattern of exchanges «in terms of volume and value, at least in northern Europe, down to the Industrial Revolution. The records of the tolls charged in the Sund demonstrate that». In actuality, «specialization in grain production in Poland» coupled with «rising exports of grain to Low Countries» propelled by «the higher level of market integration», notably in the XVI century. There are evidences also endorsing the conclusion that «Poland suffered not only from short term drains of foodstuffs but also from limitations in the total supply of grain» from export correlation and soil exhaustion. «The volume of grain shipped was impressive [and the] sheer size of the trade meant that the economies and the grain markets of the two regions were interdependent»⁹⁷.

Van Thielof tells us that about 600,000 people could live with grain imported through the Baltic sea from the east in the decade of 1560. These figures, the historian says, are truly «impressive», even more if we consider that Holland population was far less than that and the greater part of the grain imported came to be re-exported for profit in England, Scotland, Spain, Portugal, and in the countries on the Rhine and Meuse⁹⁸. As far as it is concerned here, this profit was not simply profit hoarded, but capital reinvested into i.e. proto-industrial and industrial production, that is, in technology, innovation, specialization – capitalist intensification of production, concentration and centralization, scale enlargement, labor-savings techniques, etc. – and the further expansion of the commercial networks. In short: expanded accumulation of capitalist sort. In this respect, the Dutch deployed a circuit of compound growth: grain trade was integral to the qualitative and quantitative expansion of proto-industries in the countryside and in towns, and both to the further growth of commercial activities – such as fishing (herring) for example. All these factors, as we shall see below, molded and

were in turn molded by Dutch ecology which enabled the easy retrieve of fuel and energy, and the functional environmental manipulation. Increasingly from 1540 on, Holland was to be «the grain entrepot of Western and Southern Europe» and the highest capital-intensive productive centre; furthermore, «the importance of Baltic grain trade became disproportionately large [for] the great influx of eastern rye during the sixteenth century put the masses of not-rich inhabitants of the Netherlands in the position of supplying their needs for basic food item and a relatively cheap manner [...] even in hard times»⁹⁹. The shift in the living strategy for the Dutch was integral and crucial part of this circuit.

The imperial emissary to Hamburg Maximilian Transilvan in 1534 beheld that:

The whole profit and increase of the kingdom of Poland and the said town of Danzig lies in this, that the Hollanders come every year once or twice to Danzig with two or three hundred ships, to buy and take off in fourteen days all the grain that they find in the said town of Danzig. For in the past twenty-five years all the great lords of Poland and Prussia have discovered therein the means of sending by certain rivers all their grain to Danzig and there to have it sold to those of the said town. And for this reason the kingdom of Poland and the great lords have become mightily rich. For before this time, they knew not what to do with their grain and left their lands uncultivated, and the town of Danzig, which was nothing but a village, is at this time the most powerful and richest city in all the Eastland sea¹⁰⁰.

Not only eastern grain was imported. Any run of western grain in the XVI century flowed into Holland from England – soft grain, barley and malt –, France, notably norther France nearby the Seine, Somme, Artois – that during the start of the Revolt strongly integrated the Baltic flows that were hit hard – and South Flanders, but also from Germany via the Rhine and Meuse. The Province of Holland particularly came to be even fed by Netherlands's sources emanating from Zeeland, south Holland, Delft and Dordrecht, up to Leiden, Utrecht – whose wheat transportation to Amsterdam spawned

a market devoted –, and from Guilders via the Rhine and Meuse to Dordrecht¹⁰¹. Cities were crucial to supply Holland from the outside indeed: ecological disorder foisted the need to capture foreign flows of grain foods on the Dutch and only the market networks of the cities managed to provide such a service, and whose appendages were to provision increasingly the rural areas also¹⁰². It is tenable to say that the *whole* Dutch space – albeit unevenly – came to be dependent on foreign grain from the eve of the sixteenth century¹⁰³.

This perspective tends to back also the historical importance and the nature of the town-countryside involvement as a rather coherent complex of relations, as well as the spatial interpolation of such a historical bloc in the region: trade, production and labor, the networks of trade and the chains of productions and labor, were all intermeshed within, among and by such composite units of institutionalized capitalist space. It was not a pattern of urban exploitation to be sure; nor was it an exchange whereby power simply accrued to cities. It can be better described as a historical unit of capitalist-patterned relations premised on multilateral interdependency and exchanges of value-forms and wealth, whose inherent quality and quantity of interactions and operations built the conditions to greater achievements. As de Vries claimed: «one can view the European economy of the late sixteenth century as consisting of hundreds of towns with hinterlands of 50 to 100 square miles [as] unities». In Holland, since the late middle ages, they worked hand in glove. The national economy and political economy of the Republic of the seventeenth century came to be mapped out and organized in time, then fashioned apace in the last three decades of the sixteenth century, through the increased and expanding thickness and density of the medieval network of power relations on the ground which both urbanity and rurality at once weaved¹⁰⁴.

Pivoting on such a matrix finally, *pace* Brenner, it was the expansion of an economy geared to a supra-regional export-import pattern of accumulation what exactly permitted the *expansion* of the capitalist praxis, and thus capital *enlargement* – not its formation. This pattern provided to Dutch capital outlets to boost accumulation and to check the impact of proletarianization rate on the rate of capital reproduction, without however overly limiting the development of domestic markets. That is, the expansion of capitalist accumulation occurred through: enhanced exploitation/appropriation, in virtue of the semiproletarianizing scheme of labor reproduction (waged laborers + unpaid labor); through the underpinning of uneven levels of consumption in domestic market; and through the European circuit of import-export production, exchange and appropriation that boosted capital accumulation and reproduction, and that overcame, or however curbed, the constraints to the semi/proletarian-based consumption in and for the domestic market. In short: *historical* capitalism (as system) in full swing¹⁰⁵.

3.4 *The capitalist logic and the Dutch ecology*

The process of capitalist expansion and workforce (semi-)proletarianization demanded and allowed at once a movement towards the appropriation of Dutch nature and thus an ecological and environmental manipulation at unprecedented scale: early processes of capitalist environment-making were put into operation. Money was a powerful lever for organizing the nature of the world, Moore avers. Indeed, profitability rose, but appropriation outpaced exploitation and commodification. In Holland «we see capitalism's marriage of accumulation by capitalization [i.e. proletarianization-commodification proclivity] and accumulation by appropriation (lots of 'free gifts'): the savage coupling of productivity and plunder that conditions every great wave of accumulation». In this respect we can say that Dutch history epitomized, above all else,

«social processes with environmental significance, in [a matrix] in which, through complex relations, the physical, social, economic, and political factors intertwine». Dutch history is the history of Dutch environment shaped by a historical-social metabolic exchange¹⁰⁶.

«If God made the world, the Dutch made Holland» René Descartes said (1596–1650)¹⁰⁷. Simon Schama tells us that «the period between 1550 and 1650, when the political identity of an independent Netherlands nation was being established, was also a time of dramatic physical alteration of its landscape»¹⁰⁸. Not for nothing this seventeenth century peak in environment-making processes paralleled the world unfolding of Dutch power. It was the climax of a long-lasting process of landscape manipulation funneled through the institutional framework to facilitate the expansion of the economy since the middle ages¹⁰⁹. The capitalist thrust was at the roots of both of them. The making and remaking in time of Dutch ecological space was thus a master process of the same expansion of capital on a par with the economic-social and institutional processes of Holland formation since the late middle ages. Therefore, in this respect, the environment definitely was not a mere recipient to capital development but integral constituent of Dutch processes of capitalist accumulation and expansion since the beginning.

[W]hy around 1600 [did] the Republic [assume] the mantle of leadership on the path of mankind's economic and social development[?]. The answer is: because it was able to extensively apply inland navigation and, by that, to fall back on its peat deposits when everywhere (also in the Netherlands itself) deforestation had progressed to such an extent, that wood had become an expensive fuel¹¹⁰.

Usually, during the Middle Ages strict socio-ecological constraints to development had to be respected for, being all men dependent directly from soil

productivity, «different sorts of energy [were] mutually exclusive»¹¹¹. The early Dutch capitalist thrust was to push the limit of development against the limit of the natural developmental conditions – which had been inherent in the medieval logic of production and power¹¹². The expansion of the capitalist logic of operation – cash nexus or appropriation alike – embedded on such a vast scope, changed the rhythmic of society instead, and of society in nature with an «irreparable rift»¹¹³. «Urban living created a new human environment in medieval northern Europe [and] extended human environmental impact beyond their own immediate surroundings. Centers of market exchange transmitted demand pressure to natural local ecosystems at some remove from the urban consumers, so initiating on a modest scale effects now attributed to globalization»¹¹⁴. In this process, the Dutch stepped into the limelight *for* this creative manipulation was under way to deliver profits on an ever-larger scale of reproduction to men. The prospect of «capitalism *as* environmental history» for Holland fits quite well¹¹⁵. Commodified energy was required by an expanding capital indeed, and work, in this respect, can be seen as an action toward the transformation of nature to cater to human needs.

As the capitalist logic came to root and spread out, the pace of the erection of dams, dikes, sluices, and polders, the construction of drainage canals, water mills and transport systems stepped up as well as the rhythm of deforestation and soil-dependent energies extractions. Along with this, the effect of an industrial production on a larger scale that such man-made environment eased and propelled further began to be felt¹¹⁶. However, what we need to emphasize is that any such processes of environment-making were far from being permanent and irreversible¹¹⁷. Early-modern capitalism did not intrinsically altered nature. But nature was harnessed and subordinated to the logic of capital accumulation. «One could argue that society did not have its *back* to the ecological wall but was facing it, for the old ecological order could hardly provide

higher living standards for the masses»¹¹⁸. What this shifted mode of landscape production in Holland signaled was “nothing more” than the underlying shift in the living strategy, moving from the old ecological order to the capitalist one – for a wealth, power, and nature, produced by the search for money and premised on the relation of power and production embedded in the commodity-centered reproduction of value¹¹⁹. What the expansion and the entrenchment of the capitalist logic of operation within Dutch space factually made was to entrain – unsurprisingly of course – a swift shift in the *management* of the environment – quality – and in the *pace* of the ecological manipulation – quantity.

The pace and the quality of soil exploitation and degradation stepped up *forcefully as a result of* the increasing operations of industry that foisted the more intense appropriation of natural resources on capital¹²⁰. The Dutch started out putting into operation activities of deforestation and excavation on a massive scale to recoup fuel and energy for replenishing the capital-intensive structure of production, and to keep up with the demographic upswing and urban concentration. Forests were razed to the ground to produce wood for heating, to supply industries, and for building purposes, leading to heavy deforestation¹²¹. The increasing scale of fishing operation for example was enabled by technological investments in shipbuilding and the expansion of production, spelling the accretion of the rate of deforestation, even beyond Holland region, in the territory close to her¹²². «Around 1640 the Dutch stock of harvestable wood lots had been reduced practically to zero»¹²³. Not only deforestation but rivers depletion: investments in fishing technology delivered to the Dutch «enormous drift and drag nets used by fleets of 30 to 50 ships, which emptied the sea». The usage of trawl nets and net poles and the practice of smothering or catching young fish, nearly emptied some rivers, such as the Meuse near Rotterdam. «Around the middle of the 16th

century, fishing grounds in the Zuiderzee seem to have been depleted by overfishing»¹²⁴.

The Dutch were the greediest extractors of peat in Europe, proceeding to operate on the soil on ever-increasing scale and more intensive manner starting from the late middle ages, succeeding «in breaking through the development limit»¹²⁵. The subsidence of drained peat bogs had been a longstanding issue¹²⁶. The rate of peat extraction in Holland, in the course of the late-medieval capital expansion, compounded severely such a historical-natural condition: the mounting drive for profit delivered increasingly the soil to market expanding usages¹²⁷. The waxing pace of extraction and the extension of the activity of dredging of peat paralleled indeed the «jump-start of Holland» – fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries¹²⁸. In this respect, the upshot was forced and systematic landscape manipulation – and sometimes degradation – on ever-larger scale¹²⁹. This was only possible thanks to the capital accumulated, reinvested and reproduced capitalistically. In sum: the expansible industrial structure of Holland necessitated increased quantities of fuels¹³⁰; the soil's natural bounty¹³¹ along with the prompt availability of capital and the cheap and plentiful rural labor-force made it prone to invest in larger-scale capital-intensive operations¹³² and new methods¹³³ – although peat digging remained largely high labor-intensive¹³⁴. The increasing throughput of an expanding economy meant higher returns on investment. The outcome: the further accumulation of capital. By way of this early and inchoate circuit of «capitalism-in-nature», buttressed by the profit-oriented institutional framework¹³⁵, the industrial thirst of commodified energy could be quenched¹³⁶, endowing the economy as a whole with productive capacity, flexibility and competitiveness alien to other region in this respect, thereby enabling to expand and extend range, quantity and quality of productions, exchanges and operations in domestic and international markets alike at unprecedented scale.

The expanding rate of dikes building, sluices construction and wind/watermills technology swept across Dutch space, and along with private and public investments for creating new polders, they were part and parcel of the movement that was making ever-more profitable land in the course of the early process of commodification of nature. Add to this the extensive transport and port system – «the finest transportation networks in all of medieval Europe»¹³⁷ – and the facilities by water which the furtherance of the hydraulic technology – i.e. sluice mechanization and raw material improvements for dikes – enabled as a response to the widespread ecological crisis – partially bred but with no doubt sharpened by the spreading logic of commodifying nature – and we set about gleaning why accumulation of capital and capitalist forces could congeal in the region consistently¹³⁸. «Indeed, it is impossible to envision the economic success of the Dutch Republic during the early modern era without taking the inland waterways into consideration» with energy-fuel production as a function of water managements: «investment in water managements provided the means for intensive economic growth [and in so doing] water adaptation strategies were connected not only to environmental processes, but also to the changing framework of political, economic, and social institutions»¹³⁹.

Adapting Moore, the «Fours Cheaps» – reserve of labor, food (largely imported), raw materials (domestic and imported) and energy (domestic – peat – imported – wood) – were all at work in full swing here largely accruing to the operations of capital. The capitalist circuit of compound growth afforded the Hollanders «*twice doubled* opportunities for development» pursuant to the fact that it embedded within itself the nature and the profit-oriented management thereof¹⁴⁰.

3.5 By way of introduction

Over time, in Holland, the capitalist expansion spelt the same old problem of the capitalist strategy of power and relation across history. Wealth polarization, social inequality and environmental exhaustion through market transformation of human values was not an unnatural distortion but the factual agency of a society of capitalist sort, and it signaled the degree to which the capitalist logic of operation enveloped Dutch space. The first and second points – inequality and polarization – have been omitted thus far and now treated in passing.

Social mobility brought about an ample inequality between various social groups. It grew, and wealth distribution became more uneven with the increment of the scale of the market operations. The phases of economic expansion partially concealed the process of uneven distribution of social wealth by expanding purchasing power; but it brought out also that the growth of GDP per capita paralleled the increment in polarization and a sharpened process of wealth concentration: the gap between rich and poor was waxing. The masses were not worse off in absolute terms but in relative ones. Abstract indicator such as GPD per capita diverts the quality of Holland development for the expansion was accompanied by improved and yet languishing living standards. And the quality of such a contradiction has been tracked down in the growing importance of the cash nexus and the market-based social relations of exchange and production, the scale enlargement of the operations of accumulation, production and exchange and a division of labor towards a sharpened proletarianization. «This process was able to increase or sustain GDP per capita and feed more people, but at the same time created inequality, pollution, and environmental degradation». The capitalist thrust has always been structured on, and has always operated by way of, an oligarchic accretion of wealth which pollutes and degenerates any social achievement¹⁴¹.

Nonetheless, the material and cultural development of society proceeded in waves of accelerations and braking, but, since the later middle ages, Holland region slowly but steadily accumulated and bulked forces and powers, means and ideas, knowledge and know-how, *function of* the capitalist origin of its own framework of expansion¹⁴². The exceptional level of urbanization was a long-run vector of “modernization” conducive to a «bourgeois society» in which particular institutional and occupational flexibility, market-oriented agency and religious-intellectual broad-mindedness, further swayed medieval traditions and collectivity and enveloped the countryside outright. This “modern” environment and spatial arrangement in turn furthered the common individual and individualistic propensity to act by creating «situations in which personal initiative, innovation, and responsibility [could] develop, and where political, economic, and personal freedom [was] valued more highly». Medieval remnants were thus progressively eroded away, displaced by a logic of socio-ecological agency rooted in an institutional framework premised on tenets of «modern economy». Such a bias was not confined to cities, but it had its profound sway on peasantry as well, and thus all over the region – the «institutions by their nature were probably closer to the most basic values of life and therefore more firmly embedded in the fabric of society»¹⁴³. The interplay of historical factors and vectors represents the early matrix of power relations and pattern of wealth, production and exchanges; the original intertwining and intersecting «socio-spatial networks of power» over and within Dutch space; the very ground upon which the next structured complex and higher assemblages of power relations embodied by the Dutch Republic could be framed and put into operation¹⁴⁴.

«Capitalism *only* triumphs when it becomes identified with the state, when it is the state» avers Braudel. But capitalism, Braudel continues, «*reveals its true face*» only when it becomes identified with society, when it is society. Hence, if a capitalist-

hegemonic triumph is to occur, within a territory, state and capital, plus society, are to be coextensive, that is, to constitute a trialectic unity premised on a capitalist process of interlocking embeddedness¹⁴⁵. Power is to be the result, and the world expansion of power to be the result of the most logically-coherent rootedness and development of the same process of constitution. The incunabula of this movement factually occurred *on the Dutch ground* since the late middle ages in a characteristic fashion and it represented an interstitial emergence of a new configuration of power within the general feudality of Europe¹⁴⁶. As capitalism took hold and expanded by way of the interlocking articulation of institutionalized capital-oriented business and governmental agencies and structures of power on the ground up to the sixteenth century¹⁴⁷, its triumph was to be substantiated by means of (the structuring of) a capital-based «territorial state» in the seventeenth century – a organizational capitalist complex of agencies, networks and institutions¹⁴⁸. Such a process of development and structuring did not signal the crossing of an edge, but the historical development of «infrastructural power» – a regime of accumulation¹⁴⁹. The Dutch Republic was thus the historical outgrowth of both Schumpeterian adaptive and creative response society- and state-wide that signaled not the transition from feudalism to capitalism, but the passage from medieval networks of scattered capitalist power on the ground to a structured complex of concentrated capitalist power that the Dutch state embodied in the seventeenth century¹⁵⁰.

The historical lack of a congealing organic state structure – an organic and strong upper *ordo* of power – in the process of power formation during the late middle ages was an important factor conducive to the expansion of Dutch society *as a whole* and the extension of the benefits and the logic of such an expansion toward the very ground of the Dutch social edifice. For its own historical premises, Holland region lacked strong higher configurations and coordination of powers premised on the strategy of «political accumulation» that were to exert a rent-seeking hold in the process of early formation,

displacing and distorting powers, forces and wealth from the ground¹⁵¹. In view of this hence, *by laying out conditions and seizing opportunities on the historical ground*, urban(-rural) capital, in the long run, managed to garner and strengthen the hold of *political* power at supra-local level pursuant to the vertical and horizontal extension of networks of accumulation and power – from the second half of the 14th century, towns in Holland *began* to «move to the centre of the political stage» up to becoming «*the* dominant center of political power» in the Republic¹⁵². As we shall see, this capitalist hold in politics on the ground, enabled to seize and thus to run from below the process of jurisdictional coagulation that historical contingencies and necessities thrust upon the Dutch during the second half of the sixteenth century¹⁵³. The construction of the Dutch Republic was the witting completion and historical acme of the developmental path of a society compelled, since the origin, «to sell to survive»¹⁵⁴.

Chapter 4

The Dutch Regime of Accumulation.

From Scattering to Concentration to Redeployment, XVI-XVII centuries.

This chapter draws on and expands in riveting detail a suggestion made by Brian Downing in his 1992's *The Military Revolution and Political Change*, that is, that the impetus for the historical change during the middle ages and early modern times came from «the institutional momentum of the medieval estates, local governments, personal freedom and independent judiciaries» themselves, not from the emerging structure of nation-states. But also it endeavors to elaborate on the insight made by David Landes recalled in the previous chapter which the scholar rounds off as follow:

In any event, it was surely one of Europe's great advantages that its first capitalist entrepreneurs worked and flourished in autonomous city-states, hence political units where the influence of landed wealth was necessarily limited; and that even in the larger embryonic nation states, the special juridical status of the urban commune made it possible for its inhabitants to develop and sustain their own distinct political interest [...]. In this way the cities were not only foci of economic activity but schools of political and social association incubators of the bourgeoisie as a self-conscious, assertive interest group.

They were also crucibles for the refinement of values that, although profoundly rooted in European culture, were still deviant and limited to a minority-values ultimately subversive of the feudal order¹.

This chapter also takes inspiration from the work of the distinguished historian Frederic Lane who drew attention to the effect that the transfer of resources by means of taxation engenders on processes of capital accumulation, notably with a focus on «the extent to which governments determined directly the uses made of surplus through their taxes and disbursements»:

Economic growth depended not only on the incentives to invest but also on the capacity to invest. In recent times it is estimated that nearly all individuals' savings, and thus capacity to invest, is in the hands of ten percent of the population. The poor may have the incentives, but they lack the capacity. There is reason to believe that such was also the case in early modern times. Economic growth then depended very largely on whether or not the system of property rights, and the use by governments of the tribute they collected, put surplus under the control of men who invested it and thus increased total production².

This chapter follows the path already undertaken to understand the formation of the historical basin of Dutch power. In this regard we can summarize that the horizontal unfolding of the logic of capital accumulation on the Dutch ground during the XIV-XVI centuries enabled the vertical thrust of power which structured the Dutch state in the second half of the XVI century. Paraphrasing David Held, this interdependent capitalist transformation of both state and society came to be topped off by the coming into operation of the Dutch regime of accumulation during the last decade of the XVI century right up to the XVII century. The issue looks at how the capitalist logic of operation permeates the pattern of behavior of state, capital and society up to create an historical intersubjectively-constituted capitalist reality which was characterized by a

great logical coherence. The completion and acme of the historical process of interlocking embeddedness begun in the late middle ages was the Golden Age, that is, the Dutch hegemon of the seventeenth century *in the context of* consolidation of the capitalist world system. But, in this long-run process of formation and combustion, nothing was preordained or certain and definite.

William Aglionby wrote in 1669:

scarce any Subject occurs more frequent in the discourses of *ingenious men*, than that of the marvellous progress of this little State which in the space of about one hundred years (for 'tis not more since their first attempt to shake off the Spanish yoke) hath grown to a height, not only in transcending all the ancient Republicks of Greece, but not much inferior in some respect to the greatest monarchies of these latter ages. Nor is the wonder inconsiderably augmented, in that the lesser moiety hath farre exceeded even the whole itself, and seven provinces are become greater than seventeen; with manifest verification of that enigmatical aphorism *dimidium plus toto*. To which it may likewise added that for above sixty years of that abovementioned hundred they were continually engag'd in a Warre against the greatest king of this Western World. [...] and nevertheless the difficult exercise of their nonage not only promoted their growth, by necessarily exciting the industry *natural* to that nation, but likewise contributed *to render the constitution of the state it self more robust and athletic*.³

This chapter therefore will attempt to show how the construction of the Dutch State – conflictual and flawed as *any* process of state-making in *any* time – was tapped and became so productive to the Dutch to transform a tiny piece of land under siege by the Spanish imperial forces in the first hegemonic regime in the history of the capitalist world system. Of course, the constitution of the Dutch edifice was first and foremost highly remunerative for the oligarchies at the helm, but the populace under them enjoined prosperity at unprecedented levels. This is not to say, for instance, that workers fared extraordinary well during the agricultural doldrums of the mid-seventeenth century – firstly affecting the inland areas and northern Brabant in the 1650s and then

became progressively general in the late 1660s – despite the efficient network of welfare that the local authorities, subsidized and backed by the State, arranged⁴. However, the Dutch organization of social provision was, above all else, a «symbolic means for representing cultural norms to a broader public» which conveyed the image and the actual manifestation of a *bonum publicum* to which the Dutch oligarchy could not renounce and the Dutch state had to provide to the Dutch. In this regard see an example of how state, capital and society worked hand in glove in a social equation pivoting on capital in 1658:

Although it must be admitted that in these banks everything is not so equitable as in the Mountains of Charity, and although the profits are not used in helping the poor with alms, nevertheless the interest charges have been reduced one-half, and they are intended to help pay the cost of government. Furthermore, since it is the duty of every man to continue to labor with his hands in order to improve his financial condition and so build up a surplus for the maintenance of the needy, I conclude that the magistrates by increasing the public funds are taking care that in times of depression the poor may be aided either through loans or alms⁵.

An internal projection and organization of power of this sort instantiates the concept of regime of accumulation as here understood. Such a projection contributed to defuse potentially perilous popular uproars during the entire history of the Republic and to keep economy and state going as well. In this sense therefore, a Dutch historian termed the Dutch state «a function of society», a device of management to-ing and fro-ing the societal ground. The Dutch trialectic unity that ensued from this interlocked involvement of the new state with the “old” capital and society was not mere concentrated power; it was concentrated power constructed through collective efforts. And this, the same historian says, is a conception of state, and thus of society and of

perspective of power, «which differed widely from that which prevailed in the Europe of royal absolutism»⁶.



The Republic of the Seven United Provinces

4.1) The birth of the Dutch state and the dawn of the Dutch regime of accumulation

4.1.1) 1482-1560. The first surge of territorial state-building: absolutism in reverse

Concentrated power through collective efforts spelt that Dutch governmental dynamic – structure(s) and processes – in the history of the Republic credited its subjects with powers pursuant to the institutionalized bargaining entrenched during the preceding centuries of societal development theretofore. That is to say that power lay within the Dutch historical edifice, not at its tip, sweeping from within to the tip(s) back and forth – as Herbert Rowen said, power in the Dutch Republic «was distributed all up and down the scale across the country»⁷. This suggests also, as we shall see, that the governmental helm was held by those who already had the means to wield rights and rules, but that were too scattered on the ground to assume complete control, and that exerted – and were only able to exert – a typology of power which called for collective efforts and collective enterprises. In keeping with its historical development thus, the Dutch regime in the XVII century was characterized by rulers which possessed actual power and subjects who were organized and able to organize themselves on the same scale as the rulers. This levelled confrontation was conducted in an highly productive way for populace and rulers alike, and this, in the seventeenth century context, was an exception rather than a rule – purportedly, it was a governmental dynamic which represents a historical rarity as well. Furthermore, it enables to understand the Dutch trialectic unity. The construction of the Dutch state brought the third element missing to constitute the Dutch regime of accumulation.

Since power stemmed primarily from the ground of the Dutch edifice – society –, the passage from scattered to concentrated power can be viewed firstly as an

organizational revolution related to the way state power was organized and structured in actuality in relation with capital and society.

Before the Revolt, especially during the sixteenth century, the urban-rural complexes were subjected to a superimposed authority external to the locus of power itself which obstructed and diverted functions and values to ends which did not conform with the logic according to which the same value was produced. Indeed, the Spanish rulers, for their own prerogatives, lacked a specialized network of bureaucrats and diplomats who could undertake technical negotiations in the sphere of international economy. They were inadequately equipped to play an effective role on the technical level of accumulation, production and exchange⁸. The early expansion of the Dutch space of accumulation provided an opportunity to those rulers to harness the Dutch frontier in the form of social disciplining, political interloping and thus fiscal extraction – viz., value predation. However, the external thrust for appropriation ended up heightening the historical tension inherent to the capitalist logic of power geared to define a clear constitutional self-identity which found political expression in the forcible and ongoing assertion of the Privileges and Liberties in the form of an irresistible thrust towards self-organization and self-representation in political, social and economic matters. This contributed in creating a situation in which, in practice, Spanish rulers scarcely played any role at all – against the collectivity of urban-rural complexes, mainly of Holland, and also in Zeeland

Up to the fifteenth century, the Netherlands had been politically dormant. During the sixteenth century by contrast, especially after 1520, the socio-political reorganization of the Netherlands by the Spaniards bridled the northern space in an integrated Hapsburg jurisdiction under the rule of the agents of the Crown's bureaucracy. The intensified processes of unification, centralization, and bureaucratization caged the true spirit of Dutch sociality, liberties and power with a

superimposed bundle of bureaucratic-fiscal relations – new provincial high courts and the transformation of the *Hof* of Holland and Zeeland as instrument of Hapsburg meddling, the curbs on provincial self-government turned instead into a centrally-managed web of patronage, etc. Up to 1540, political constraints were reckoned with and brooked by both sides. But once the process of social disciplining and political restructuring was coupled with an ever-mounting fiscal pressure during the '40s, situation changed. The struggle for hegemony in Europe between Spain and France was escalating and all provinces were subjected to new heavy burdens in terms of taxation, recruiting, billeting, provisioning, and dislocation of troops – in the Netherlands, the annual cost of waging war in the 1550s was double compared that of the 1540s, and seven/eight times higher than that of the 1520s. The only way to cater to the military needs of the Spaniards – that is, the administrative enhancement of the web of finance and taxation, and the related increase in efficiency of both of them – was a wave of state expansion within Dutch space.

The submission of provincial administrations was of course the main objective of central government. In the newly won provinces indeed, fiscal and political extortion – and the resultant frustration of processes of capital accumulation – exacerbated deep-seated socio-political malaise, and bred strong contention concerning the form and organization of the Hapsburg crown's relations of power with its subjects as well as the right to wield power in that form over them. Notably Holland – but in general the entire Dutch space – owed a deep-rooted «habit of cooperating on behalf of perceived common interests», and when these – the interests of the expanding capital in its operations of accumulation – began to be obstructed or seriously damaged, the harshest frictions set about surfacing⁹.

The new burden – political fetters, fiscal exaction, and economic interloping thereon – was to divert forces and values from the activities of production and trade,

thereby impinging on the rhythm of regional accumulation – within and among the urban-rural complexes – and, as a consequence, on the European networks of Dutch accumulation, notably those ones extending on the Baltic and in north-western Europe. Political, fiscal and economic pressures, exerted for different purposes not related to the urban-rural political economy, enfeebled the rate of accumulation, weighed down the rate of capital reproduction, increased costs – especially related to the circulating capital¹⁰.

Take an example: concerning Baltic grain, political-economic competitive pressures were intense at home as well as in the Baltic. The most intense competition might have been contained, or averted in great part, thanks to an opportune trading policy and/or fiscal relaxation from the center. By contrast, fiscal exactions might create a situation for the Dutch in which a) grain prices might have increased, leading foreign traders to avoid Holland, b) offering to the closer competitors from the southern Netherlands the opportunity to redirect trade directly to Antwerp, or by way of them to other shores, thereby eluding Holland; worse still, c) Holland involvement in the Spanish dynastic and imperial politics – a fiscal and military involvement – pertaining to the northern states might have closed off Dutch trade in the Baltic – Holland had proceeded during the XV century, and in the first decades of the XVI, to secure its international relationships in the Baltic, notably with Denmark that was crucial to Dutch trade. A Baltic war, commercial or political alike, might have brought on increasing fiscal pressure, seafaring unemployment, contraction of the grain market and of the correlatives at home, and increased costs in general – transaction, protection and production costs. Uproars might have sparked off. But the Dutch government – namely, Holland towns' regents – did not permit any *effective* meddling in the economic, fiscal, and also political affairs of the Province when this one impinged on the vital nerves of Dutch economy, and especially on the international economic policy – notably on grain

and herrings – of the most important regional centers of accumulation, such as Amsterdam – the “Danish question” is an example of Amsterdam’s obstreperousness¹¹.

The Dutch made their own policy in the face of the Spanish central governors since the beginning of their rule, deftly handling several central government encroachments¹². Two instances: since 1495, Amsterdam owed a privilege, granted by Maximilian I, for the free re-export of grain, but during Margaret of Austria’s stewardship in the second decade of the sixteenth century, the Spaniards tried (1527/1535 officially) to withdraw it – it was believed an affront “to the sovereignty of the Emperor in his native provinces” – but to no avail. Indeed Holland – the Council of Holland – succeeded in averting the promulgation of the edicts of 1527-1535, and the imposition of the congie on the re-export of Baltic grain, through artful political-economic contentions concerning its domestic legitimacy, and by way of the leverage of international commerce. The Hollanders retained room of maneuver and never gave away in practice their free agency¹³.

Another instance was the attempt to introduce a hundredth penny on the value of all goods exported from the Netherlands and a tenth penny on commercial profits. Mary of Hungary attempted to impose the hundredth penny but the States of Holland refused it. Even when Mary imposed it "*ex potestate absoluta Imperatoris*", the edict – thanks to the Council’s obstruction – was not published in Holland for months, and when it was, Amsterdam ignored it. Furthermore Holland insisted on modifying the tenth penny on commercial profits, to change it in a tenth penny on the assumed profit of mercantile inventory. Holland won but, even then, no collection was put into operation for months and when it was, only about 1,200 pounds were collected. The same fate had a four-year tax on imported wine consumed in the Low Countries. “The great and excessive monopolies that merchants practice”, as a treasury official said, impeded taxation in

fact: in the period between 1543 and 1554, only 1.8 percent of the taxes collected in Holland stemmed from the direct taxes on mercantile activity.¹⁴

Differently in Brabant or in Flanders, this Spanish inability to extract values from Dutch merchants was, above all else, the result of the ability and the stubbornness of Holland's deputies to uphold, on the one hand, the *bonum publicum* – regional profit and capital –, on the other, their own interests – they bought into industrial-commercial activities. The two overlapped. In sum: «the attempts of the central government to control the regional and local receivers were largely unsuccessful. Repeated proposals to introduce general systems of taxation, especially proportional taxes on trade and on capital, were aborted as a result of the opposition of representative institutions dominated by the large cities»¹⁵.

One great leverage to lobby and endure central government pretensions was fiscal blackmail in wartime, whose effective strength was premised on the great capitalist accumulation of the urban-rural complexes¹⁶. The expected submission was in fact constrained not enhanced by warfare needs that in the Northern Netherlands precipitated, by contrast, the role of the Provincial States in the management of finance and taxation, and thus the weight and the sway of the urban oligarchies on the supra-urban processes of decision-making: warfare led to a forcible Spanish dependency on the States, notably of Holland, and an unwilling devolution of functions, in a context of absolutist processes of centralization and concentration¹⁷. The absolutist reverse brought about a historical-structural contradiction in the Dutch-Habsburg relations of power, and in the related hierarchy, which contributed to redistribute power within Dutch space, and from the Spanish crown to the Dutch¹⁸. This was an important step in the construction of the ensuing Dutch state: expanded financial empowerment, historical articulation of fiscal-financial practices, agencies and institutions unto and on the ground, and the creditworthiness which in those years came to be borne out. The

creation of an incipient infrastructure of provincial public finance embodied the headway of Dutch state formation underneath the Hapsburgs' nose, and the percolation of such an advancement within the Spanish organization itself¹⁹.

The province of Holland (1256) – a «proto-territorial state»²⁰ – was the propellant core and trailblazer of such a power movement and expansion, in terms of technics, administration, disbursements, investments and financial accumulation of capital, by virtue of the historical urban-rural power and bargaining on the ground²¹. To account for what happened in the sixteenth century we need therefore to broach the matter of how capital encountered the state during the cycle of power formation and accumulation up to the 16th century. What follows also explains why the next Union was to be founded on the natural – but not taken for granted – lead of Holland²².

In the course of the middle ages, the urban-rural spheres of governmental activity designed an institutional architecture geared to stave off the feudal usage of coercion – property rights were secured and rent-seeking behaviors were checked²³. It thereby strengthened the capitalist logic inherent in Dutch space – the start of capital accumulation of capitalist sort traced back at that time we noted. Agents, elected representatives and officeholders of local administrations stole the limelight because directed, regulated and monitored economic exchange – the local public sphere was «the backbone of the market structures» because set out a market-oriented legal framework, based on a mix of Roman and German law, which propelled interaction. In this regard, the activity of the official receivers was momentous for it normalized and intermeshed economy and (within) society: it was prone to check and rationalize taxation, to put in order the public spaces of exchange, production and information, and to promote the socio-economic policy of the urban-rural complexes – «these three incentives were at the heart of the local political economy and the main motives for institutional change». Along with what we saw in the previous chapter, we can say

hence that the urban-rural complexes displayed an efficient regulatory and normalizing capacity of (and within) their space and that this came about because state-capital relations were bundled into a permanent and inextricably institutionalized whole which enveloped Dutch space. The local public sphere – i.e. the local courts – became indeed the «pivotal points in economic exchange» between early state and capital – land, industry, commerce and finance – and for the expansion of both since the late middle ages. This bundle of relations can be rendered by the dynamic concept of “governmental-business agency”²⁴. But if the state-capital encounter of capitalist sort was processed as a bottom-up movement, the top-down thrust (the States + the counts) was itself incipiently on the move²⁵.

We have already noted the patterned matrix of value relations extensively developed. What importantly contributed to the sociospatial fluidity of capitalist accumulation was the formation and development of an efficient capital market. It started out to operate on the ground indeed during the late middle ages and it was crucial to expand the financial body of the urban-rural complexes, the supra-urban framework of politico-financial relations, and the layered connection between public (local and supra-local) and private sphere of accumulation and investment. It bettered – homogenized and strengthened – societal environment for capitalist accumulation and topped off the Dutch institutional landscape and its primordial web of sociospatial relations rooted into the urban-rural framework²⁶. It provided the crucial institutionalized space wherein medieval state and capital could develop a fluid encounter – transaction costs reduction, savings redistribution and increased velocity of money circulation – and enlarge the quality and quantity of their exchange of power²⁷. Institutions geared to control market risks, asymmetry and fraud swiftly emerged, premised on the general security of property we saw: arbitrations, judicial courts and information asymmetry check (*Zeventuig*), contracts formalized and incorporated in an

extensive legal framework, registers and registrations to combat frauds, to check profits, tax and wealth for example.²⁸

Capital market enabled people to contract obligations and to own securities which permitted the transference of value from savers to investors in an enlarging circuit of financial accumulation – part and parcel of the regional process of capital intensification and accretion, and of expansion of the capitalist logic of power within both private and public sphere. It therefore allowed for the “widest” participation of actors to the process, and by the same token, a primordial Dutch fusion of state and capital – the States, cities, and villages in medieval Holland were both intermediaries and investors on capital market along, and in combination, with private capital. The capital market was hence important to transmit economic, social and political changes: on the ground, for it contributed to disseminate the capitalist logic of power by early “democratizing” capital²⁹; upward, for it resolved into the crucial conduit for transferring and channeling from the ground capital and the logic of capital accumulation – with a fusion of private and public investments by way of tax, debt and financial transactions³⁰. It was this medieval wave of state-capital formation, conflation and enlargement into an ensemble of interlocked governmental and business agencies which was to provide the basis to the sixteenth-century provincial empowerment we will account for below: the «tangle of debt and credit link[ing] the Republic’s households» formed across the centuries XIV-XVI represented the stepping stone for the financial and fiscal headway of the mid-sixteenth century³¹. Along with it, the «market for *renten* [...] remained the main institution enabling the accumulation of capital for the public and private sector under the Republic»³².

To keep up the pace with, and at any rate foster, the capitalist expansion of the urban-rural political economy, Dutch governmental agencies were forced to enhance, and promote, relations of power based on informality, impartiality and transparency

through which local finance and private-public exchanges came to be organized. Late medieval Holland indeed showed a remarkable local public sphere which managed to create founded debt through taxation – as well as by way of important institutions such as the general mortgage³³. Pursuant to its institutional homogeneity, the urban-rural complex secured the capital market – for *renten* as instance – through the assumption of debt management – «they had to find buyers, draw up contracts, pay out *renten*, and monitor retainers» – and the direct liability of the remittances. Such empowerment resolved at the same time into a round of bureaucracy formation since more tax and more debt entailed more agents, offices, accounts and checks. This contributed to further improve the institutional framework and to expand not only the complexity and specialization of administrations and administrators, but also the value of the debt itself – since the agents themselves bought into it –, the quality of the economic-financial networks the administrations guarded, and, every bit as important as that, the linkages between subjects and governments³⁴. All this allowed for the expansion of capital market scope and operation and the number of actors participating with safety in it – public and private ones alike since the capital market shaped an early common space of accumulation in which rulers, local public sphere and privates could dialogue. Tax and debt were their point of juncture³⁵. In turn, such institutional constraints drove out competitors of feudal sort³⁶.

The early spreading of *renten* trade was thus itself the signal. The market for *renten* expanded during the second half of the sixteenth century, but its origin is to be traced to the late middle ages, during the early wave of state-capital formation in which collective responsibility for debt was hooked in eventual tax incomes. By assuming the liability of public debt (as early as 1291 for Holland and Zeeland), the urban-rural complex allowed for the expansion of domestic financial investments – «the vast majority of the *lijffrenten* the counts sold between 1389 and 1433 were secured by

towns» for example³⁷ – and attracted foreign investments that contributed to the creation of a primordial foreign debt. Furthermore, the development and diffusion of a rural public debt by way of sales of *lijfrenten* and *losrenten* signaled the great scope of irradiation of the capital market and its openness – as well as the quality and solidity of the market relations between urbanity and rurality as an organic complex. In 1514, 59.9 percent of the villages had created funded debt: 85 villages had sold *lijfrenten*, 161 had sold *losrenten*, and 148 had sold both. According to the *Informacie*, funded debt in the countryside was «ubiquitous»³⁸. Public value formation and institutional security enabled the downsizing of floating debt and forced loans, spurring on further financial capital – of private and public investors – and expanding with a vengeance the *renten* sold by the governmental agencies themselves (States included) to an increasing number of *rentiers* throughout Holland and even in the rest of the Low Countries – The 1514 *Informacie* shows that all cities and the majority of villages serviced funded debt; the main ones obtained 50 percent of their ordinary revenues from debt³⁹.

Table 4.1 Collective public debt (1292–1482)⁴⁰

Year	Town	Securities
1292	Dordrecht, Middelburg, Zierikzee, Delft , Leiden, Haarlem	–
1294	Dordrecht, Middelburg, Zierikzee	–
1295	Dordrecht, Middelburg, Zierikzee	–
1345	Dordrecht, Zierikzee, Middelburg, Delft , Leiden, and Haarlem, assisted by 24 nobles	Among others, a Delft <i>bede</i> tax and all taxes paid in Rijnland
1351	Dordrecht, Haarlem, Delft , Leiden, Amsterdam, Alkmaar, Medemblik, Geertruidenberg, Schiedam, Rotterdam, and Oudewater	Tax revenues from northern Holland, and confiscated goods
1405	Dordrecht, Haarlem, Delft , Leiden, Amsterdam, Middelburg, and	Tax revenues from Kennemerland and West Friesland

	Zierikzee	
1407	Haarlem, Delft , Leiden, Amsterdam, Gouda, Rotterdam, Middelburg, and Zierikzee	Tax revenues from Kennemerland and West Friesland
1416	Haarlem, Delft , Leiden, Amsterdam, and Gouda, assisted by Alkmaar, Hoorn, Rotterdam, Schoonhoven, Geertruidenberg, Heusden, Oudewater, Middelburg, Zierikzee, Remmelzwaal, and Goes	Tax revenues from Egmond and IJsselstein
1417–1418	Haarlem, Delft , and Leiden, assisted by Amsterdam, Gouda, Alkmaar, Rotterdam, Schiedam, Hoorn, and Oudewater	Revenues from northern Holland, including part of the <i>bede</i> tax
1418	Haarlem, Delft , Leiden, Amsterdam, and Gouda, assisted by noblemen from Holland, and Zeeland	Revenues from northern Holland, including part of the <i>bede</i> tax
1430	Haarlem, Delft , Leiden, Amsterdam, Gouda	<i>Bede</i> tax in Waterland and Kennemerland
1482	Dordrecht, Haarlem, Delft , Leiden and Gouda	–

Table 4.2 Collective public debt (1404–1425)⁴¹

Year	Public	Principal sum (lb)	Destination	Public bodies	Securities
1405		4440	Arkel war	Dordrecht, Haarlem, Delft , Leiden, Amsterdam, Middelburg, and Zierikzee	Dordrecht toll, Kennemerland, West Friesland, and Zeeland revenues
1407		3885	Purchase Gorinchem	Haarlem, Delft, Leiden, Amsterdam, Gouda, Rotterdam, Middelburg, and Zierikzee	Kennemerland and West Friesland revenues
1416		–	Compensation lords of Egmond and IJsselstein	Haarlem, Delft , Leiden, Amsterdam, Gouda	Egmond and IJsselstein revenues
1417–1418		2899–3103	–	Haarlem, Delft, and Leiden	Central Holland revenues
1418		8968	–	Haarlem, Delft , Leiden, Amsterdam, Gouda	Comitial tolls and domain revenues

Taxation and public debt – borrowing – were means in the hands of the Dutch governmental-business agencies – operated by the public sector which mediated and extended the relationship between rulers (counts and States of Holland) and subjects – to manage, re/produce, accumulate and redistribute value, and to maneuver in the political-economic-social arena at once. Such a financial empowerment forced *competitive cooperation* thereon: negotiations with the counts demanded, and allowed for, the development of solidarity and consistency. The expansion of economy, and the drive of capitalist accumulation that had to be catered, compelled governmental and business agencies to develop horizontal and vertical networks of financial relations and information enfolding creditors, foreign cities, governments, in order to negotiate «about terms of payment, safeguards, and moratoriums [...] about the securities backing *rente* payments, such as future tax revenues, and about compensation for money they had advanced to *renteniers* and other expenses». In sum:

From the end of the 13th century, collective public debt provided a strong impulse to develop a supra-local organization representing the interests of public bodies. This organization was gradually institutionalized and became known as the States of Holland. Once established it became a platform for cooperation on a large number of issues, including collective public debt.⁴²

Under the Spanish rule indeed, the urban-rural complexes continued to be the crucial cogs of juncture between regional politics and markets, and to the sociospatial processes of intermediation, cooperation and competition among the Dutch. Only during the second decade of the sixteenth century, the States started to coordinate with higher intensity the Dutch political space as a whole, especially in economic-financial matters⁴³. But once, in the 40's, the Spanish central government essayed the most powerful attempt of financial-organizational restructuring of Dutch space⁴⁴, the States

countered this move by managing to stretch, and to strengthen to the full, their web of power relations toward society. By tapping the Spanish attempt of absolutist reorganization itself, the States of Holland (and Zeeland) succeeded in gaining a wider hold over the management and the coordination of provincial space, notably taxation and finance⁴⁵.

The Spanish reform of 1542-1544 was aimed at financing the struggle for power of Spain against France. It put into place a circuit of urban-rural taxes-credit-provincial bonds geared to bankroll the growth of public revenues. The reform comprised the *nieuwe middelen* consisting of province-wide excises (beer and wine) and land taxes (a 10th penny on the income from *renten* and real property); these were destined to fund a new set of *renten* – the expected principal source of revenues for the central government⁴⁶. It comprised also new taxes on mercantile wealth (100th penny on exports and the 10th penny on commercial profits). In sum: the 1542/1544 reform was to widen the tax base in order to extend credit in order to expand the financial market with a vengeance⁴⁷. To propel the restructuring, a consequent expansion of bureaucratic functions was called for. But the wave of Spanish state expansion resolved instead into the first important Dutch surge of “modern” state formation: the «novel expedients» had the effect of propelling the higher conflation of state and capital – in the form of provincial administration and borrowing, and urban capital – through a) the reorganization of the financial networks on provincial bases *directly useful* to Dutch urban-rural capital in the form of proceeds from provincial loans, b) and the spreading – not the takeoff – after 1553 of securities purchased on voluntary base – an incipient free market, thereby relaxing the custom of forcing buying. Provincial borrowing was sealed in so doing with urban-rural processes of capital accumulation and expansion via fiscality through the financial circuit of the forming Dutch state⁴⁸.

A provincial reorganization on the base of the urban-rural complexes, which entailed the voluntary investment of values in modern state-building processes, was however possible, indeed because state networks of power and capitalist networks of accumulation overlapped and integrated each other – the Province increasingly raised taxes but in so doing it had to cooperate with its societal ground, and especially with the urban-rural governmental-business agencies that in fact handled such taxes with great care. Such an intertwining had started during the preceding centuries through the capital-based encounter of public and private sphere but now it expanded because itself integral to, and motor force of, the process of Dutch state formation, that is, the formation of an actual state structure governed by the Dutch themselves. The urban-rural complexes – capital, private and public wealth, institutions, framework of relations – and the forming Dutch state – structure and networks – was now welding together on the base of a common matrix of financial relations – which emerged out of the medieval embeddedness of state and capital – whose pattern of accumulation and wealth was indeed capitalist. It was thus this move and this higher conflation which «opened the tap and allowed urban[-rural] capital to flow freely into the refinancing of state debt» of the modern kind, and thus into processes and cogs of modern state formation, thereby syphoning off and letting flow within the forming venae and arteries of the state the logic of capital accumulation. Put it very simply: the difference between a rentier, a man engaged in commerce or industry, a magistrate and a provincial deputy was now blurred, if nonexistent⁴⁹. See, as instance, table 4.3 for the multilayered political ties developed by the public agents of Holland and Zeeland:

Table 4.3 Political ties of members of the Admiralty Boards⁵⁰

Years	Number of councilors	Average years in function	Function in local government	Function in provincial government	Function in national government
Representatives from Holland on the Amsterdam Admiralty Board					
1586-1699	170	5.1	151 (89%)	66 (40%)	29 (17%)
1700-95	116	5.8	107(92%)	43 (37%)	26 (22%)
Representatives from Zeeland on the Zeeland Admiralty Board					
1584-1699	56	15.0	45 (80%)	55 (98%)	13 (23%)
1700-95	37	15.1	36 (97%)	37 (100%)	4(11%)

What happened in actuality? While previously the function of the States of Holland, firstly during the Utrecht War and during the Guelders Wars, connoted in essence mere loan organization but neither the management and the allocation of the related funds, nor their granting – this was a primordial provincial debt organization –, during the ensuing struggle for power between Spain and France in the mid-sixteenth century, the States managed to assume the direct responsibility of finance indeed by way of the same «novel expedients» the Spanish government had promoted. These allowed the Dutch to fund borrowing by imposts and land taxes that the States themselves set about managing and granting. Technically, in time, the Dutch aspired to convert short-term obligations premised on forced buying at high interest rates into long-term debt at low rates on a voluntary basis of investment – mainly, *lijfrenten* and *losrenten*, already developed in the centuries of power formation⁵¹. Such a voluntary engagement and participation came about simply because it was fruitful in terms of profit enlargement. Capital *wanted* to buy into modern state formation because state formation resulted in profits and political power⁵².

While the first and second round of *renten* issued during the Utrecht War (1482) and the Guelders Wars (1514-1517) was paid off respectively in 1529 and, partially, in 1566, the first round of *renten* funded by the «novel expedients» and managed by the

States allowed to partially pay off the huge debt accumulated between 1552 and 1559 already in 1566 – a strategy for continuing to curb the debt, lowering the interests and hence foster trust was found in a circuit of *renten* conversion-cum-taxation of income from *renten* (10th penny). The vast amount of money raised by the Province never reached the coffers of the Spaniards. Such a huge retention of value in time, by contrast, effected a dramatic shift in the relative position of the central government and its provinces. [In so doing,] the province not only maintained a superior credit rating, at a time when the government could not even pay the salaries of its officials, but showed a positive cash flow, which could be used either for additional debt retirement or for gratuities to helpful officials [...]. Moreover, during this period Amsterdam was forced to end its proud isolation, so that the debt was truly the responsibility of “the common body of the land”⁵³.

An amalgam of freedom, security and good rates – initially high admittedly – led to a fundamental expansion of Dutch-governed provincial financial networks within the urban-rural complexes in Holland, and then also in Zeeland, thereby making urban-rural *rentiers* – officeholders and public representatives firstly – the main protagonists of such a financial accretion of the Province. The sharp decline of the annual *renten* interest charged on the excises and land tax from 134,000 in 1555/1556 to 59,685 in 1566/1567 within the same level of impost and land tax rates was the strong signal that Dutch management was working despite the Spaniards. Dutch Provincial government tapped into urban-rural wealth in depth as well as urban-rural capital tapped into Dutch politics with a vengeance of accumulation and investments⁵⁴.

In this subverted whole of power relations, the value extraction operated by the Spanish central government was thereby checked and frustrated powerfully. The low credit rating was a critical weakness for the Spanish crown in a time in which financiers in Antwerp were still crucial to uphold the Spanish side. But the bankers, in fact,

preferred dealing with the States directly. This happened because the Spanish crown and financiers were bound together, as far as it is here concerned, by way of supposed “reliable and ready” fiscal and financial flows from the Dutch that instead were slowly channeled unto the center (taxes), or drawn to themselves (financial capital)⁵⁵. The Spanish renegotiation and repudiation of debt was an usual procedure that actually enshrouded a process of state-unmaking in terms of power formation and accumulation, state structures, networks and institutional practices *compared with* the Dutch in the context of an expanding capitalist world-system.⁵⁶

In this sociospatial exchange of value and power, Amsterdam was the core-center of accumulation in which the widest fractions of population got into capital market, debt, *renten*, borrowing. The following table shows the investments by Amsterdam’s upper/middle classes and elites – the most sizeable part of course on the totality of the investments in the capital market – but the lower classes and subalterns, proportionally to their wealth, invested remarkable sums – having in return a solid, further source of income to sustain household economy and the urban-rural complex’s political economy⁵⁷.

This voluntary popular involvement in provincial borrowing is of great importance for it signaled the trust the Dutch populace put in their provincial governmental agencies. The high quality of Dutch institutional framework and network had built degrees of cooperation and trust on which the voluntary popular participation in the state activities rested. Put it simply: provincial taxes were high – and they were to become progressively higher in time. Therefore, if the state was to avert malaise or ward off the peril of uproars, the populace had to have material returns. These returns were: financial takings, fluid accumulation of wealth, state services – protection (military, social, economic), social provision, reliable markets for exchange and production, efficient public sector. Contrary to the rest of Europe therefore, modern state formation

turned out to be profitable for all: the administrators had at their disposal a wide stream of resources to back state operations – and their own interests – through a great power of extraction that was offset in turn by great social investments – we shall see next. In this sense, this was a financial revolution: provincial finance helped capital, markets and state to be intermeshed and “democratized”. This exchange of values contributed to forge in time solid, upright relations of power based on accumulation of capital provincial-wide – whose underlying logic was of capitalist sort – through the active co-partnership of governmental and business agencies up to the provincial level (States, the local public sphere and its subjects) – «a continuous bargaining process between local and central levels, between taxpayers, investors, and political representatives, and between urban and provincial officials, over fiscal policy». In other words, the bargaining process enabled the governmental dynamics of the state agencies and agents to be legitimized by the other spaces of government and accumulation, and this permitted a far greater rate of value extraction, a fiscal expansion. Thereby «the political ceiling of taxation» rose, that is the point beyond which social malaise and the ensuing unrest could explode⁵⁸. In sum: cooperation and trust were built on profit; profit was propelled to the full through cooperation and trust, in economic-financial, political and social matters.

Table 4.4 Characteristics of investors in the Amsterdam annuities, 1542-1565, in percentages and in guilders⁵⁹

	Proportion of investors	Mean
Local political officeholders	37%	1573
Idem, with no other business than local political office	13%	1618
Professions	11%	847
Brewers	7%	1257
Drapers	7%	1826
Baltic Exporter (herring-packers, wine merchants soap-boilers)	10%	1604
Grain dealers	22%	1178
Other merchants	20%	833
Shippers/shipyard entrepreneurs	10%	755
All merchants, brewers, drapers, shippers, entrepreneurs	76%	1154
Idem, but not combining with local political office	52%	972
All identified investors	100%	1181
All incl. unidentified investors		714

To this purpose, an engaging theory that links state-capital formation, accumulation of power and people stands out. It posits that the Dutch sixteenth and seventeenth century represented «an important link between» two ‘democratic’ movements – the Medieval and the ‘Atlantic’. This link is understood as the economic character of citizenship – the Dutch concept of citizenship. Within a capitalist space, the economic dimension of citizenship proves paramount to be sure. We can describe this dimension as the plane of capital-state cooperation that stemmed from a social moment of value formation that links state, capital and society through the interchange of material and juridical participation (tax and formal recognition), state services and public goods. Citizenship therefore would help create a link between state, capital and society, and a suitable situation conducive to a «cooperative relationship» geared to lower state-society transaction costs in a more efficient supply of services with a higher tax morale in turn, and thus a more coherent movement of economy, politics and society as a whole – more efficient accumulation of power. Indeed it seems implausible upholding that the Dutch, and then the Dutch state, would survive the early modern warfare if popular participation to state-building processes would not have encountered the elites’ participation to society-building processes – that is, without the formation of

an efficient regime of accumulation. Accumulation of capital and power would be damaged otherwise. In this sense, according to Jan Luiten van Zanden and Maarten Prak, the point of juncture might be citizenship: the Dutch succeeded in mobilizing comparatively large amounts of resources on a per capita basis pursuant to a contract that jointed rulers and people – capital, state and society. This structural pact developed not at the end of the sixteenth century, but – for Holland notably – in the long-run development on the societal ground, and *then* topped off by the construction of the Dutch state⁶⁰.

To round off: in the course of the first half of the sixteenth century, the assembly of the cities in junction with rural enclaves strengthened the political struggle to assert explicitly their long-standing right in the sphere of fiscality, and the primacy of economy both on a juridical level and internationally, against the Spaniards – self-government⁶¹. This organization of power was the means in the hand of an uneven bloc or syndicate of wealthy men, consisting of entrepreneurs, merchants, magistrates, agents, officeholders and deputies, to achieve their goals and realize their wishes, thereby at the same time overlapping and intersecting – embedding – the political and social functions to the internal and external rhythm of economy. Such patterned motion peculiar to Dutch urban-rural milieu gave to this type of upward-thrusting representation the capacity to exert a strong pressure, primarily economic, then fiscal-financial and, as a consequence, political, on the Spanish central government and on other actors to, or levels of, negotiations. Local and provincial governments strengthened and conjoined their operations through a web of financial-bureaucratic relations that set about enveloping Dutch space – the official receivers were members of the central administration but part of the local elite at once. The relational interlacing in a common space of government, a common matrix of power, expanded the urban-rural capital clutches from the ground upward and the networks of capital accumulation

within the networks and infrastructures of the forming state and, on the other hand, allowed for the contra-trend inherent to the percolation of the provincial state operations on the ground through the same networks. In short: the incunabula of the Dutch regime.

In sum: power was not to be concentrated in a single place, but concentrated *throughout* Dutch space – Dutch localities and provincial government(s), and then States General. The single but spatially differentiated bundle of bureaucratic-financial exchanges was indeed caged in a «mediated structure» of overlapping interests, institutional coherence and shared forces to better serve and guard the actual liberty of the Dutch against the increasingly pervasive control of the Spanish government. In fact, «the States were becoming a self-conscious and self-regulating “body”, like a municipality on a grander scale», that, in junction with the strong identity of the municipalities themselves in practical terms, succeeded in untying the Spanish reins and constraints: progressively, the urban-rural ground and the sphere of the higher politics were knitted together⁶². The fusion of urban-rural governmental-business agencies and provincial state intensified and, because of premised on a sociospatial continuum of power relations that in fact turned out to be overlapping, it was to become more and more organic with Dutch society on the ground – whence capital and power expanded. It was this socio spatial organicity that contributed to distinguish the (formation of the) Dutch regime of accumulation from the rest of the other European regimes⁶³.

4.1.2) 1560-1600. The second surge of territorial state-building: republican materialism

Dutch state formation set in within the absolutist framework of Spain and propelled its crisis: the 1542 reform's washout and the related fiscal fiasco during the '50; the huge debt accumulated and the bankruptcy; related army malaise (unpaid salaries) resulting in insubordination, sometimes mutinies; societal turmoil, from the

ground to nobility; rising imperial costs, and economic inefficiency in terms of processes and management; and the advance of Protestantism – reformed Protestantism in the Netherlands took firm hold in 1555. This sketches out the general situation of the sixteenth century would-be hegemon in Europe – and around the world. Indeed, Philip got back to Spain after making peace with France at Cateau-Cambrésis (1559). This signals here two main things: first, a world empire demanded a stationary commander in an established center of command and the uppermost managerial heed; second, the Low Countries made him fear. And fear was vindicated: «Nobody doubts», will sum up bishop Juan de Palafox in 1650, «that the wars in Flanders have been the ruin of this monarchy»⁶⁴. Margaret of Parma was chosen to govern, but, from the outset, decision-making and administrative and ecclesiastical control lay with Granvelle (bishop of Arras and a member of the Council of State), and Viglius. The new Spanish governors proved incapable and the distance with the Dutch forces (led by Orange above anyone else and Egmond) increased, increasing in turn the wider rift in the Netherlands society between Spanish rule and Dutch identity. Soon, Alva's descent would have exacerbated the situation to the full. The Dutch space of politics, society and economy was riven⁶⁵.

Among the Dutch – firstly the Hollanders – the general conviction of the necessity of getting rid of the Spaniards spread. But the thrust for independence was only strengthened by the ensemble of socio-political processes scattered on the societal ground, which we will explore afterwards. The furtherance of state formation intersected and intensified them – the socio spatial continuum of relations and interests just discussed enables to glimpse the intersection between socio-cultural tension and state formation. Such a twofold whole of processes flowed into a historical-relational contradiction I argue. Thus, to appreciate to the full the reasons for the all-out rejection of the entire historical-constitutional order of the Netherlands we need to understand the historical relation of command between sovereign and subjects. The crucial moment in

such a story was of course the Arrival of Alva which embodied the historical obliteration of the framework of *Dutch dominium politicum et regale*. Why? In sum: Alva attempted to *directly* extract resources by restructuring and centralizing *from within* the historical organization of capital, wealth and institutions of the Dutch – the core of which was the Spanish attempt to reorganize and appropriate Dutch wealth by taxing it *according to value* (the Spanish tenth penny)⁶⁶. Hence, we will understand the structural friction ensuing from the attempt of power restructuring in the '70s and appreciate the relationship between power as Authority-freedom as Liberty (singular) and the role of the Spanish crown⁶⁷. This whole of relations defined the second surge of Dutch state formation, which structured the republican character of the state, and put into operation the Dutch regime. As summed up by Brian Downing: «The Dutch revolt was a successful rebuff of a monarch's attempt to dissolve constitutional government and build military bureaucratic absolutism»⁶⁸.

The provincial financial accretion built upon the sociospatial extension upward of the urban-rural capital frontier in the first half of the sixteenth century slackened off at the end of the '60s because of Alva's descent. Already in 1568, the Revolt showed paucity of funds⁶⁹: the urban-rural complexes indeed endeavored first to spur on financial investments towards the province on the base of their long-standing creditworthiness, that is, acting more than ever «as guarantors for debts charged to the States» or, for instance, by pushing forward a strategy of tax-debt exchange – taxes urban capital owed for debts owed by the province – or by selling off ecclesiastical and annotated property; then, practices of forced loans resorted and expanded – especially short-terms loans until 1580 – but to no avail⁷⁰. The financial voltage was not enough. The fluidity of the financial circuit came to be obstructed.

The basic problem was that revenues – both urban and provincial ones – had to be now earmarked *directly* to the pressing needs of the war for independence that the

Province *as a whole* was now waging⁷¹. The staggering amounts of capital needed to endure the pressure called for a viable and readily available alternative structured more on the great material wealth produced, or to be produced, than on creation of financial value. The Spanish-derived strategy of provincial financial accumulation was thereby complemented with the first *provincial policy* of fiscal expansion, only possible by virtue of the fantastic expansion of institutionalized networks and processes of urban-rural capital accumulation of the preceding centuries⁷² – the institutionalized primacy of economy in urban-rural politics on the ground had allowed for the secular composition of an ample basin of historical value to tap⁷³.

But capitalist accumulation on the ground was now put in grave danger, and it was so not merely because the economy was in peril and slowed down⁷⁴, but because the syndicates that managed processes, networks and capital risked to lose control of their own political-economic and social operations. The Spaniards attempted indeed, for the very first time, to really expunge the three fundamental prerogatives of the Dutch – and whence, by the same token, the Dutch drew their (capitalist) strength – thereby trying to cut their resistance for good: self-identity, self-organization and self-representation – in one word, self-determination. With the greatest danger at all at the gates, by virtue of their far-flung networks of trust and capital, and because of entirely destined to finance their own independence, the Dutch were prone to bankroll war with a steady stream of ever-increasing human, material and financial resources.

On the technical bases of the 1542-44 reform, the States of Holland devised (1572-1574) the first independent fiscal policy topped off with a new round of state accretion – premised on the urban-rural network of accumulation, wealth and institutions. «In virtually every sphere of activity the States now assumed responsibilities that had formerly been reserved to the central government [at the same time being] more broadly representative of urban interests across Holland»⁷⁵. In 1572, a

new policy of direct locally-administered taxation (*verponding*) was put into operation: a twelfth penny, that is, 8.3 percent on land rents was increased to the sixth penny, 16.7 percent, in 1574. To better account wealth, in 1575 a register of houses was arranged and spread in addition to already existing land registers we accounted previously. Since 1576, 2% per year was levied on the value of lands and houses whose total estimates was about 105,000 guilders per year. In 1580 the rate was doubled. In 1584 a *verponding*-register (lands and houses) was put into operation for an expected yield about 220,000 guilders per year for each *verponding*, that since 1586 was more than 1 million guilders per year, and then 1.3 million guilders per year in 1599. As such it remained unchanged until 1621⁷⁶.

The second part of the fiscal reform was known as *gemene middelen* (common means), taxation of direct provincial administration. a) The *gemene middelen* hit a much larger number of commodities – for example, beer and wine of course, but also soap, meat, fish, bread grains, woolen cloth, horned cattle, peat – and a larger and enlarging population – from about 350,000 in 1544 to about 760,000 in 1648⁷⁷. According to Tracy⁷⁸, in 1575 the *gemene middelen* brought in 24,000 pounds per month, and increased steadily the following years: 1578 - 68,199, 1579 - 63,490, 1580 - 68,135, 1581 - 69,520, 1582 - 72,308; b) taxation was proportionated to weights and not to prices, thereby limiting the effect of the inflation – tax burden for an urban day-laborer went from less than 5 per cent at the start of the revolt to a peak of nearly 16 per cent in 1630; c) contrary to the novel expedients that were geared to back and fuel the financial accretion of the province – by funding *renten*, *lijfrenten*, *losrenten* – common means were earmarked primarily and directly to war expenditures and, only as collateral, to financial remittances⁷⁹; d) significantly, countryside and towns came to be taxed on the same bases, the provincial excises – in origin the countryside was subjected to provincial taxation but on different bases, a tax on land (*morgengeld*). In so doing the

States evened out the provincial fiscal relations and barriers between towns and countryside; e) finally, the *gemene middelen* were handled by the very first run of provincial agents, appointed and organized not by urban governments, but by the States of Holland directly⁸⁰ – albeit the fiscal jurisdiction remained a prerogative of the urban-rural complexes. Local spaces remained the lynchpin⁸¹. In sum: the Province approved a package comprised of provincial taxes on domestic commercial products, activities and assets in the cities as well as in the countryside – provincial excises plus two thirds of town excises – taxed *according to quantities*, that became the major source of direct war financing during the first part of the Revolt⁸².

Structural accretion, institutional enhancement and the extension of the fiscal network of provincial state in scale and scope, homogenized the urban-rural fiscal – and financial – space on provincial base (to military purpose) and expanded the provincial capacity of fiscal extraction to the full. Fiscal equalization, administrative empowerment and socio spatial extension resolved into a great fiscal expansion – «a dramatic rise in public revenues», contrary to the novel expedients of 1542 that witnessed the dawn of financial capital (borrowing)⁸³. These moves represented the actual headway of the process of Dutch state formation in the form of expansion of the provincial fiscal-bureaucratic frontier up to envelope the whole Dutch (Holland) space. All this signaled thus the consolidation and extension of the provincial relations and networks organized and put into operation in 1542, the shift in the *relative* position of the province and the urban-rural complexes – «As the income of the provincial receivers grew, the dependence of the province on the credit of the individual cities decreased»⁸⁴ – and the fusion of the fiscal processes of the Province with – and their grafting within – urban-rural processes of capital accumulation – the forming of a provincial-level basin of value accumulated and managed directly by the Dutch. A somewhat similar process of

tax expansion, economic accumulation and provincial empowerment was put into operation by Zeeland since 1574 (until the eve of the 17th century)⁸⁵.

The Spanish coercive rupture of the late medieval framework of *dominium politicum et regale* was however the stepping stone for another Dutch move during the 70's, that ruptured with the past outright, this time in the constitutional sphere: it translated into the strengthening of *inter*-provincial relations and the expansion of the authority of the States General. In those years, with a series of resolutions and political ploys, the Dutch managed to strengthen the spatio-constitutional relations of power *within* Holland – and within Zeeland as well – thereby welding the urban-rural spaces and the provincial state into a «parliamentary» complex of power relations in which *formal* «sovereignty and considerable control over the executive had shifted to the estates». This move represented the constitutional-structural obverse of the fiscal-financial structural shift in the relative position of the province and the urban-rural complex previously said⁸⁶. The covenant of Holland and Zeeland signed in June 1575 sealed the (Protestant-led) political, military, financial inter-provincial state network of power, and overlapped the sociospatial relations of inter-provincial power to constitute a territorial embryo, or northern mini-state, the core of the Dutch state. To this add the new critical position the States General went to acquire after 1576, and along with it the Council of State, and the «revolutionary stance» of the Dutch becomes truly apparent. Thanks to a strategic tug-of-war of demands and contentions with the Spanish rulers, the Dutch managed to shift the States General in an independent and empowered organism in which the assembly «had the right to deal with all the matter whatsoever»: the States assumed sovereignty; at the same time, the Council of State was to become an operative propagation of these independent States. In other words: the Spanish had made once again a move – Alva's – that in the end the Hollanders (and the Zeelanders also) turned in their favor also in these respects, and that completed after Don Juan's

arrival in 1577 with the unprecedented stance the States General took. The Spanish thrust spurred on the reshaping of relations between the Generality and the Estates of the other provinces towards a structured complex of power relations:

The States General at Antwerp eventually merged with the assembly of the estates forming the Union of Utrecht [1579]. The political structure that eventually emerged in the north, the seven United Provinces of the Netherlands, could function with the revolutionary system of parliamentary government because this system had achieved a high degree of stability. This stability was to a large extent the result of the economic and financial preponderance of the province of Holland⁸⁷.

Premised on Holland's power – and supported by Zeeland – during the decade 1580-1590 the Dutch thus knitted together, and extended as a whole, the structural and the constitutional: all the seven provinces, Utrecht, Friesland, Overijssel, Drenthe, Gelderland, Groningen, Zeeland and Holland came to be dovetailed in a state-wide sociospatial web of power relations of financial, fiscal and governmental sort that the States General set about coordinating, and that Holland was to run by means of its powerful capitalist thrust. It was *this* organization, as the Dutch Historian Boogman says, that «provided cities and provinces ample opportunities for seriously promoting the essential interests of their own citizens and subjects»⁸⁸. The growing degree of unity and cooperation that the Revolt was to engender in political and financial-fiscal terms was coupled also with the increased power and sway of the urban-rural oligarchies in any provincial states. Such a *relative* social equalization of power *within* the provinces allowed for a wider degree of sociopolitical isomorphism in the Generality as well⁸⁹. This socio-relational organicity of command, along with a constant movement of adaptation to society and change in relation to capital, allowed the republican machinery both to operate in accordance with the composite nature of Dutch society itself, *whereof the state was a mirror*, and to drive forward the regulatory and normalizing capacity of

the Dutch regime⁹⁰. The Union covenant was indeed intended as a flexible-because-pragmatic framework of power, in legal-judicial and material terms, interpreted «in accordance with “*de experientie en de opgevolghde practieken*” (experience and practices followed)». It was the pragmatic myth upon which Dutch nationalism was to be built and fed into:

This myth most certainly fulfilled a real need: it functioned as a very necessary counterbalance to the local and provincial feelings of solidarity which remained so uncommonly forceful and vital, in fact even continued to prevail, until the very end of the old Republic. Besides, let us not forget that the advocates of local autonomy and provincial sovereignty could equally well appeal to the Union of Utrecht. For in terms of clause 1 it had as a principal aim: maintenance of the privileges⁹¹.

Upon these foundations, the 1580s state circuit of politics, capital, finance and fiscality in the making, based on the historical thrust of accumulation of Holland and Zeeland, began to breed infrastructural operativeness and a state-wide integration of power.

With no doubt, it was «not in spite of, but precisely because of Holland particularism» and preponderance that the Dutch Republic became the first hegemon of the capitalist world-system in the XVII century. In fact, Holland particularism, the policy of Holland, in normal circumstances was the Generality policy, a federal policy⁹². Thus, sociospatial relations of co-operation could rise by virtue of the preponderance of the urban-rural syndicates within both the provincial estates and hence within the States – even the power of the Grand Pensionaries of Holland rested on the urban-rural bloc too⁹³ – and thanks to the late medieval urban-rural formation and accumulation of Holland whereon the entire sixteenth century financial-fiscal expansion, state formation and societal coagulation could be activated – in this regard, Thomas Wilkes, an Elisabeth’s agent in The Hague, was flabbergasted by the fact the

Hollanders evened out so rapidly the divergences in the States of Holland: «the mislike of the States, bred in the people heretofore by faction is now removed and the government so quieted and settled (as the States themselves avow) that since the beginning of their troubles the like was never seen»⁹⁴. Holland hegemony (*in Gramscian terms*) begot capital accumulation and the expansion of power of the entire Republic.

In these years indeed, under the leadership of Oldenbarnevelt and the Hollanders, the Dutch managed to get rid of overlords and suzerains of any kind and managed to gain full control over their space of government through the cognizance that substantive sovereignty, in fact, resided not in the States assemblies, but in the urban-rural capitalist syndicates, pursuant to the historical network of power they run from the societal ground. Thomas Wilkes reported in 1587 that «the sovereignty resided not in the States assemblies, but in the people themselves»; on the other Francois Vranck (1587) asserted also that was in the *vroedschap* within the urban-rural complexes, the actual “national” council of rulers, that sovereignty lay, and that determined the States assemblies and the Generality:

these boards – Vranck says – must be as old as the towns, as no one remember their origin [...] They alone had the power to resolve upon all matters affecting the state respectively of the province and the town, and the citizens accept these decision as binding, for they have never infringed or opposed these decision [...]. From this it is clear that these boards of town magistrates and councilors, together with the corporation of nobles, undoubtedly represent the whole state and the whole body of the inhabitants⁹⁵.

In other terms: the long-standing bargaining power of the urban-rural complexes could not be eluded, restrained or avoided, but it had to be acknowledged and stretched with a

vengeance unto the center – and through the center. The weight of the other provinces' urban-rural spaces was stretched as a result.

The urban-rural complexes of Holland, and the urban-rural spaces in the other provinces, became the substantive-structural lynchpin on the ground upon which the only model of state possible on these premises could be put into operation. It was the republican model, that is, freedom and growth⁹⁶. The States of Holland rose to power within the emerging Republic during the '80s, and along with them, the relations of politics and power enfolding the urban-rural complexes of Holland were projected unto the center⁹⁷; at the same time, the States General consolidated their role and function as «the centre of [...] improving cooperation» in the matter of world and national economy, politics, finance and war, deploying a network of agents, agencies and institutions which enveloped Dutch space and that intertwined the provincial and local ones – we account for them next.⁹⁸. Holland leadership promoted a form of government pivoting on persuasion, accommodation and the search for intra- and inter-provincial consensus, thereby determining the structure of decision-making in the States General: all important decisions became a product of the constant interaction between provincial and “central” decision-makers, on behalf of the urban-rural syndicates, in Holland notably, whose political economy rose as the main politics of society in the Dutch Republic⁹⁹. Within the common sociospatial matrix of power that now comprised not only financial-economic and fiscal relations, but also the constitutional and governmental ones, the social strategy of «maintenance and increased prosperity» became dominant but also, more than ever, achievable on an expanding scale – the world scale¹⁰⁰. The scattered capitalist power on the ground formed during the centuries could be funneled and deployed through the cooperative form of scalar representation of the Dutch state, now topped off by the States General, and that went consolidating in that decade, along with the normalizing and regulatory capacity of the new regime.

The *sovereign state* expansion of capital, starting from the late 1580s indeed, occurred during the very stabilization of the marriage between republican framework and urban-rural (and Provincial) capital in a historically-new machinery of power called Dutch Republic¹⁰¹, was, at one time, the foremost outgrowth and primary source thereof. It enabled to consolidate the state networks of politics, finance and fiscality, and the domestic economy as a state network of interrelated, urban-rural based, industrial, agricultural, financial and commercial processes of accumulation; and to wage war by buying into army, science, technology and warfare practices. In sum, to expand power. Spain was in reverse also because of France, and the Dutch state could have respite, thereby managing to congeal and thus to redeploy its potential across world space.

Above all else, state formation was coupled with, dovetailed to, and propelled through, *world* capital accumulation for the very first time. The 1590s Dutch capital expansion was the first world capitalist expansion of a state – and of its domestic processes of capital accumulation – *in the modern world-system* that replenished and expanded power through progressively wider sociospatial spate of value re/production, exchange and appropriation on world scale – Northern Europe, Russia, South Europe, West Africa, Middle East, the Caribbean and East Asia: Dutch capitalist frontiers were extended to the full upon, through or by virtue of, the different societies and social logics of power encountered and harnessed. Dutch state formation therefore intermeshed with Dutch capital world expansion: expanding networks, agencies and institutions of capital world re/production eventually and definitively welded to and with the state networks, agencies and institutions of finance, fiscality and warfare. But was capital that swiftly and readily embedded the state – not vice versa! – and this came about pursuant to the longstanding historical process of interlocking embeddedness and capitalist-spatial expansion on the societal ground that had organized the Dutch region since the later middle ages. By means of the capitalist institutions and practices of state,

the governmental-business agencies of the Republic – based in Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Leiden, Middelburg, also Harlem, the more prominent among capitalist consortia – went to consolidate the European network of exchange and appropriation in the Baltic; extended and consolidated relations of accumulation and exchange in Russia; expanded relationships of accumulation onto the Mediterranean; stepped into and grasped the commercial space of Guinea, the Caribbean trade and East Asia.

What is crucial to stress is that all these sociospatial networks of accumulation and wealth were possible thanks to the interlocked operation of state and capital within Dutch society at home towards world space – the marriage of state society and capital we are exploring, in fact, became a single bundle of relations; but more importantly, they grew mutually interlocked in world space as well: any of these spatial circuits of capital re/production became dovetailed in a world-wide grid of accumulation operating according to the commodity-centered logic of value re/production, through which value flowed *unto* Dutch space – and by way of it throughout the system. The functional intertwining of spatially-different places of value re/production in a single but multi-articulated space of world accumulation allowed for the consolidation of the Dutch capitalist marriage of power and wealth both, at home and throughout the world – this whole of sociospatial relations world-wide was to constitute the single world-historical process of capitalist expansion that Giovanni Arrighi called Dutch systemic cycle of accumulation and the related systemic regime of accumulation. It was such a world web of local nodules of value re/production that enabled in sum to expand Dutch power and to command world space – and as far as Arrighi is concerned, to expand further the capitalist world-system as a whole as well. This world maelstrom of value and relations, in the making during the final decade of the sixteenth century, enabled thus the consolidation of the Dutch state, and therefore, the coming into operation of the Dutch regime of accumulation: the state circuit of capital, taxation, finance, and warfare,

premised on urban-rural processes of accumulation, which became thereby state-organized processes of world accumulation, came to be replenished by ever-increasing injections of value, produced, exchanged or appropriated across the world. In sum: the Dutch had now resources enough to refine state formation, to bankroll war, to finance army and to fight for independence, and at the same time to allow for the further expansion, regulation and normalization of society and capital. In a nutshell: to become a sovereign great power, internationally acknowledged¹⁰².

In all this, what is arresting, and pivotal, is that the post-1574 Dutch mode of value extraction from society was incomparably heavier than that of the Spanish in terms of material efforts and exploitation, but its organization and redeployment was far more rational: the increment of state pressure upon Dutch resources was more than sixfold¹⁰³. The expansion of the operations of value extraction put into place by the Dutch was outstanding. Of course, the world expansion of Dutch political economy was essential to make this rate of extraction accepted by the population. What was to be a Dutch warfare-welfare regime of accumulation indeed came into operation because the process of value extraction from Dutch society definitively was organized through and accompanied with Dutch capital world expansion and thus with societal growth in terms of wealth and power.

Firstly, as far as here is concerned, the greatest part of resources garnered by the state stemmed from indirect taxes – common means indeed – that were directly and strictly connected to the world expansion of Dutch trade and the socio-economic growth that ensued – that has been estimated around 0,86% per year between 1565 and 1620 – and directly earmarked to war. Holland increased its monthly quota from about 74,000 in 1583 to about 92,000 guilders on average per month in 1585. Estimates show an impressive increase in the total revenue of the ‘common means’ between 1586 and 1600 from about 1.5 million to about 2.7 million guilders, which amounts to a growth of on

average 4.6 percent per year¹⁰⁴. Value extraction was brutal but however socially accepted¹⁰⁵. But this is only part of the explanation.

The degree to which this pressure was accepted was narrowly linked also to the past of the region itself. The historical trajectory of formation and growth of the seventeenth century Dutch regime emanated from a single and unified long-run historical regional process of capitalist expansion that enabled the Dutch to build historical customs and infrastructures devoted to accumulation of power and capital as dialectically constituted within state and society. As van Bavel, Zuijderduijn and Dijkman showed in their extensive and thorough researches, taxes, tax networks and tax institutions developed highly within society. But this occurred by virtue of an expansion that viewed capital and state on the societal ground interlocked through a logic of capitalist sort. Institutions, public sphere and markets were center of, and means to, fiscal accumulation tapped by the urban-rural complexes to expand their operations in time and space – civil servants, burghers, peasants, local and foreign traders, all contributing to social accumulation of value and power, and to the institutionalization of the Dutch treadmill of fiscal cooperation¹⁰⁶. While the Dutch cycle of formation was characterized «by very rapid structural transformation» of Dutch space – a capitalist restructuring of human space –, the outstanding power expansion of the last decade of the sixteenth century occurred for the capitalist thrust came to be braced by state formation, technology development, demographic growth and social adaptation – immigration was important, especially after 1590¹⁰⁷. This whole enabled the unprecedented rate of value extraction.

However, there is another aspect that crosscuts Dutch structural history: the “national” character of the war, a war of the Dutch for the Dutch, that permitted the highest degree of acceptance among the populace. This meant in sum that value and

efforts began to be spent for the Dutch themselves, to protect the territory, their wealth and their long-time grounded way of organizing life¹⁰⁸.

Alva attempted to reorganize and centralize the mode and operations of values extraction and redeployment *from* Dutch space towards the Spanish center as never happened before, and this contributed strongly to shatter the historical order and its own premises – all the provinces’ public finance, and as a consequence, the entire political organization of commercial-industrial space, was to be at the direct helm of the Spaniards¹⁰⁹. Indeed, if the incunabula of the Revolt can be spotted in 1566, the take-off occurred during the quadrennial 1568-1572. In other words: of course religious oppression and historical political violation were welded into a process of powerful symbiosis that sparked off the revolt¹¹⁰, but the actual thrust emerged only once both became coupled with the most forcible attempt to predate from within Dutch space – self-determination (the way of organizing life) thereby was truly jeopardized as well as the liberties of making a living (self-government)¹¹¹. We should wonder: why therefore under the new heavier independent organization arranged by the Dutch themselves, did the urban-rural complexes bear the brunt and never revolt? It is suggested here that a “materialist nationalism”, premised on freedom and growth, and entrenched within society, fired up the Dutch.

The Revolt was not merely about the question of asserting a claim on religion and customary arrangements. Along with it (or underlying it) lay the recasting of the historical relationship of command and obedience *in the context of advancing processes of modern state formation*. In this regard, the Dutch War of Independence was not simply a revolt eighty years long, but, as Charles Tilly and Alberto Tenenti both say, *the revolt*: it was the model of the European bourgeois revolution¹¹². Why? In that it spelt the first conflict in early modern times around two ways of organizing life – the structure of every-day life – that implied the restructuring of the internal and external

relations of power among those who were ruled and those who ruled. When a transfer and a reorganization of state power comes about Tilly says, the form thereof is strictly related to the nature of society and to the previous organization of the state, and also related to interstate relations. When a forced reorganization of power is the case – a revolution in Tilly’s scheme – the process sharpens and gets more complex. According to Tilly, the Dutch revolt was in essence revolutionary because it implied a forced shift in state power during which two contending blocs had incompatible and irreconcilable claims and contentions that resolved into an all-out conflict¹¹³. But frictions get even more violent, I argue, when two incompatible ways of organizing life are pitted against each other.

The long-standing cooperation among the Hollanders climaxed – it was in that moment that «the political elite in Holland revealed themselves, [especially] in the crisis years of 1572 and 1573, as masters in the art of compromise and accommodation»¹¹⁴ – and among the separate provinces emerged strongly, owing to a historical-*relational* contradiction which escalated during the XVI century concerning the historical role and stance of the Dutch overlord in relation to the Dutch – and by means of which the historical-*structural* contradictions advanced in the two surges of state structural formation¹¹⁵. In fact, in the Netherlands, central rulers had always been in essence suzerains, a role *and* a stance which spelt in actuality a power relation comprised of protection with freedom-and-growth against loyalty-prestige with (reasonable) taxes¹¹⁶. Role and stance overlapped in this multi-pronged exchange of power and values. But when, because of interstate competition and the general warfare, the historical *role* of overlord came to be split from the *stance* of the same one, the relational contradiction inherent in the differences between the historical way of organizing life of the Spaniards and the Dutch surfaced and then climaxed. This became the lynchpin around which the conflict raged. It surfaced when, *within* his own formal role of suzerain, the Spanish

ruler attempted to break off the historical relation of power ruler-subjects by changing the *form* of his hold in the Netherlands – sparking off the Dutch processes of state coagulation during the ‘40s. It climaxed because, as the process of state coagulation advanced, the Spanish ruler completely cut off any formal linkage between historical stance and historical role in the Netherlands¹¹⁷. Dutch state formation intensified indeed after the stance-role split became outrageously evident – Alva’s descent, the true start of the Revolt. The advancement of Dutch state formation process was itself a signal and an opportunity for the Dutch of freeing themselves from the Spanish historical (relational-structural) fetters for good.

To make the purport of such historical rift somewhat clearer we can draw on some observation made by contemporaries. What follows is to be stressed that predation of value and self-determination were at the center of Dutch concerns and unrests, and that such problems were conveyed indeed through the popular exposure of the ongoing Spanish assaults and violations to the entrenched *dominium politicum et regale* of the Low Countries. What stands out is that religion seems to be ancillary to the Revolt since it appears to be vindicated through political-economic-fiscal reasons – in a nutshell: religion pertained to the level of the *événementielle*; but value and power pertained to the level of the structural¹¹⁸. The problem of *Dutch* contractualism summarized such reasons.

An Anonymous in 1581 says:

I clearly identify what are abuses and what are Privileges. I term privilege a custom duty exemption, an exemption from duties, from [...] taxes and others levies. [...] A privilege is when – as for the urban centers – a burgher’s house is to such an extent free from constraints that no official receiver is allowed to step into to arrest an individual, unless the latter has unsolved debt; it is a privilege which ensure the payment of a certain type of debts before others; and I can find many other exemptions like

this. Moreover, I term privilege the norm according to which the Duke of Brabant cannot impose new taxes without the consent of the Provincial States, and the states can chose a different overlord if the duke does not comply with the norms in the *Joyeuse Entrée*.¹¹⁹

This is the nub of what for the Dutch in 1581 a privilege was – and reason to revolt. The *Joyeuse Entrée* (1356), called forth by the writer, was the true Magna Charta of the Low Countries. On the one hand, it had a potentially revolutionary content for it prescribed clauses that envisaged and justified the possibility of legitimate rebellion. On the other hand, it lay legal foundations – structuring also the societal ground – for the ensuing and crucial general “common law”, a true constitution, promulgated in 1477 after the death of Charles the Bold: the *Groot Privilege*. The *Groot Privilege* comprised many arresting articles about: provincial integrity and state property guarantees; administrative and judicial procedures and offices; anti-corruption practices; the *ius de non evocando*; norms on judicial and financial decentralization and management; tax and financial imposition; and many others, all geared to create a balance among potency on the ground and between the overlord and the Dutch – by way of such legal-historical framework of power balance the rebels pushed forward their legitimate claims against the Spaniards in the XVI century. The document in sum was crucial to the history of, notably, Holland (and Zeeland) for it clarified and deepened the checks and balances thrust on the overlord by the *Joyeuse Entrée*, and interlocked such binding rules with the *effective historical structure* – social, institutional and hence, economic – of the provinces of Holland and Zeeland¹²⁰.

The constitutional web of rules, constraints and guarantees, which enveloped and shielded Dutch space since the XIV century – paralleling the start of the expansion of the capitalist logic of power, and this is not a coincidence (ch. 3) –, may be intended as the political obverse, complement and brace for the capitalist web of wealth, production

and exchange developed within Dutch space. We may also push such a line up to suggest that, in fact, both complemented and interpenetrated each other in time, as today capitalism and democracy do – both in essence emanated from a shared historical background¹²¹. Owing to such an interlocking of rules and capital – in Clerici’s words, because of «la natura del paese e dei suoi abitanti»¹²² – any attempt of damaging or weeding out the former resolved into an intolerable danger for the latter – and vice versa¹²³. Unrests crept up or uproars burst – as after Charles the Bold’s death (1477) and after Alva’s arrival (1568, especially after 1571-1572¹²⁴), not to mention Gand in 1539-1540¹²⁵. In 1540s indeed, more than ever, «[fu] attorno al problema dell’imposizione e raccolta dei tributi che cominciò a manifestarsi chiaramente il paradosso dello scontro fra un monarca sempre più bisognoso di risorse economiche per governare da solo il nuovo “stato moderno” [e il] ceto dei mercanti e imprenditori che detenevano proprio quelle risorse tanto ricercate dal sovrano, ma disposte a cederle in cambio di una compartecipazione alla gestione del potere pubblico»¹²⁶. This (unintended) «compartecipazione» (1542-44) was the first movement towards the birth of the Provinces united as a state.

Alva’s absolutist attempt of coercive dispossession embodied the collapse of an entire constitutional-historical order in Holland, and in the Northern Low Countries as well: unconstitutional centralization of illegitimate extraction was to spell a profound shift in the power relations among the Spaniards and the Dutch, in favor of the former¹²⁷. But the Hollanders, differently from other populaces under the imperial yoke, had their lively past and *present* of freedom and growth:

Non era mai stata solita la Fiandra per l’adietro a sentir gravetze di gabelle, e di datii nella forma che si costuma in Inspagna, in Italia, & in altri paesi. L’uso inveterato era di chiedersi dal Principe ne’suoi bisogni a’popoli quelle sovventioni, che paressero consapevoli, e l’essere bene spesso negate, mostrava la

libertà dell'essere concesse. Presa la resolution del concederle, imponeva per ciascuna Provincia a se stessa quel peso, ch'era necessario per tal effetto. Domandavansi però sempre queste contribuzioni a tempo dal Principe, e venivano a tempo consentite ancora da'popoli; e quante volte il bisogn o stringeva quello a far nuove istanze, era di mestieri, ch'altretante da questi se n'avesse nuovamente il consenso. Onde il modo insolito, che proponeva hora il Duca d'aggravare così all'ingrosso il paese per *tempo indeterminato, & in forma prescritta*, non dalle Provincie, ma da lui stesso, alterò sommamente gli animi; e tanto più allora, ch'erano di *già* commossi gli humori per ogni parte¹²⁸.

William Temple, in a retrospect, observed:

'Till the duke impatient of further delay, causes the Edict, without consent of the States, to be Published at Brussels. The people refuse to pay, the soldiers begin to levy by force; the townsmen all shut up their shops; the people in the Countrey forbear the Market, so as not as much as bread or meat is to be bought in town. The Duke in enraged, and calls the soldiers to arms, and commands several of the Inhabitants, who refused the payments, to be hanged that very night upon the sign-posts; which nothing moves the Obstinacy of the people: and now the officers of the Guards are ready to begin the executions, when news comes to town of the king of *Briel* by the Gueses, and of the expectation that had given of a sudden Revolt in the Province of Holland¹²⁹.

In this respect, already in 1568 an observer wrote:

Les pratiques & menées du Cardinal de Granvelle, & autres avaricieux & sanguinaires, lesquels sous le pretexte & manteau de la Religion pretendue Catholique, ne cherchans autre chose, que diminuer l'honneur de Dieu, l'autorité du Roy, & le bien du commun peuple¹³⁰.

And such an accusation was followed by a spate of pamphlets and treatises that «reiterated the view that Granvelle and Alva were trampling on the privileges and thereby violating the “old traditional freedom”. Under the pretence of religion and the

service to the king both tried to destroy the prosperity of the Netherlands and to bring “the inhabitants who before had had good freedom, in pitiable slavery with oppression and extermination of all the privileges and franchises of the country”»¹³¹.

Another anonymous *Fidelle exhortation aux Inhabitans due Pays Bas* (1569) pushed on Dutch historical contractualism which had afforded not only «Liberté» but also so great «prosperité», and on the fact that the final point for the oppressors and occupiers was the appropriation of the wealth and power of the Dutch:

Quelle iouissance de vos droicts, libertez & coustumes esperez vous, soubs la indeve domination des iniques invaseurs & violens oppresseurs d’icex, les trescruelles & tresiniustes actions desquelles ont par tant d’exemples manifesté leur intention n’estre aultre que de grasser tyranniquement & Impunement sur les personnes & biens detous les inhabitans, de quelle religion, qualité, eage, ou sexe qu’il soit, selen leur desreiglée passions [...] ?¹³²

What is important to stress, with Alberto Clerici, is the almost absence, in all this strand of pamphlets published in the first years of the war, of religious underpinnings to vindicate the Revolt – the *Libellus Supplex* is another example. Indeed, the *Fidelle exhortation* put forth also what we may term as the issue of “materialism”: the inquisition must be abolished not because it slays heretics or because it is bringer of a bogus religion, but because it appropriates Dutch customary wealth and power¹³³. Put very simply: the Dutch wanted to free themselves because of religious oppression and the violations of the Privileges; but the Dutch had to free themselves for they did not brook to be pillaged in terms of wealth and liberty – freedom and growth. Plunder would have meant actual passive submission and definitive reorganization of their lives according to the Spanish feudal-coercive logic of absolutist power.

In these regards, indeed between 1568-1569, Jacob van Wesembeeke, secretary of William Orange, published several important and influential works which emphasized the crucial steering the Revolt was to take¹³⁴. A shift came about in the realm of thought that was to reveal itself as a turn in the realm of practice as well. “Liberty” in the singular – in the modern political fashion – was posed at the center of the reflection. What is to be stressed is that this modern concept of liberty was regarded as the long-lasting and silent heritage of the old concept of medieval liberties that now it was to be abandoned in the realm of praxis to propel the revolt as an all-out national war. This was the step that would have led to the development of the conceit of Dutch absolute sovereignty and sovereign government. Liberty (singular) was understood as the manifest foundation for wealth and wealth as the foundation for liberty. Such a singularization caught a historical situation in which the operations of the Revolt started to be regarded by the Dutch more and more as a single national thrust for liberation. The «old liberty» the pensionary says, is «natural, inborn» and «will not allow to be taken away». Van Gelderen, commenting on Wesembeeke, stressed that the author

argued that the prosperity of the Low Countries was closely linked to the eager protection of Dutch liberty. The distracted policy of the government was not only an outright attack on the freedom of the Netherlands, making the Dutch “the most oppressed slaves in the world”. In addition it would lead “to the complete ruination of the whole country, which was standing solely on its liberty and freedom (and the trade, merchandise and the multitude of goods and persons, which had followed from this)”

The «intrinsic connection» between freedom and growth is the leitmotif of Dutch historical life, understood by both populace and pamphleteers, and used in actuality in the realm of historical politics since the late middle ages by the urban-rural syndicates against «encroaching central institutions». In this respect, to counter the sixteenth century encroachment of the Spaniards, Wesembeeke suggests that at the center of the

thrust for the protection of Dutch space, the States General was «a sound resort and secure remedy in all anxieties». Along with the recognition of the Generality's role of guardians of the *Liberty*, Wesembeeke proceeds to argue «that the prosperity of the country and the personal freedom of the inhabitants rested upon the country's old liberty. The loss of liberty would be catastrophic: the country would be ruined and the people turned into [...] “the most oppressed slaves in the world”». Therefore, the sovereign activity of the States General had to become an «imperative» around which the defense of wealth and liberty must be carried out¹³⁵. The accords of Gand in 1576 – south and north united, that is, different historical-structural societal arrangements but overlapping politico-constitutional infrastructures¹³⁶ – had confirmed the States General's role of barrier against central encroachments and the Dutch volition of self-government and self-financing – the provinces «had to be governed by the Dutch themselves» and they had to be «willing to pay all the necessary and reasonable contributions and taxes» (article II)¹³⁷.

The Hollander showed and pushed this volition above anyone else through the Union of Utrecht afterwards. In 1579 indeed, for the first time in another pamphlet, the *Brief discours sur la negotiation de lapaix*, Wesembeeke's discourse was echoed and deepened. We read that directly to the States is to be «reserved the power to decide on all matters concerning the sovereignty». This was truly revolutionary. The Dutch started to see the Generality as a true sovereign organism by itself, thereby transforming it in the most incisive device for the protection of customs and privileges, which were, in turn, the main form of protection for «la libertà personale e del patrimonio». Sovereignty was to reside in the States *because* of representatives of the estates and *guardians* of the liberty and wealth of the Dutch, *on behalf* of cities and countryside¹³⁸. In the early '80s indeed, as acknowledgement of such a new stance and position of

sovereignty, Holland and the other Provinces remitted their finance and government to the supervision of the States General to seal the revolutionary vision¹³⁹.

In the Generality's arena, the Hollanders naturally took the lead and this allowed their voices to be strongly heard, and the resources well spent for the protection, firstly and importantly, of their space, and *as a consequence*, of Dutch space as a whole¹⁴⁰. In these years indeed, Holland increased staggeringly its monthly quota to Dutch space protection, from 80.000 guilders in 1578 to 128.500 in 1586, by way of taxes to be sure, but also through an urban-rural, and then provincial, creditworthiness on the way of restoring¹⁴¹. In this regard, Fritschy stressed, the *financial* strategy of uncoupling the *gemene middelen* from the remittance of the interests, hooking payments in the locally-administered *verponding* – *gemene middelen* were earmarked directly to war financing not to the payment of the interests, and this obstructed the financial market in the first decades of the revolt – was crucial for it allowed the re-opening of the free financial market of the Province as a whole, and thus the thrust for the refinancing of the funded debt of the state – obligations, short terms loans, were to become a common mean for borrowing; interests started to get lower (we shall see below). The *provincial* fiscal network (with provincial receivers) and the urban-rural *financial* network (with public bodies) could, and in actuality started to, operate like “clockwork” at the end of the sixteenth century contributing to Holland's new financial accretion and the Dutch Republic's coagulation¹⁴².

The consolidation of the republican moment in 1590 was concurrent to the re-opening of the financial tap of Holland, the general and mindful assumption of the sovereignty of Dutch space as a whole – self-determination, especially in its «economic dimension» – and the start of Dutch capitalist world accumulation. This happened simply because these four things are to be considered as one – along with the bundle of consequences that stemmed from it. Structurally and constitutionally legitimated, the

State General set about coordinating the multi-layered Dutch space of rules and capital that became thereby interconnected through a web of power relations that set about articulating, regulating and normalizing the different levels of societal government and accumulation – a unified logically-combined structure of power. The Dutch state sought to defend Dutch territory and to expand societal power as unified process like never before¹⁴³. For the very first time, modern state formation, territorial sovereignty and capitalist accumulation on world scale became mutually and inextricably interlocked, and interlocked with, and articulate through, its societal ground – this was the dawn of the first regime of capitalist accumulation in the history of the modern world-system. The Dutch world power of the seventeenth century was the outgrowth of this complex whole of relations.

Hans Blom aptly rounds off:

If the Dutch Republic ultimately *found its rationale* in the defeat of tyranny, in the process it had developed *a sense of community* that consisting in a joint effort to bring together the funds necessary to successfully wage the war, can very well be described as one republican virtue. By gradually making (transit) trade the stronghold of this financial policy, by establishing “publicly-owned” trading companies, by taxing consumption instead of import and export, by making available to the population lifebonds to strengthen the treasury, the energy of the country was geared to *one single purpose*. The political structures reflected *this public spirit*¹⁴⁴.

8.2 *The Dutch regime of accumulation under completion*

The Dutch regime of accumulation was the most efficient and coherent mode of regulation of human space and scheme for the re/production of power in the seventeenth century, and the only national regime patterned after the capitalist logic of operation in the seventeenth century world-system. This enabled the Dutch to be hegemonic in the

European context. Herein, we keep exploring the *mode* of organizing Dutch space, that is, *the most important constituent* for a hegemon and of a systemic hegemony. In keeping with the forgoing, it will be shown how the Dutch brought to completion their historical edifice and major historical accomplishment. It is to be argued that Dutch rulers and subjects succeed in organizing and interlocking the military logistics and the cultural-welfare organization to the financial-fiscal networks, and the urban-rural structure of accumulation whence power primarily comes. In other words, they managed to deploy the different agents and agencies in an entwined commodity-centered web of value relations that enveloped the whole ensemble of powers – from the military to the socio-cultural to the market to politics – and the related organizations. Since we are to argue a historical unity, it is not useful to discern or split in successive and separate paragraphs the operations or the realm of capital, society and state, thus we will continue to proceed jointly.

To sum up the argument and rationale: the unique accumulation of capital and wealth of the preceding centuries translated into a warfare-welfare organization of Dutch space permeated by the capitalist logic of operation and structured on networks of regional markets for the re/production of power and wealth the Dutch state organized. The medieval capitalist expansion of trade and production had allowed for an urban-rural accumulation of fiscal-financial capital, especially from Holland and Zeeland, that enabled the structuring and consolidation of the Dutch state during the XVI century. The remarkable expansion of trade and production in the course of the century bulked at unprecedented level customs duties, excises, surcharges on exports, land taxation, tax on capital, that constituted the hefty basin of public resources for the emerging state. The XVI century capital and fiscal accretion enabled to consolidate the debt-based management of Dutch space and a great financial expansion injected further and unprecedented supplies of money into the general circuit of capital accumulation that

during the seventeenth century wholly embedded organization and processes of military power re/production – in view of the ongoing state of warfare in which the Dutch lived – and the most advanced network of welfare and social value re/production of the early modern times created to bear the brunt of war and social conflict. By way of an ample array of procedures of value redeployment, the Dutch state, in close association with the urban-rural spaces, managed to order society and economy at large toward a coherent and efficient capital-based movement of power re/production for the protection and the expansion of Dutch space.

In very short: all the logistics of power that the Dutch organized crisscrossed in domestic markets and re/produce power and wealth according to the logic of capital accumulation. The coherent deployment and the efficient redeployment of the expanding value so produced by the governmental business agencies stands out as the distinguishing character of the Dutch regime during the Seventeenth century.

4.2.1. The capitalist organization of Dutch military space

The Dutch military power, and the deployment of it, had its premises on the historical efficiency of production and the rapid circulation of commodities and capital, along with the capacity of labor redeployment that the historical urban-rural structure of public power, network and system of accumulation, distribution and transport permitted (chap. 3). This organization allowed for, and in turn was further potentiated thanks to, the seventeenth-century technological advancement and rising productivity as a whole, which led to an unprecedented industrial expansion and spurred on a remarkable state financial-fiscal accumulation. Thus, the rising productivity and technological leadership in the Golden Age was not merely the result of industrial investments limited to specific sectors, but indeed it was an outcome of the *whole* urban-rural structure of power, and

involved the economy as a whole. The capitalist organization of Dutch space pushed for a general technological and productive advancement through the market nexus that interlinked loci of technological experimentation to centers of production and consumption. This resolved into a rise of both the «*physical* productivity of labour – i.e. an increase in the number of items produced per manhour input» – and, at the same time, of the «*qualitative* surplus value per item produced» – often this occurred as an interconnected phenomenon. Against all the circulationist eddies of thinking, it was industry indeed – production – that after the Revolt saw the highest rates of growth – even compared to merchant shipping¹⁴⁵.

As a consequence, seventeenth-century domestic commerce boomed as a whole, *especially in terms of value*¹⁴⁶. Value explosion downsized negative consequences such as networks' congestion and the perilous increase of general transaction costs, and greatly strengthened the domestic position in the international structure of comparative cost advantages, which was bolstered by the ample margin of productivity. This injected an impressive volume of commercial value in domestic markets by which the urban-rural complexes profited as never before in terms of both industrial-commercial and fiscal-financial accumulation. The latter was then redeployed through the financial-fiscal networks of the state to further boost material accumulation. As a result, «per capita wealth tripled. The most important factor in this was no doubt domestic savings» which contributed in turn to expand, diversified and specialized further the structure of urban-rural investment, production and accumulation¹⁴⁷. As van Zanden bears out: «The period 1580 to 1650 was one of industrial diversification, with the rise of new (often harbour-related) industries (sugar refining, diamond cutting, paper making, printing, the silk industry, delftware)» with an ever-increasing liquidity and supply of money; notwithstanding the absorbing capacity of a booming economy, de Vries says, the «demand for labour rose more rapidly in the period 1570-1620 than did its supply [,]

despite the massive immigration from the Southern Netherlands, despite the rapid natural increase and urbanization of the domestic population, and despite the radical rationalization of the work year introduced after 1574»¹⁴⁸.

In a nutshell, the magnitude of Dutch accumulation and expansion in the seventeenth century was unprecedented¹⁴⁹. Capital investment and diversification with labor surfeit were preconditions for expanding capital accumulation in the seventeenth-century Dutch wars, that is, a bourgeoning war economy required several different and new state-capital-labor combinations to survive the necessity of war and to profit from it.

Table 4.5 . Estimates of the growth of production in the most important sectors of the economy and in the economy of Holland as a whole. 1500-1650 (annual average growth rates)¹⁵⁰

	1500-1580	1580-1650	1500-1650
Agriculture	0.3	0.5	0.4
Herring fisheries	1.0	0.4	0.7
International services	1.8	1.3	1.5
Textiles (woollen)	-2.0	3.3	0.5
Brewing	-0.6	0.6	-0.1
Shipbuilding	1.8	1.3	1.5
Gross output			
weights 1500	0.7	1.2 a	0.95
weights 1650	0.3	1.2 a	0.7
Population	0.5	0.9	0.7
a - minimum estimate			

Table 4.6. The taxable value of capital assets according to taxes levied in 1599, 1650, 1672 and 1788 (in millions of guilders¹⁵¹).

1599	160
1650	400
1672	626
1788	1400

Since the uninterrupted bout of warfare the Dutch Republic passed through, the organization of military power and of military labor-power was crucial to societal dynamics, for the expansion of the societal control of the state and the societal control over warfare processes as well as over the consequences of war¹⁵². The urban-rural expanded accumulation enabled a cumulative dynamics according to which public revenues and financial capital, through state and provincial governmental-business agencies which were wholly embedded into the urban-rural structure of production, trade and labor, replenished the organization of military labor and power; the military logistics at the same time fed the urban-rural space of accumulation and allowed for a noteworthy boost in financial-fiscal accumulation: the transference of wealth from the ground towards the upper level of government, and vice versa, came about thus by virtue of the related increase of public revenues and investments in the financial market that the general expansion of the processes of capital accumulation enabled. This value was redeployed thereon. A hybrid network of capital deployment and redeployment – hybrid because part government part private, that is, governmental-business – spawned a movement of interaction and integration between entrepreneurs-merchants, business companies, state agencies and agents involving state, province, urban-rural complexes, that highly speeded up and guaranteed military funding and provisioning through the historical urban-rural structure of wealth, production and exchange.

The organization of redeployment operated through a circuit of financial transference, urban-rural military-centered accretion of trade, production and consumption and thus fiscal growth, up to replenish public revenues, and also the financial market in the Republic. The military presence in towns and countryside became part of the processes of capitalist accumulation of the Dutch regime. A 1664 pamphlet witnessed: «the more mony they pay, the more they receive again, in that insensible but profitable way». The development of regular mechanics of the operations

of payment, supply, commodity distribution and redistribution that was based on the historical urban-rural structure of accumulation, «underpinned cohesion» and increased the Dutch military efficiency but also the efficiency of the Dutch regime in general through the marketization of the military life, that is the entering of the army in the commodity-centered web of relations characterizing the Dutch regime¹⁵³. In sum, The financing of the military organization – as instance, the regularization of troop’s payment, arguably the most relevant element in public expenditure¹⁵⁴ – was to connect the regularization and rationalization of public finance and the financial market we have already explored to warfare and the local space of wealth, production and exchange in a layered but coherent web of value relations¹⁵⁵.

The military organization and power were connected with financial capital. The seventeenth century capital and per-capita wealth explosion witnessed the related explosion of voluntary investments in the financial market that created an environment in which large fringes of population – regularly-paid soldiers included – participated through the markets to the financing of war, and to profit from it. The proceeds of this market expansion returned to the urban-rural complexes in the form of public loans through transferences of sums from the state, linked to the increase of public revenues that ensued from the expanding economy, or in the form of profit from interests on capital invested in the market. By the same token, the money invested stemmed directly from the growth of production and trade that war stimulated, and from the fact that the increasing presence of proletarianized labor, both in towns and countryside characterized by wages that were among the highest in Europe, boosted consumption, and, along with it, expanded the financial investment opportunities of the population in general¹⁵⁶. The proceeds that the expansion of the “free” financial market procured to the urban-rural complexes – population, elites and soldiers – fed into capital accumulation through the consequent further urban-rural investment in production and

trade, and the further rise in wages that such an injection of productive and commercial activities and money enabled – the high purchasing power was «a product of the era of economic growth, achieved by productivity-raising investments in agriculture, industry, and commerce. In this expansion era costs [of any kind] rose, to be sure, but wages rose more rapidly than prices, and real annual household earnings probably rose even more than did real wages»¹⁵⁷. The Seventeenth-century expansion of financial capital was structured on the funding of a (long-term) state debt premised on the urban-rural financial expansion that the local capitalist growth in general enabled.

The more traditional *lijfrenten* and *losrenten* were replaced by bonds and the official receiver morphed into broker and banker that fed and guarded the market dynamics in the whole space of Dutch accumulation from the state perspective. As ‘t Hart reminds, «*Obligaties* became the preferred kind of investment, since they were easier to transfer than *lijfrenten* and *losrenten*. They were used typically by receivers less bound by traditional regulations, such as the Receiver General of the Union, the provincial receivers of the western maritime regions, the receivers of the five Admiralties, and the receivers of the largest cities»¹⁵⁸. As a result, such a loan policy dragged the Dutch burghers deeper into the state¹⁵⁹.

Table 4.7 Annual budget of the Dutch Republic c.1641, and the Dutch state, 1801: percentage distribution of expenditure (excluding local and provincial expenses)¹⁶⁰

	c. 1641 (%)	1801 (%)
Army and fortifications	61	30
Navy	26	15
Military expenditure subtotal	87	45
Debt servicing costs	4	41
Administration and miscellaneous	9	14
TOTAL	100	100
total (millions of guilders)	24	71

Between 1621 and the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, Holland's debt rose more than fivefold, to 125.5 million guilders¹⁶¹. A financial expansion of this sort implied, on the one hand, the staggering organized accumulation of capital that in fact was – «the level of capital accumulation was enormous» van Zanden estimates¹⁶²; on the other, it spelt the widest trust in the fiscal-financial creditworthiness of the state, premised on the one of the urban-rural complexes. The financial management of the state was «grafted» upon the urban-rural structure of accumulation and permeated by its institutional framework apt to capture revenues «in a timely and properly manner». Indeed, the Dutch had begun to tap the fiscal wealth of the urban-rural spaces in place of coercive loans to foster further trust in the voluntary investment of capital that in turn translated into the expansion of the bond market– the growth of bills' issuing from the late 1620s: «By 1648 bills amounted to 73 million guilders, or 60 percent of Holland's debt». The shift from coercion to investment, Gelderblom-Jonker say, meant the building up of a long-term debt by way of short-terms instrument, with rates among the lowest of Europe:

By 1630 Holland combined a strong credit record with a booming economy and savings outpaced the rise in public debt [...]. Consequently, we must see Holland's anomaly as an equilibrium of interests achieved on one side by rapid economic growth and wealth accumulation and on the other by the soaring expenditures needed to defend that prosperity. The equilibrium depended on the receivers' dual-action safety valve, which gave investors an exit option while buffering roll-over crises¹⁶³.

Short-term loans in the XVII century, and especially *after* the end of the truce (1622), became the most reliable source of money because the state began the widespread use of *solliciteurs militair* apt to mobilize, advance and guard the transference and employment of funds all over Dutch space¹⁶⁴. The Dutch put into

operation brokerages through this new breed of financial agents of war¹⁶⁵. Related to them, a contemporary wrote in 1669:

It is very observable in these Provinces, that though there be no Money in the Treasury, yet the Souldiers receive their pay every week or moneth; for every Regiment chooses an Agitatur, who resides near the States to sollicite the payment of those he represents; and when there is no Money in the publick Treasury, he may confidently, and does borrow and take up Money for the present necessity; and it is repaid him again with interest by the States order. The hops of the great profit there is to be made, engages these solicitors to d thus; for they advance their money it is at rate of 10 per cent. gains which they take upon the arrears which the state owes to the officers¹⁶⁶.

Appointed by the Province, a military solicitor had to collect funds and redeploy money from Provincial treasury (*comptoir*) to the army or, at any rate, in case of need, to guarantee troop funding by investing his own capital or raking money from other private investors¹⁶⁷. Great accumulation of capital was the objective and, purportedly, the outcomes for these agents, ensuing primarily from interest – noteworthy in time of war – but also from provincial funds' surplus. The great mobilization of money and the networks these brokers developed enabled the more efficient redistribution of the resources¹⁶⁸. The operations of these solicitors boosted velocity and quantity of commercial transactions, and thanks to the improved army funding that ensued from their operations of value redeployment, the sectors of value production that were directly connected to the army on the field came to be boosted as well¹⁶⁹.

Not only willingness to participate – with *ever-increasing profit* in return in mind – to the financing of state and war, but also *willingness* to bear increasingly heavier taxation. In the 1590, Fyes Moryson observed:

The Tributes, Taxes, and Customes, of all kinds imposed by *mutuall consent*, – so great is the love of liberty or freedome – are very burthensome, and they willingly beare them, though for much lesse exactions imposed by the King of Spaine – as they hold – contrary to right, and without consent of his Subjects, they had the boldnesse to make warre against a Prince of such great power¹⁷⁰.

The explosion of capital, trade and purchases in the seventeenth century brought about an accumulation of fiscal value that was tapped to bankroll the protection of Dutch space and the protection of capital. Since 1600, Provincial taxation – common means – came to be viewed as a good source to fund interest payments on a consolidated debt, and thus remarkably expanding the possibilities for war financing with an expansion of the financial market. Taxation and finance were tied up together¹⁷¹. However two other points can be taken into account.

Fiscal cooperation in the seventeenth century was pushed forward by the consolidation and further adjustment of the federal organization of state related to the urban-rural complexes. The Dutch Republic was organized through the compliance to the historical nature of Dutch society: the efficiency of the Dutch regime was achieved in this respect because the Dutch rulers understood and abided by the differences in the historical socio-economic structure of production and wealth between the provinces, thereby operating in accordance with them. Holland, and Zeeland, performed the starring role in the Republic, but the state power rested also on the other provinces' value-added in productive, commercial, military and fiscal-financial terms. The greatest achievement of the Dutch rulers in the seventeenth century was thus the management and the organization of Dutch space as a whole in compliance with the historical socio-spatial differences of its own: they channeled and harnessed the added-value the provinces brought with them by creating a socio-economically differentiated organization of financial-fiscal accumulation – what Fritschy calls the «Social-

Economic Structure of the Public Revenue of the Provinces». The Dutch rulers captured the productive and commercial differences and constructed a state-wide policy of fiscal-financial differentiation that slipped over the historical provincial peculiarities to obtain what the rulers longed for, «the required public revenue-increases». In so doing «the ‘fabric’ of the total of public revenue was ‘stretched’ from on average nearly 17 million guilders between 1621 and 1700, to on average about 24 million guilders between 1700 and 1794»¹⁷².

The fiscal network of differentiated accumulation of the Republic was organized upon a very efficient provincial system of direct urban-rural extraction-redeployment – that is, «the increases in public expenditure [...], did not lead to an increasing financial role of the centralized institutions in the course of the existence of the Dutch Republic»¹⁷³. Within a framework of provincial fiscality, taxes were spent for example to finance troops that stationed in the same towns-countryside in which taxes were levied and the money so redeployed spent further in the local economy. The local public sphere, geared to market and capital accumulation thanks to the solid framework of capital-oriented institutions, in close association with the merchants put into place a dynamic network of relations between artisans, industries, proto-industries and army for the general supply of populace, field army and navy alike¹⁷⁴. A direct circuit of state loans-urban-rural fiscal deduction from provincial taxation thus was installed: its linkages became the markets and the soldiers’ purchases. The tax revolution the Provincial States put forward in the 1570s enabled the Provinces to advance loans to pay soldiers whose amount would have been deducted later from the towns’ tax contribution to the province; at the same time the market involvement of soldiers who purchased food (bread for example¹⁷⁵), beer, housing stimulated the circulation of commodities and money, increased the volume of commercial and financial transactions (interest-bearing obligations), breeding an expansion in the urban-rural fiscal, and

provincial financial, accumulation¹⁷⁶. The soldiers stepped thus into market relations with hosting structures, households, merchants stimulating an added state circuit of capital expansion. The market system was crucial to lower the friction between the garrison and population in the urban-rural space. The reform in the 1570s thus changed the organization of military payment by establishing a direct link «between the army's local expenses and the sums raised in the immediate locality by the improved provincial taxes. From June 1577 onwards the *serviesgeld*, the financial compensation for the services, was paid out of local tax funds (and then deducted in turn from the sums the town had to advance to the province)»¹⁷⁷.

An example is offered by the financial/fiscal organization for sea protection and warfare put into operation through the five leading naval governmental-business agencies, the admiralties¹⁷⁸, whose main objective was capital accumulation by warfare and trade protection, and whose decentralization in structure and operations was indeed «part of the mechanism by which the Dutch society mobilised resources and monitored how the state used them». As Glete summarized: «The most successful maritime economy of our period, the Dutch Republic, created a state navy around the traditional private competence of convoy escorting but retained a highly viable sector for private violence at sea. Offensive warfare was to a large extent left to chartered private monopoly companies, the East and West India Companies»¹⁷⁹. Although state organisms, the admiralties were in essence independent agencies of accumulation, wholly rooted into the urban-rural network of power, that controlled the collection of custom duties in the urban-rural spaces wherein revenues were collected and then redeployed through the financial networks and agents – military solicitors – for the fitting out of ships and the protection of trade and of the Dutch seas space¹⁸⁰. In so doing these leading agencies shored up Dutch shipping and productivity by hiring out cannons, arms, ammunition, sails, anchors, maps and so on from their arsenals that were

provisioned through the historical networks of production and exchange – shipbuilding¹⁸¹ as instance took off –, feeding the state-wide processes of capital accumulation – from protection also the Dutch extracted great wealth, the so-called rents¹⁸². In sum the Admiralties provided regular financial and military support to the major trading companies by way of loans and the subsidies the Provincial States of Holland and the States-General granted in order to expand wealth, power and protection that, through the expanded fiscal accumulation which ensued, came to be further replenished¹⁸³. How said in 1644:

[B]ecause of the commerce and navigation exercised in this country over the last sixty years, the inhabitants have so much increased their means or capital, that one can truly say that they own the greatest wealth in the world. For if one would seriously investigate this point, one would find that they do so because they command over thousand ships, capable of usage for warfare¹⁸⁴.

The Dutch navy was one of the most efficient in Europe also because it was entirely geared to hire labor through market: it absorbed and employed outstanding portions of energies and thanks to the stratification and differentiation that the seventeenth century market of labor ensured, enabled the strategic redeployment of both skilled and unskilled labor¹⁸⁵. Its efficiency in terms of power was thus also an outcome of the efficiency of its military labor that emanated from the urban-rural structure of market and production. The Dutch navy was the only navy in the seventeenth century which completely relied on, and rested upon, the market for mass recruitment of sailors – «the largest concentrated labour market for seamen in the world and the Dutch mercantile marine». As Glete says indeed, «The key to their availability was, of course, high wages [but also] the republic's good reputation as a reliable paymaster»¹⁸⁶.

The market network thus could penetrate the military logistics because of military investments being earmarked with the state financial-fiscal policy of accumulation – savings included¹⁸⁷ – through the urban-rural structure of capital accumulation and the historical web of regional markets throughout Dutch space. Such a spatial and layered interlocking of economic, financial, fiscal and political sort reveals thus that the Dutch regime owed a *compound* structure of power with a *unified* internal structure of capital accumulation, characterized by continual processes of negotiation and adaptation between spaces and layers of power and accumulation¹⁸⁸. But finance, taxes and capital were not the only reasons that explain the capitalization of the warfare processes. Quite the contrary. Discipline became the hallmark of Dutch military labor and this had remarkable consequence for the capitalist power accumulation of the Dutch regime.

The reinforced military discipline regulated troops' behavior and marshaled the resources that war mobilized to the market, allowing for the improvement and the strengthening of the market discipline of war in turn: soldiers set about utilizing market networks in place of plunder and theft, completely substituting in time coercion with money the state paid to them for market services – the market network penetrated even within the camp wherein was put into place «a market square [...] where the sutlers could proffer their wares to the soldiers»¹⁸⁹; this circuit of resources' redeployment centered on the troop's presence in the urban-rural spaces aided to reproduce capital, not to impair the accumulation – as occurred in other regimes¹⁹⁰. The disciplinary movement started in the first years of the Revolt with a rising professional army. Since the 1570s, William Orange's reform and the following reorganization by Maurice and Frederik Hendrik, transformed both the management and logistics of Dutch military organization.

In his political testament, Richelieu wrote: «history knows many more armies ruined by want and disorder than by the efforts of their enemies; and I have witnessed

how all the enterprises which were embarked on in my day were lacking for that reason alone»¹⁹¹. The Dutch were the exception proving Richelieu's rule. Before the state regulation, the urban-rural complexes were reluctant to host soldiers within their space. Law infringements and havoc – thefts, rapes and citizens' revolts as a consequence in essence – were usually the result of soldiers' permanence in town¹⁹². The situation changed by arranging and imposing a new organized discipline and institutionally-controlled behavior to both army and urban-rural spaces that quartered troops, thereby linking over time military discipline to the order of capital accumulation. With the introduction and the perfection of Roman strategies and tactics, the Dutch transformed the army in a «coherent community» as McNeill says, based on a rational deployment of military labor, the most efficient in the early seventeenth century. In sum, they increased the quality and the efficiency of military labor power through the enhancement of the military regulation, drill and engineering. In keeping with Dutch history, Dutch armies «were, readily, renewable and preserved old-fashioned», i.e., rural values and attitudes within an ever more drastically urbanized, monetized, commercialized and bureaucratically rationalized world»¹⁹³.

New institutions were created whereas the old ones were recasted as were the related agencies. Here some instances: it was reduced the hold of landsknechts, extended the numbers of officers compared to soldiers and introduced standardized military trials presided by officials that began to punish whatsoever law infringements – the jurisdictional control of the landsknechts was abolished and the captains could wield full judicial powers. Then, the so-called Articles of War were also changed by adding new disciplinary regulations, making the relations between the several actors more rational and impersonal at all levels, pushing the relations between the army chain of command and state towards higher standards of integration and depersonalization – a standing army was on the way of formation in so doing¹⁹⁴. Societal control became

central since military courts were filled with citizens that acted as public secretaries, advisors or prosecutors. Civilians played a remarkable role in the administration of the military trials thereby making the entire urban-rural citizenry the guardian of military comportment and administration. What developed was a sort of “democratic” check, or more precisely, surveillance on the organization and execution of military power. For instance, ‘t Hart reports, «when three farmer’s children lost their lives as a result of some stupid act by soldiers from the Zutphen garrison, a public outcry arose in which the Zutphen government sued the garrison governor, Van Dorth. By comparison, in almost all other early modern armies prosecutors came from the military ranks»¹⁹⁵.

The role of the Council of State was limited to administrative functions by the extension of the power of the States General in the process of military appointment that was driven by both the stadholder and the provincial governments, and that was highly influenced by local authorities. Especially after 1618, processes of recruiting of high officials – no private selling of such positions was allowed – and of mustering of troops were organized by the provincial government with specific institutional rules of hiring concerning skills and experience, precise rules of discharging – pension for injuries for example¹⁹⁶. This organization was complemented by civilians’ supervision, notably those of noble birth with military experience, accompanied by new strict regulations issued by the local governments. Formal regulations and skill- and experience-centered assignments of functions, hierarchical chain of command and increased society-state judicial authority managed by both government – especially the Provincial government of Holland – and local bodies, made the States’ troops the model army of the time; but more importantly, these new rules made the state organization of Dutch space as a whole an intersubjectively constituted reality in which cooperative behavior was the norm – «[T]he effectiveness of military-fiscal systems [was] forged in the negotiation of complex contractual relationships between rulers, subjects, bureaucrats, and armed

forces, negotiation of the sort possible in the Dutch Republic after the Revolt». About it, 't Hart says: «Since the 1590s war had increasingly become 'not an act of uncontrolled violence, but rather the orderly application of force, directed by a competent and legitimate authority, in the interest of the state'»¹⁹⁷.

The improvement of drill organization and regularization was crucial to avert the unpleasant consequences of unruly armies in cities, towns and countryside, and their impact on processes of production and exchange. The standardization of drill was only possible as a consequence of the standardization of weaponry after Maurice's reform – and more fully later with Frederik Hendrik – that signaled a general movement toward the rationalization of the practices of human management, beyond army and war, with the use of science as strategy of control and order¹⁹⁸. Improved drill indeed allowed for more strict adherence to the orders, and thus a more disciplined use of coercion. Regular and standardized drills were new inasmuch as they became part of daily life for the militaries. In sum, the increase of professionalism and rationalization «reduced significantly the negative burden on society represented by mutinies or uncontrolled provisioning by bands of soldiers»¹⁹⁹.

Another instance is troops' lodging. William Aglionby wrote: «Besides their pay, the soldiers have likewise their lodging free, and the states do pay to inhabitants of all towns upon that score, six pence a week for each soldiers they lodge, and this is call'd Service Money»²⁰⁰. For the time, large amounts of «Service money» were syphoned off from central government to those who actually provided lodgings for troops, in sharp contrast with the practice adopted elsewhere in Europe, especially in the absolutist jurisdictions. From June 1577 onwards the *serviesgeld* was paid out of local tax funds deducted, as in the previous case, from the amounts the urban-rural complexes had to advance to the provincial government. In so doing, troops' lodgings came to be bankrolled directly by local authorities and state, and thereby the hosting structures

obtained regular funds that substantially downsized the attrition between troops and civilians, that is, lowered in a substantial way transaction costs for society as a whole, and between state and society as well. State rules of billeting established that the Dutch soldiers were not to be forcibly billeted upon households, which were legally protected from obligations of any sort. Even local elites provided such a service in the same manner, underlying relaxed practices at any level of society²⁰¹. Since no obligations were established, a free bargaining between troops and hosts developed, and this freedom highly fostered the market organization of relationships between army and local spaces. Financial agents such as *serviesmeesters*, appointed by local governments, managed the money to financially organize war space – as instance, funding households that hosted soldiers. In general, the introduction of the so-called *serviesgelden* «created above all a regular source of potential income for numerous townspeople, above all middling and lower income households», and in so doing it enhanced societal cooperative behaviors for the provision of such a service for the troops. Despite military labor demand grew vastly during the seventeenth century – as a consequence the presence of *would-be* soldiers in the cities posed actual threats to social order²⁰² – the army's permanence «strengthened the Dutch urban communities» instead of weakened them²⁰³.

In sum: the Dutch regulated and normalized conflict within society spurring on the market discipline and the intertwining of capital accumulation, military logistics and social organization of market through their deep-rooted institutional framework of medieval constitution and their newborn state networks of power. The state intervened with a disciplinary movement to order Dutch military labor and power that became part of everyday social life, and as a consequence, geared to market. While in other jurisdictions during the seventeenth-century global state of warfare, accumulation of capital and power were highly impaired and the «confusion reign[ed] supreme», the

Dutch regime by far outdid the others by means of the conflation of military logistics with market, capital accumulation and state – that is, it disciplined soldiers to the market rules of capitalist sort the state sorted out²⁰⁴. In so doing, the Dutch Republic put into operation and supplied one of Europe's first and largest standing armies throughout the XVII century in proportion to Dutch population and domestic space.

The Seventeenth-century Dutch army consisted of 50.000 to 120.000 men. At the same time, it had between 80 and 120 ships of the line. If we compare these figures in absolute terms, they were not extraordinary since England's navy had over 120 ship of the line, for example, and its army included up to 87.000 men. France also had well over 100 ships, at least during the early 1700s, and in theory its army comprised over 400.000 men; Sweden c. 100.000 at the end of the century. However in relative terms, situation changes: compared to population, the composition of the Dutch army was astonishing, for the Dutch population was about 2 million while England counted around 5.5 million inhabitants, and France over 20 million. This means that the Dutch outfitted about one soldier for every seventeen civilians, and 1 ship for every 25.000. By contrast, England had 1 soldier per 61 civilians and 1 ship per 45,000, while France had (at best) 1 soldier for every 50 civilians and only 1 ship for every²⁰⁵. These astonishing figures buttresses the actual capacity of regularization and normalization of Dutch space activated by the Dutch regime.

4.2.2. Religion, welfare and the logic of capital accumulation

Religion was a great vector for capitalist accumulation. But herein it is to be understood differently from the usual purport historians and sociologists mostly assigned to it. State organization, capital accumulation and the salvation of the soul passed through the organization of welfare and social provision arranged and bankrolled

by the urban-rural bloc and hence the state. By way of such a socio-cultural organization of state, the Dutch managed to placate the violence of the social conflict during the XVII century and made Dutch society an environment which, by contrast, improved and enhanced the capitalist expansion of power. Thereby, salvation and charity became firstly a question of pragmatism. It was in this sense that welfare and religions aided to get richer, and getting richer was a crucial condition to fuel state, economy and the struggle for independence and power. This hence concerns how religion disciplined man in depth to peaceful coexistence according to the logic of capital accumulation that the welfare organization enabled to propel further.

Needless to say that capitalism did not originate from some religious penchant or its entrenchment within society and the soul of man. In this respect thus, the protestant thrust was at most a propellant, a facilitator of historical dispositions already deep-seated into the Dutch and their logic of action. As Clé Lesger suggests, «socioeconomic change seems to have promoted the reception of Protestantism in the Netherlands rather than the other way round». From a European perspective, Protestantism sparked off a continental reconfiguration and massive redistribution of labor, capital – both financial and human – and land through migration movements that «transformed the geographical distribution of labor and capital, diluting it in some areas (e.g., the Southern Netherlands and Northern France) while concentrating it in others (e.g., the cities of Holland and Zeeland)»²⁰⁶. The disciplinary thrust the Dutch put into operation to regulate the inflow that followed this movement, proved fundamental to the Dutch regime.

This section purports to expand such suggestions. Actually, part of the background has been already set and explored in chapter 3 in which it has been argued that the logic of capital accumulation *fully* developed in Holland many centuries before the coming of Protestantism – during the late middle-ages-early-modern times (XIV-XVI c.). It is not a coincidence thus that an extensive network of welfare, social care,

education, justice, along with its institutional framework, set about developing in Dutch towns from the XIII century onwards²⁰⁷. Early administration and the related institutions have been broached above in this chapter as well, and as such they showed how early state, and its networks, came to be bridled and embedded into the capitalist patten of power re/production to replenish the entire urban-rural structure and Dutch network of capital accumulation.

The historical process of formation of Dutch space brought the Dutch unto world power. It was brought into completion by way of the construction of the Dutch State and the deployment of its organization over the territory of the Republic. The management of socio-religious strife in the Dutch Republic – that emanated from the universal conflict within Church, and spread out because crucial component of the struggle for stability in Europe between the emerging nation states – was actually a crucial constituent for the movement of societal regulation and the rise of the Dutch hegemon. But before exploring how the Dutch managed this inner conflict – inner in a twofold sense: inner to the soul of man, and internal to Dutch society –, we need to sketch out in very brief the historical religious landscape of the Dutch.

The Revolt rifted the Low Countries through the combination of materialist thrust funneled through political discontent – as we have seen – and religious contradictions. The latter were rooted in turn in a European maelstrom of theological differentiations, ecclesiastical repressions and continental migrations whereof the Low Countries, for its particular configuration in terms of institutions, economy and geography, were swept over. Already between 1520-1530, from the German Empire, Lutherans and Anabaptists were attracted and mixed with local traditions of critique and opposition – both of religious life and ecclesiastical organization. The great industrial landscape enhanced the central position of the Low Countries in such a movement: for example the development of printing industry made biblical texts and evangelical literature available

for anyone, and the growing number of those who were “protesting” against the authoritative monopoly of church encouraged and increased demand. Literature was formerly reserved to clerics but now, thanks to the industrial democratization of religious readings, anyone in towns and cities bought both Bibles and devotional works. Religion became a popular affair in the Low Countries. To counter what was being viewed a perilous movement of political destabilization, the catholic Emperor arranged a legal framework of inquisition and control through agents and agencies – commissioners, provincial Courts and urban justices, the regular episcopal courts, and the reviewed of the heresy laws that forbade reading, possessing, printing and sale of heretical books – to protect and preserve the catholic unity of the realm.

In the 1540s, from France, Calvinists stepped into South. French Calvinism was not only a religion, but also a political movement – not entirely different from Anabaptism which was viewed as a political danger owing to its proclivity to not acknowledge political authority. All over the Netherlands Calvinism grew rapidly especially in the 1560s, and after 1566 new Calvinist groups emerged and changed its character by organizing politico-religious operations of recruiting and opposition to royal policy. As a dated but interesting analysis aptly summarizes:

This historic movement reveals Calvinism as much more than a creed. It was, as Kuyper called it, a " life-system," but something more, for it possessed within itself the dynamic of life, vitalizing creed, worship, moral and intellectual discipline, church organization and civil government, economics and social ethics, developing and utilizing to the utmost God-given talents for the up-building of church, free public schools, military defence, and the wealth necessary for so comprehensive and costly a commonwealth [...]. Calvin not only said, "We must walk each according to his station", but also, "We must walk forward, and grow, so that our hearts may be capable of things we cannot now understand. If our last day finds us going forward, we shall learn beyond this world what we could not learn here". This not merely forward-looking but forward-moving spirit made Calvinism a growing, questioning force²⁰⁸.

Along with these major strands – and the Jewish –, many other variations and nuances of religious practices and credo – the Mennonites were a relevant community for example – spawned a highly-diversified socio-cultural landscape that forced the Spanish rulers to change their tactical strategy. As Jean-Baptiste Stoupe wrote in 1673: «Is this really a Protestant country that we have occupied?»:

The States give unlimited freedom to all sorts of religions, which are completely at liberty to celebrate their mysteries and to serve God as they wish. You will therefore know that besides the Protestants there are Roman Catholics, Lutherans, Brounisted [Congregationalist followers of Robert Browne], Independents, Arminians [Remonstrants], Anabaptists [Mennonites], Socinians, Arians, Enthusiasts, Quakers or Shakers, Borelists [partisans of the collegiant Adam Boreel, who tended towards prophetism], Armenians, Moscovites, Libertines, and others whom we can call Seekers because they are seeking a Religion and they do not profess any of those established. I do not say more about Jews, Turks, and Persans²⁰⁹

Although the unlimited freedom whose Jean-Baptiste Stoupe talks about was surely an overstatement, the question for the Spanish rulers was not whether the church had to remain a single catholic corpus anymore, but «rather what attitude the authorities should adopt in the face of the phenomenon of religious diversity»²¹⁰. The Spanish failure in understanding and implementing such a conceit, substantiated by Alva's descent, created the conditions for the solid incorporation of protestant factions into the leading circles which would have run the Dutch state– and the church as its appendages – that is, at the same time within the urban-rural elites and their men in the upper levels of government. By contrast, the successful organization the Dutch put into operation to face the crucial knot of diversity aided their power, and its re/production and expansion.

The reformed community was a religious minority. Nonetheless, it was officially recognized with the birth of the United Provinces. What follows was not a national Protestant church, but, *in general*, a «church of the state» – especially after 1618, the synod of Dordrecht²¹¹. As for state-building processes, the last decade of the sixteenth century was an important bout of church-building: politics and war pushed for a restructuring that could be useful to uphold the Dutch war efforts²¹².

But the organization of the new church of the state proved difficult²¹³. Protestant ministers were scarcer and the high standard of moral conduct, pastoral prowess and education made the recruitment difficult. «They had to teach their flocks a godly discipline that was stricter than traditional, medieval Catholicism had been». The state now earmarked a great part of church revenues to brace the war efforts and repay the damages war brought with it – it was the catholic church that firstly paid off for war. In essence, the Dutch state and Church appropriated the wealth of the Catholics. The other part of funds was destined for the building up of the protestant network of university and discipline that had to shape the next governing elites of the Republic. A new breed of religious ministers was trained in the new universities. These were the new governing agents of the church of the state who possessed administrative competence and disciplinary functions. The remainders were earmarked to bankroll the local church organization – activities, but also pensions and salaries. Ecclesiastic agents were in sum laborers waged «from the State, upon whom they wholly depend» William Temple claims²¹⁴.

Such a web of rules and money was rather strictly and restrictively organized, firstly because funds were few and thoroughly regulated, secondly because to step into it, the requirements of learning, public profession of faith and lifestyle were remarkably high for the ministers, and a full membership under a permanent scrutiny of the consistory was called for the believers. As a consequence, in the Dutch Republic,

the Reformed Church was, for a public Church, rather exclusive, and it is estimated that by the end of the sixteenth century only ten to twenty percent of the population could be counted as members. This is remarkable. It is an indication that all the humanism, evangelicalism and anti-clericalism of the preceding decades had not made many people into informed and convinced Protestants. *It would take a process of confessionalization, of systematic inculcation of religious values, lasting deep into the seventeenth century, to do that*²¹⁵

As far as it is concerned here, Jo Spaans reports a crucial fact related to the religious landscape of the Dutch Republic that upholds a central hypothesis of the present study: the origin of Dutch capitalism had nothing to do with Protestantism precisely because confessionalization and systematic inculcation of religious values was a process accomplished *throughout* the seventeenth century (at least!) – this is a tenable historical scenario even regardless of our framework of Dutch historical capitalist expansion put forth in chapter 3. An explosion in magnitude akin to that of the Dutch in the XVII century should have implied the completion of the confessionalization process and the thorough rootedness of Protestantism to uphold the link between origin of capitalism and Protestantism. Or in other words, religious conversion should have involved far wider strata of population than in fact were at the end of the sixteenth century to uphold the Weberian hypothesis. By contrast, when Protestantism involved more people, Dutch power was already fading away.

Instead, *Dutch* world capitalist expansion and power in the seventeenth century involved *Dutch* Protestantism inasmuch as «in worship, church and civil government, education, social and economic program, even more than in theology, [it] was marked by *an adaptability* which enabled it to become an international movement» and to discipline the diverse socio-political landscapes it encountered in its European expansion²¹⁶. We can say that Protestantism, and Calvinism in particular, proved crucial

in two respects: it engendered, or contributed to engender, a double movement, at the same time, of disciplinary regulation and flexible adaptation. *The* crucial character of capitalism in its *longe durèe* is precisely adaptability – as Braudel has showed. Calvinism in this respect provided a powerful inner lever to brace capitalist accumulation. The discipline it thrust on man was crucial in helping regulate Dutch society, making it an environment apt to capitalist accumulation. Both conditions were crucial to the construction of the Dutch hegemon.

«Church is not only part of politics [...] but the Church is also political society» claimed an Arminian practitioner²¹⁷. Hence, as Troeltsch avers in his study on Protestantism, Calvinism fell into place within the Dutch state that was fighting for sovereignty since it favored its power and evolution vigorously. This translated into a unique ideological overlapping between state-builders and church-builders which, on the one hand, fed into the anti-despotic compulsions, and on the other, consolidated within the state organization forms of government hinging on participation, thereby grafting the idea of social contract and of election of sovereign powers²¹⁸. Indeed, it was in Holland that «durante il XVI e XVII secolo venne elaborata la teoria della titolarità della sovranità alle assemblee rappresentative [...]», Clerici bears out²¹⁹. And those who held this power were the urban-rural syndicates. As such, it was another important factor which helped solidify the urban-rural organization of Dutch constitutional framework – state-builders and church-builders became, in their intertwining and interplay, social engineer, society-builders²²⁰. But, as De Vries and van der Woude recall, «the common individual and individualistic propensity to act», typical of capitalism, that created «situations in which personal initiative, innovation, and responsibility [and] where political, economic, and personal freedom [was] valued more highly» were already developed, according to the two historians, since the XVI century, before the diffusion – not to mention the rootedness – of Protestantism in Holland and

in the other Provinces – according to our framework, these situations and propensity set about developing since the XIV century²²¹. Therefore the role of Protestantism should be sought in something different than the origin of capitalism. In this respect however, the original Calvinist thrust in the Netherlands proved at times detrimental to the Dutch space of accumulation, as for instance in Friesland:

During the following fifty years, Friesland's share in the Baltic trade rose to the highest percentage ever recorded, that is, 799 ships out of a total of 3,9283 which passed through the Sound in 1564, against 2,425 for Holland. At this time Calvinism was just entering Friesland from the south; and, if this religion actually helped the growth of commerce and industry, it should have benefited Friesland more than any other Dutch province, for Friesland became predominantly Calvinistic after 1564. But the figures show a contrary trend. In 1574, Friesland had only 46 out of 4,567; in 1575, 36 out of 3,786; in 1576, 592 out of 3,885; in 1577, 252 out of 4,784; in 1578, 354 out of 5,010; in 1579, 380 out of 3,772; in 1580, 401 out of 3,832; in 1581, 421 out of 4,262; in 1582, 442 out of 4,946; in 1583, 529 out of 5,371; in 1584, 449 out of 4,898; in 1585, 360 out of 4,103; and in 1587, 502 out of 6,465. The figures for the period from 1587 to 1660 remain approximately the same as those from 1580 to 1587, while those for Holland also show about the same percentage after 1587 as they do before 1587: in 1587, 92,254 out of 6,465; in 1594, 2,974 out of 6,208; in 1600, 1,778 out of 4,288; and in 1608, 3,387 out of 6,582²²².

The general synod at Emden in 1571, that gathered representatives of the Reformed churches throughout the Netherlands and of the refugee churches in Germany, stated that although it was permitted to be a merchant, it was «improper for the confessors of the pure religion, unjust and hostile to love, to accumulate money in order that it may be debased, or otherwise to coin money which may result in damage to the general welfare, even though it be done with the connivance of the magistrates of the city». In the provincial synod of Dordrecht in 1574 it was stated even that a banker could not partake to the Holy Supper: «No, for he has been allowed by the magistrates to operate his bank only because of the hardness and evil of men's hearts, and not

because of God's will. Hundreds of persons would be scandalized by the admittance of such a person to the communion service». The national synod convoked at Middelburg in Zeeland in 1581 stated, related to the banker's wife and servants, that «the wife was not responsible for her husband's actions and was therefore permitted to come, though on condition that she declare her objections to those actions, while the servants could not attend because they had been free to leave the banker's business if they had objected to his way of doing business»²²³. This is not to say that Calvinism was against capitalism, but that its orientation about capital accumulation should be regarded rather as neutral.

However, once capital and state conflated, Calvinist elites postured somewhat differently. The treatise called *Res Judicanda*, published at Leyden in 1658, contained the official opinions of leading Calvinists in the Netherlands during *the fourth and fifth decades of the seventeenth century*, that showed plainly, as a historian says, «that in the provincial towns, removed from the bustle of the great commercial and industrial enterprises, the attitude of the clergy and of the scholars was very slow to change, and that Calvinism cannot possibly be held responsible for the rapid growth of capitalism in the Netherlands»:

A distinction must always be made between the rich and the poor, for from the poor one may not require interest, since to them one must loan money without charge Let no one think that he will stand free before the hosts of God, who in the countries where commerce is carried on, with the connivance of the magistrates, institutes a bank and devours the people, especially the poor Such are they who in the Netherlands and else- where are called Lombards, who publicly carry on a business as the Jews do in other places, wherefore they have become infamous²²⁴.

When, in the provinces of Holland and Utrecht magistrates and municipal governments started out regulating or checking strictly banking operations, channeling activities and profit also toward the well-being of the community, the posture softens:

Although it must be admitted that in these banks everything is not so equitable as in the Mountains of Charity, and although the profits are not used in helping the poor with alms, nevertheless the interest charges have been reduced one-half, and they are intended to help pay the cost of government. Furthermore, since it is the duty of every man to continue to labor with his hands in order to improve his financial condition and so build up a surplus for the maintenance of the needy, I conclude that the magistrates by increasing the public funds are taking care that in times of depression the poor may be aided either through loans or alms

Not only the posture here comes to be softened, but also reveals the kind of dynamics the Dutch (Calvinist elites) permitted and promoted. The synod of North Holland convened at Alkmaar in 1656, accorded permission to a clerk in loan bank at Hoorn «to attend the *communion service* [a public service] in the Reformed church in his city». The Res Judicanda in 1658 indeed averred that there was «a decided difference between a bank properly licensed by the municipal government» and the unregulated private one. State regulation secured property rights, guaranteed the security of capital holders but also the security of the community – as an expert bears out: during the seventeenth century, figures related to property crimes as instance mostly «remains rather low: 22.3 to 38»²²⁵. The Estates of Holland declared in 1658 that «henceforth no church had the right to deprive any banker of *participation in the communion service* because he was a banker. In due course the other provinces followed suit. The new regime was first officially introduced in North Holland, where Amsterdam was located»²²⁶. So the estates of Holland and West Friesland on March 30, 1658, stated that:

After ripe deliberation it has been decided that the question of moneys loaned by banks does not fall within the jurisdiction of church boards, classes, or synods, but *comes under the supervision of the civil government*, and that therefore the civil officials in the forthcoming synod will declare in behalf of the estates that the churches are not to take upon themselves the decision regarding the amount of profit the banks are permitted to earn, but they must leave that to *the discretion of the government, resting assured that the latter will take care to protect the public and especially the poor against usury and to take the proper steps to insure profit for the majority of the population, whether the magistrates shall continue to operate the banks themselves or shall lease them to private concerns*. Consequently, when those persons active in such banks comport themselves to the satisfaction of the magistrates, they shall not be suspected or accused of being guilty of usury²²⁷.

The present standpoint on the way the Dutch regime operated cannot be expressed better. Only when profit, in sum, came to be geared to community, Calvinist elites admitted operations when marshaled by the public sphere in turn – whereof Calvinists formed a part as well. Profit was just to the Dutch when individual accrual comes closely associated with the well-being of society as a whole – «Only after the bankers met the terms proposed [above], by greatly lowering the rates of interest and by helping the communities to give sufficient financial support to the poor, were they permitted to partake in the sacrament of communion in Utrecht and Friesland»²²⁸. By contrast, the search for the salvation of the soul became weak when, and where, the greatest profits were craved and expected:

With deepest shame did Voetius recognize the fact that the Dutch East India Company, unlike the Portuguese and the Spanish commercial companies, paid very little attention to missionary work among the heathen. Consequently, the Japanese gladly welcomed the Dutch merchants during the second half of the seventeenth century, because the Dutch, who were less religious than the Portuguese, came only to make money, not to make Christians²²⁹

On the other end, in Holland, Arminias «together with the more worldly and more liberal among the orthodox Calvinists, became the leaders of business». In the city of Amsterdam

the greatest diversity of faith and of original habitat existed, both among the proletariat and among the leading members of the bourgeoisie, the owners of the industrial and commercial establishments, who exploited labor. Nevertheless, the greater capitalists belonged for the most part to those families which in the days before the religious dissensions had carried on commerce on a large scale. But since many foreigners had recently arrived from the southern Netherlands, together with Protestants and Catholics from the outlying Dutch provinces, the bourgeoisie was readily inclined to sympathize with the various religious beliefs current in the city²³⁰

These long but noteworthy quotations underscore two essential things: the first one is that Calvinism does not show a necessary causal link with capitalism, neither its origin nor its expansion; the second one is exactly its political-social flexibility or adaptability.

As the last sentence of the previous quotation recalls, the Dutch protestant elites adapted to historical contingencies. For instance they adapted quite well to the swelling influx of exiles, migrants and the socio-religious fragmentation that followed the Revolt and the wars of religion that wiped out the European continent²³¹. They implemented a political strategy of religious regulation and negotiation. It was substantiated by the fact that the rulers «made use of religious rituals to strengthen the feelings of unity in society at large», which was the main objective of the urban-rural governments to survive and then thrive from the seventeenth-century contingencies. Partly, tolerance²³² was an outcome of how reformation was introduced in the Low Countries and this led to the fact that no act of uniformity was issued, so the Dutch were never forced to become

members of one church and the protestant church never became a national church. Rather, it was the «church of the state» as Huizinga once termed it, but even more, a church in the urban-rural space. As such, the church polity mirrored somewhat the decentralized polity of the Republic, making a «comprehensive Protestant Church illusory»²³³. This meant that, although it was officially constituted as a supralocal entity since the origin, the synod of Emden in 1571, its polity and authority was layered «and ascended from the local level upward»²³⁴.

Indeed, religious organization and politics was the upshot of the pragmatic stance the urban-rural elites, both political and religious, were forced to put into play to regulate the social conflict that might have been ensued from diversity and fragmentation, and that might have impaired the Dutch machine of accumulation, whereof they were the crucial cogs²³⁵. The social policy of the church was indeed premised on four features, as Willem Frijhoff summarizes, that by the same token came to mirror the social policy of the Republic: individual freedom of conscience, religious sociability from the bottom up, a culture made up of debate and civic participation, and a social ideal of real co-existence. Any of these were rooted in the urban-rural ground: these features, which made for degrees of religious freedom, «would have had but little effect had it not been associated in everyday life with a great permissiveness on the part of the local authorities»²³⁶.

Protestant elites were thus integrated into the urban-rural elites that commanded the organization of state and capital. The new Church in Amsterdam even functioned as first city's Bourse where entrepreneur and merchants used to gather. As Fynes Morrison observed in 1592: «The Marchants in summer meet upon the bridge, and in winter they meet in the N e w Church, in very great number, where they walke in two rankes by couple, one ranke going up, and another going downe, and there is no way to get out of the Church, except they slip out of the doores, when in one of these rankes they pass

by them»²³⁷. For their own interests, and as a result, for the interests of society, they had to maintain social peace and harmony at all cost. Tolerance was thus a pragmatic strategy, not at any rate a question of principle²³⁸: the materialism of accumulation swayed the policy of this new church that a long-time secularized society welcomed²³⁹. The leading example is offered by the fact that members of tolerated churches were allowed to access public office and civil service: in the seventeenth century, Catholics, Mennonites and Lutherans were part of the urban-rural governments and public bodies, as sheriffs and bailiffs, as secretaries serving urban magistrates, as managers (*binnenvaders*) in public orphanages, schoolteachers²⁴⁰ – although during the seventeenth century, especially in the second half of this century, this policy became more restrictive because the acquisition of citizenship in some towns became more restricted as well (Arnhem, Deventer, Nijmegen, Utrecht, and Zwolle for example). In this regard, an arresting link has been spotted between economic downswing, occurred in the second half of the century, and dwindling of tolerance: the more wealth dwindled, the less forthcoming it was, the more restrictive the enjoyment of religious and civic rights became²⁴¹.

Such a socio-cultural blend on the one hand reflected the composite composition of Dutch society, but on the other, made the governing bodies socio-cultural organic compared with the stratification of society itself – this character mirrored in turn the already-recalled sociospatial organicity of the Estates and States.

Government office or civil service were valued highly because they gave access to influence where it counted: in the field of economic regulation. Local governments set tariffs and regulated their own markets, and threw in their weight in favour of their own cities in the provincial Estates, where supra-local commercial activities were controlled. The decisions taken at this higher level were often decisive for the health or even viability of local industry²⁴².

As a consequence, despite that the protestant church was officially intolerant²⁴³, this organicity made church and governments prone to practical accommodations for social peace. For example, pragmatism led governments to shield the Jewish community which «*flourished because of the protection of the regents*, who ignored most of the complaints of the Reformed clergy»²⁴⁴. The Regents were the conductors of the Dutch movement of accumulation, but the Jewish were important actors as well. They were capital holders and possessed networks and contacts, especially in the trade with Portugal and the Portuguese empire over which they detained a sort of monopoly, and in the domestic sector of production processing colonial commodities – sugar, diamonds, tobacco, silks²⁴⁵. It was not by chance that Amsterdam's politics of toleration concerning the Jewish became *the* politics of Jewish toleration in the Dutch Republic – the Jewish community obtained leeway compared with other communities. The room of maneuver the Jewish had stemmed from their important involvement in the processes of capital accumulation of the Dutch Republic. The state policy of religious pragmatism was in essence an urban-rural strategy of “parting by sharing”, that is, to differentiate socio-religious communities once a certain degree of acceptance was attained between them, thereby allowing a porous thriving²⁴⁶.

The relations between urban-rural governments and the numerous catholic communities living in the Republic was always premised on bargaining processes which entailed flexibility by both sides: accommodation on the one side, trust in law on the other. For them, «tolerance was always in flux» but, on the other side, they enjoyed full civic rights. «Practical considerations prevailed [especially] in crowded towns with large Catholic minorities, [where] systematic or consistent religious persecution would have threatened public order». Since the importance in terms of figures and overall wealth, prosecution against Catholics was unworkable. As Henk van Nierop stressed:

«the burgomasters probably considered effective anti-Catholic action suicidal from an economic point of view»²⁴⁷. So William Temple described the Republic's socio-religious landscape:

the great Care of this State has ever been, To favour no particular or curious Inquisition into the Faith or Religious Principles of any peaceable man, *who came to live under the protection of their Laws* [...]A free Form of Government either making way for more freedom in Religion, Or else having newly contended so far themselves for Liberty in this point, they thought it the more unreasonable for them to oppress others. Perhaps while they were so threatened and endanger'd by Forreign Armies, they thought it the more necessary to provide against Discontents within, which can never be dangerous where they are not grounded or fathered upon Oppression in point either of Religion or Liberty, But in those two Cases the Flame often proves most violent in a State, the more 'tis shut up, or the longer concealed.²⁴⁸

For the Roman legal principles were by now rooted and substantiated the framework of institutions of the urban-rural structure of accumulation, they were integral to implement the policy of pragmatism as well. Roman codes provided a legal framework upon which building up the strategy of parting by sharing, enabling the differentiation of socio-cultural treatments. In this respect, the web of rule and capital comprised hence the religious-legal principles that overlapped with the tenets of government and administration. The urban-rural governments were *firstly* and directly involved in the ecclesiastical organization of social space – clergy monitoring and arbitrations for example – of the diverse religious communities. The strong political involvement implied thus that, despite their formal role, the tolerated Churches were an integral part of the urban-rural structure of power and legitimate actors participating the urban-rural policy of socio-religious regulation. As a consequence of this political mixture, freedom, within given limits, was accorded. «These limits varied, sometimes considerably, from place to place, but these differences were differences of degree».

Penal laws became superfluous, since the social elites of tolerated groups were found willing to discipline their coreligionists, and this usually included their clergy. It can be taken for granted that these policies, taken together, were consciously aimed at stabilising the religious order and the relations between different confessions. [...] A important characteristic of this social order was that, by this time, religious differentiation had also come to mirror social stratification. [...] The key to the development of this stratification is, in my opinion, the reform of poor relief.

A general *civil* religion was the consequence of this religious integration, that is connivance and concord as Frijhoff says, within elites and population that allowed the «multi-confessional pattern to be imprinted further». The result was not the rootedness of a dominant religion but the «entrenchment of diverse religious communities» which as such became the socio-cultural organizational tenet of the Dutch Republic. The Reformed Church turned into a «multiform organization» based on a practical and pragmatic tolerance²⁴⁹ that became at the same time a state «weapon [...] to further political ends»²⁵⁰. In so doing, the Dutch *religions* became an essential element that contributed in defining the Dutch *common wealth*²⁵¹.

Tolerance, freedom of religion, and diversity – and this was the combination that gave distinct colors to the Dutch socio-religious landscape²⁵² – were the outcomes of the societal regulation and normalization operated by the religious-secular elites. The state politics of the religions was based on the urban-rural policy of “parting by sharing” which had the effect to regulate and normalize the relationships between different, and potentially conflictual, communities in order to continue the foremost activity for Dutch society, that is, capital accumulation. «For a stranger to be abroad in the Streets in the Night-time. On the contrary one may travel Day or Night in Holland, without fear of being robb'd or otherwise molested» Wrote Aglionby.²⁵³ Such a quite social environment was the creation of the religious governance of the urban-rural syndicates

whose topmost expression proved to be the urban-rural organization of state welfare – the incunabula thereof were established well before the political involvement of Protestantism. This urban-rural organization had its origin in the middle ages, exactly during the period of capitalist expansion we have explored, when the urban-rural combines (lay people) took the lead and attempted to make money from it. This made for «a mixed economy of welfare» whose origin hence is to be traced back in the middle ages, more than at the end of the sixteenth century²⁵⁴. The political-religious entanglement, although sometimes conflictual in its unfolding, in both state and urban-rural composition, was really central: without urban-rural government support and lead, the disciplinary regulation of the Church in the seventeenth century would have been ineffective simply because, as we already said, the greater part of the Netherlanders were not Calvinist.

Of course, the small towns and villages of the Dutch countryside made due with less elaborate and less costly systems. But even they had their deacons and almsmen, who regularly visited those receiving aid and diligently recorded their revenues and expenditures. In retrospect, one cannot help but be struck by the scope and complexity of the Republic's "welfare state." In this area, the Dutch state was truly a Leviathan. It embraced a sizeable percentage of the population, including a great many who might otherwise have drifted into "riotous" and "disorderly lives"²⁵⁵.

The crime rates in the Netherlands were lower than anywhere else in Europe²⁵⁶. Since the implementation of the Dutch regime (1590 c.), According to Herman Diederiks, in the leading industrial textile city of the Republic, Leiden – which employed in the textile industry almost half of its inhabitants that in during the seventeenth century went from 45.000 to 72.000 c. – very few people were convicted of homicide: almost a hundred were convicted between 1600-1630; during the second quarter, the number declined to two thirds; from 1650 to 1675 homicide dropped to less

than one quarter²⁵⁷. Amsterdam shows a quite similar trend according to Pieter Spierenburg²⁵⁸. Differently but consistently, The Dutch Republic was also a «moral nation» in which the rate of illegitimate births, stemming from sexual-extramarital activities, was extremely low compared with the rest of Europe²⁵⁹.

The relaxation of the social landscape had its principal mainstay and manifestation in the organization of social provision. Compared to others – and that was the key determinant of its efficiency in terms of power and projection of power – «the Dutch system had a peculiar intertwining of church and government», or as Israel puts it: «the key feature was the overall control from the town hall and highly regulated character of civic welfare»²⁶⁰. These organizations consisted of an extensive urban-rural network of secular-religious agencies whose relationships were organized according to a certain division of labor. Philip Gorski posits a lifelike framework: «three basic arrangements were possible: «(1) dualistic: the Reformed diaconates could serve Reformed Protestants and the secular agencies could serve everyone else; (2) church-governed: the secular agencies could be subsumed in or subordinated to the religious agencies or (3) state-governed: the reverse of (2)»²⁶¹. Regardless, these agencies were controlled by town governments – although control was sometimes shared with other religious institutions²⁶².

The confessional agencies were the diaconates which the Calvinists first organized on local level, soon followed by Baptists and Lutherans and eventually by Catholics and Jews. In association with the towns' government, they put into operation a set of outdoor and indoor relief agencies, such as orphanages, almshouses, hostels, hospitals, workhouses, and houses of correction – some of them shall be shortly taken into account – with a shifting institutional settings from town to town²⁶³. This system was well-funded: private funding, state funds, urban-rural taxes levied on saloons, theaters, and other forms of public entertainment. Very interestingly however, the main

source of funding for the diaconates was voluntary contributions – we shall return to this in brief later. Peter Lindert’s estimates seem to support the fact that per capita expenditure in the Dutch Republic was among the highest in Europe, comparable only to those of England – we shall return on financing later also²⁶⁴.

The dividing and rational logic leading the operations of these agencies was to offer relief only to deserving poor. Whoever could work and earn his/her own living was regarded as undeserving. Thus, widows, orphans and the sick, both physically and mentally, were generally regarded as deserving. This is not only a rational strategy that allowed to slim down and streamline their activities but also to earmark funds more rationally and efficiently towards those who truly deserved. But also it may have the effect of stimulating people to work and to enter the market of labor, trade and productions. This, according to the evidences put forth by Jan De Vries concerning the astonishing expansion of labor market in the seventeenth century, seems quite reasonable. Furthermore, this market expansion seems compatible with the fact that the Dutch earmarked great funds to the system of social provision: wage labor is more vulnerable to market fluctuations, and thus labor needs social care²⁶⁵. The secular-religious agencies developed different approaches and strategies: outlawing or restricting mendicancy and begging – «Even the begging of Franciscans friars was subject to the authority of town government in Leiden. In 1445 the government of Leiden agreed to the foundation of a Franciscan Friary just outside the town, on the condition that there would be no more than 20 friars and that they would only beg in the town once a week»²⁶⁶; introducing and enforcing strict qualifications for outdoor relief; providing moral and practical education for the young; and attempting to re-socialize the rebellious and the indolent. «By means of these various measures, the Dutch elites sought to encourage economic self-sufficiency, combat moral degeneracy, and maintain social stability, *goals that they tended to see as interconnected*».²⁶⁷

The Reform did not drastically change the institutional landscape of the Republic concerning social care. However, at the end of the sixteenth century, two interesting institutions developed: *tuchthuis* (1595-1596) and the civic hospital for the disabled and the sick poor. The first one was an house of discipline in which isolation and forced labor along with moral education and religious guidance taught to idles the value of discipline, good sociality and work, that is, they were transformed into productive men. The first hospital of this genre the Dutch activated was in Amsterdam: it was called the *Rasphuis* because one of the main activities installed there was the rasping of Brazil wood to produce a red dye for the textile industry. Some of the hospices²⁶⁸, or a *gasthuis*, were turned into free hospitals for disabled and sick poor at the end of the sixteenth century, thanks to the welfare policy of towns governments which earmarked abundant funds, and under the spiritual lead of the Church. We find similar agencies in Gouda, at the beginning of the century, and in Harlem already in 1592²⁶⁹. By the same token hospital-hostels, that developed during the middle ages, grew steadily in importance at the end of the sixteenth century since the astonishing flux of migrations in which the Republic was involved. These agencies welcomed and housed travelers and the poor, often with no charge, often in separate spaces from the sick. Other secular-religious agencies such as the Masters of the Resident Poor (*huiszittenmeesters*) and the Masters of the Holy Ghost (*Heilige Geestmeesteren*) had functions of providing food, clothing and some money to the poor. The hospitals were run mostly by laymen, who were part of the local elite, appointed by, and answerable to, the magistracy – as such these developed since the fourteenth century through a combination of civil, religious and secular authorities, but at the end of the sixteenth century they became public agencies. An example of these dynamics is the parish of St, Pancras in Leiden²⁷⁰. Education was a business in which towns were willing to buy into. Developed in the period 1350-1550, parish school administration changed over time towards the

organization of public schools administrated by the public bodies: «town governments were assuming the role of protectors and propagators of education» – this may have been crucial: since the whole institutional framework of the urban-rural complex was market- and capital-oriented, the assumption of the school administration and the acknowledgment of the ‘public’ character of the education may well have spurred on further the spreading of the capitalist logic and proclivity over the societal ground. In 1519 in Leiden, the magistracy stated that the school should be maintained well considering «... the great profit, virtue, honor and welfare that the town and community might receive through it». In the town of Haarlem in 1565 however «The utmost in terms of well-being lies in a good school» according to the magistracy²⁷¹.

The financing of this prosperous network of welfare agencies and institution above sketched out pivoted on public funds and, importantly, on voluntary contributions which were integral to Dutch welfare finance²⁷². This indeed was a «mixture of voluntary, semi-voluntary and forced (through indirect taxes) contributions by vast layers of urban society»²⁷³. In these respects, great donations were given by the elites of capital and state. Why? To put it very simply: because capitalists, and protestant capitalist in particular, searched for salvation from their greed and atoned for their “capitalist sins” with generosity; but also because they needed a tranquil society²⁷⁴.

Planning and careful civic and government administration, along with pressures by religious agencies and agents (deacons for example)²⁷⁵, made this organization profitable by interlacing the urban-rural financial and fiscal structure to welfare in order to expand and maximize Dutch accumulation but also the well-known Dutch open-handedness. The public financial involvement of the religious agencies of welfare was extensively organized. As instance, in Leiden, Zwolle and Delft, money gathered by religious institutions was then managed by secular agencies which had a better grasp on financial efficiency. At the same time, the urban governments in the same Delft, Zwolle,

Utrecht but also in 's-Hertogenbosch syphoned off to the most important charities of the cities, and to the 's Hertogenbosch's diaconate, municipal subsidies stemming from the fiscal-financial accumulation of the urban-rural complex – firstly excises, then other taxes and fines –, which then came to be redeployed directly to the poor by the religious agencies²⁷⁶. Where centralized public institutions were created instead, the poor, and especially the non-Calvinist poor such as Catholic, Mennonite, Lutheran and Walloon turned directly to the urban administrators for assistance instead of the religious actors²⁷⁷. This organization was also funded through a specific involvement in the urban-rural complexes' financial market, whence these agencies profited: for example, for orphanages, interests on financial assets, such as income from capital and real estates, were often the main sources of money whereas other charities bought into bonds and renten. The Amsterdam Catholic Charity invested in shares and bonds 10 per cent of its income, thereby making revenues increasing over time from 20.000 guilders a year at the end of the seventeenth century to 100,000 guilders a century later with an increase of interests of five times in absolute terms «which probably implies a five-fold growth of the capital stock as well»²⁷⁸. «Amsterdam's civic welfare institutions possessing substantial investment portfolios, with an estimated total of 4.3 million guilders at the end of the 18th century. The *Burgerweeshuis*, with 2.5 million, was the single biggest institutional investor, followed by the two public poor houses with 1.5 million together, and the hospital and mad house closed the ranks with a total of about 430,000 guilders»²⁷⁹. Thanks to the urban-rural networks of financing, comprising of both markets and public finance, funding was stable and never broke down, even during the descending phase of Dutch world expansion since the last decades of the Seventeenth century²⁸⁰. Of course phases of crisis occurred as in Utrecht after 1650. There, crisis hauled in government plans of structural reforms – the Almoners' chamber

of Utrecht was one of the agency worst managed at all – but religious pressure thwarted any attempt²⁸¹.

In many cities, especially during the Golden Age heights, charitable donations were the lion's share for the financing of poor relief organization. «The Delft authorities even admonished all city-dwellers to fulfil their obligation towards the poor»; by the same token in Zwolle, when government and religious bodies called for generosity of the burghers to build a new orphanage, great sums of money were collected since a large majority of citizenry effectively contributed generously. In this regard the economic dimension of citizenship abovementioned as posited by van Zanden and Prak seems to fit quite well. Collection boxes that gathered money were dislocated in streets and churches alike. Placed both in public edifices and private houses, about 60 poor boxes have been numbered in 's-Hertogenbosch throughout the city, while in Amsterdam there were about 450 boxes. «Making small charitable donations was practically a daily habit in the Dutch Republic». This circuit of donation and giving formed up to two thirds of the financing of the City Poor Chamber in Zwolle while for Delft and Utrecht it represented over 40 per cent²⁸². It has been calculated that during the Golden Age, the Reformed Charity came to manage up to 300,000 guilders a year by the mid-seventeenth century²⁸³. The voluntary arrangements of course was the most cost-effective method of collecting money for the urban-rural complex which did not imply government involvement and expense and from which the diaconates could profit as well. For this kind of activity, town planning was not required because money collection took place on regular bases as in Utrecht and Delft whose religious agencies organized weekly door-to-door collections²⁸⁴. The Reformed churches, along with Lutherans, Catholics and Mennonites garnered most donations during their services; also, the reformed community collected door-to-door up to five times a week, while the other communities however preferred the classic offertory boxes to gather money²⁸⁵.

Often the elites were sent door-to-door to collect money and this actually fostered further generosity «When magistrates or ministers came to ask for a charitable contribution, it was difficult to be stingy [...].The tactics employed by the almoners and deacons were so successful that collections were often a stable source of income for charities. For example in Delft, from 1641 to 1794, about 20,000 guilders were collected in the churches and streets in almost every year»²⁸⁶

Table 4.8. Percentage of income of selected charitable institutions raised through collections and alms boxes²⁸⁷

	17 th century	18 th century
Delft		
Chamber of Charity	45	37
Zwolle		
City Poor Chamber	66	42
Utrecht		
Almoners' Chamber	42	13
Reformed diaconate	No data	60
's-Hertogenbosch		
House of Giving	0	0
Blocks	17	21
Reformed diaconate	No data	26

Every once in a while, Danielle Teeuwen reports, larger sums were donated or bequeathed to the charities. But, as Marco van Leeuwen points out, «Philanthropy is easier to describe than to explain»²⁸⁸. The elites were important facilitators for the social care agencies; but they were even more important as “investors”. The government elite was the capitalist elite, merchants, financiers and entrepreneurs. Clé Lesger reports that between 1578 and 1630, the position of Amsterdam burgomasters was performed for 81 per cent by great merchants and capitalists involved in wholesale trade: of the forty-two men, thirty-four were indeed leading capital holders. Only of eight burgomasters, Lesger say, commercial activities are unknown, but surely «even they came largely from backgrounds in wholesale commerce». For many of these men, the “American dream” was the “Dutch dream” indeed. An extraordinary case was Jan Poppen. He

arrived in Amsterdam from Holstein in the 1560s with a humble background and in a space of three decades became one of the leading capital holders in Amsterdam and director of the VOC in which he invested over thirty thousand guilders. His wealth was utilized later by the son Jacob Poppen, who became for many years a member of the governing elites. «At his early death in 1624, he left a fortune of one million guilders, which made him the wealthiest Amsterdammer of the age». As Lesger reports, wealth was not enough to win the day, but wealth must couple with wisdom, sensitivity and competence. Cornelis Pietersz Hooft wrote in his biography, «the wealthiest were wise» but they need to be «sensible, and also the most competent». But also prodigal²⁸⁹.

Men like Poppen and Hooft were exactly the urban-rural elites who ruled Dutch space since the late middle ages and which we are referring to, and who effectively donated great sums of money. They ruled economy, politics but also society since they had garnered dominant position in courthouses, a profound sway as legislators and as administrators of justice, but also in the entire welfare organization, even in church councils. What for? What the Dutch historian Lesger tells us is that great wealth feared the hell, that is, a great capitalist «feared eternal damnation», thus he had to confess his sins, and hoping «that God will forgive him». Or, to atone for them by philanthropy. This was not simply useful to their souls, but as a consequence, according to the present perspective, also to the social and potentially highly conflictual and unstable social landscape of the Dutch Republic, that is, useful to their pocket. Capitalist herd required green but also tranquil pastures to grow in health. The Embarrassment of Riches was checked through social care, but social care fed into the embarrassment in turn. Capitalists were the first supporters of the poor and when they bequeathed money often donated these sums to charitable institutions. Lesger says: «Should this be interpreted as an indication of anxiety and fear of eternal damnation?». Reputation and prestige were important. To donate enough money to fund and built new institutions or structures for

social care – the numerous “*hoffjes*” (almshouses located around a common courtyard) – was a common practice. To have entitled entrances and buildings was of great use for the governing elites. It gave social power and popular consensus²⁹⁰. Social prestige was a great determinant and impulse for the Dutch capitalist class of rulers.

The Amsterdam merchant Octavio Francisco Tensini bequeathed in 1675 no less than sixty thousand guilders to the poor, «on the explicit condition that to save his soul a mass was to be read for him every day for all eternity, a provision that neatly tied in with Roman Catholic doctrine and practice, of course». Also the great Louis de Geer was very prodigal:

the very wealthy Calvinist industrialist and merchant Louis de Geer seems to have had a current account with God. In a letter to his children written in 1646, he mentions that he had promised God to give to the poor 200 guilders a year for each of his children as long as they would be alive. Since God had kept his part of the deal and saved De Geer’s children, the merchant had yearly paid his debt to God. He then urges his children always to give to the poor and not to think that these gifts would decrease their wealth, since actually they would make their wealth grow “like seeds in fertile ground.” And elsewhere in the letter De Geer wrote, “Support the poor and dejected and you and your posterity will receive God’s blessing”²⁹¹.

Marco van Leeuwen finds that no reference to the Virgin Mary or the Holy Spirit or any other saints was reported in Amsterdam by the eighteenth-century Catholic wills. «However, recommending one’s soul to God’s mercy was a standard formula»²⁹². This is to say that fear of damnation was present but not really crucial for these men²⁹³. And despite fear, they kept the machine of accumulation going. Why? Lesger, who delved into the self-perception of Dutch merchants, tells us that, although careful of their souls, especially for the protestants, a new moral discipline and philosophy developed to join religion and profit, an inner compromise which stopped regrets and protected and

supported the interests of elites and burghers, and at the same time allowed to save their soul. It can be argued hence that Protestantism in this respect propelled further the development of such a moral ethics supporting the expansion of wealth and the expansion of the generosity for salvation at once. «High profits and great wealth were now acceptable as long as the rich cared for the poor and generously supported the urban charitable institutions». Lesger rounds off:

Amsterdam merchants were concerned about the salvation of their souls, but they most probably did not experience the agonizing uncertainty that Protestant doctrine and the work of Max Weber might induce us to expect. Judging from the contents of literary texts, hard work and thrift also seem to be rooted in the moral philosophy that came to dominate urban society in the Low Countries well before the Reformation.

This capitalist ethics was fed into by the Dutch system of social care whereof the Protestant framework of moral rules and ascetic ethics was an important cog. It was a flexible and as such a disciplinary device that made more organic, compact and coherent the Dutch indented socio-cultural landscape²⁹⁴.

In a nutshell, «discipline increases state power insofar as it increases overall levels of administrative efficiency and social order because a more orderly society is cheaper to govern and a more efficient administration is cheaper to run». The movement of social regulation spelt indeed a «bottom-up perspective, in which local reformers play the central role»²⁹⁵. Thereby, discipline became the invisible but actual force that permeated and completed the Dutch regime of accumulation and that crucially lubricated the complex and seamlessly intertwining of Dutch economy, state and society. Discipline kept the inner workings of the Dutch regime going *towards* the most efficient and effective capitalist organization of space within the seventeenth-century

capitalist world-system. As the military disciplining, social disciplining was integral to the capitalist accumulation of power. The latter helped the former to be imprinted further.

Hence, the Dutch regime was the outcome of its historical structure of accumulation, and the interlocking thereof with the formation of a rational state machinery – rational because, *above all else*, it was embedded into the fabric of Dutch society, conforming to its nature and historical composition –, with the strength of its socio-political infrastructure rooted within society and «the rationality of its sociopolitical ethics», as Gorski has claimed²⁹⁶.

Like the industrial revolution, the disciplinary revolution transformed the material and technological bases of production; it created new mechanisms for the production of social and political order. And, like the industrial revolution, the disciplinary revolution was driven by a key technology: the technology of observation-self-observation, mutual observation, hierarchical observation. For it was observation- surveillance-that made it possible to unleash the energies of the human soul-another well-known but little-used resource-and harness them for the purposes of political power and domination. [...] by creating more obedient and industrious subjects with less coercion and violence, discipline dramatically increased, not only the regulatory power of the state, but its extractive and coercive capacities as well²⁹⁷.

Chapter 5

Historical-theoretical reprise

The Dutch Hegemon

The previous chapters showed the process of power concentration from its scattering condition. In short: the Dutch turned the endeavor of the Spanish rulers of complete incorporation within the absolutist framework into a process of state structuring that allowed for the extension of networks, agencies and institutions from the societal ground upward, in direction of a higher level of government, and a contra-process of formation and expansion of networks, agencies and institutions of the upper space of government toward the societal ground. This combination was the dawn of the Dutch regime of accumulation. What ensued from this multi-pronged process was a scalar mode of cross-representation and governance of Dutch space hinging on what has been called urban-rural complexes on the ground, pivoting on the States of Holland in the middle, and coordinated state-wide by the Generality at the top. The multi-sided interlacing came about between the 1540s and 1590s. This bout of state structuring was crucial for it interlocked the urban-rural capitalist structure with an organizational complex of politics, economy and society. This was the product of the opportunities that

history afforded, of man ingenuity and also of strategic ploys; it was the specific product of a historical-human path of development.

The Dutch Republic, or Dutch regime of accumulation (1579-1795), was *a* historical organization of Dutch space. The matrix of wealth, accumulation and power that constituted the Dutch regime have been scrutinized as a developing regional web of rules and capital: it consisted of regional-wide urban-rural networks of relations of accumulation and wealth premised on the commodity-centered logic of value re/production (ch. 3), that interlocked and embedded the public sphere of power, rules and institutions – public bodies and operations, officeholders, official receivers, public policies. As we have seen, since the main social actors overlapped, and also overlapped and shared objectives and strategies, a bloc of business and governmental agencies commanded processes of power accumulation developed across Dutch society. Such a fusion of state, society and capital, an interlocking embeddedness, was articulated in terms of capitalist accumulation. This allowed for the historical entrenchment, and the ensuing spatial expansion, of the capitalist logic of power – understood as an early capitalist alteration of the socio-ecological pattern of value re/production and exchange (ch. 3).

The formation of the Dutch Republic entailed the supra-local expansion and the structured re-projection onto and within society of networks of accumulation, governmental-business agencies and operative institutions. Since the historical pathways within which capital and power flowed developed in the course of the Dutch regional cycle of formation (XIV-XVI), the Republic had available a ready-made nervous system that facilitated the deployment of an organic command over and within society and economy as a whole. The structural and constitutional interlocking of the urban-rural and provincial networks, agencies and institutions in the course of the sixteenth century sealed the new historical course of state, capital and society; the

coordination of the Generality, led by Holland, propelled further the capitalist organization of Dutch space as first structured center of national capitalist accumulation and world capitalist expansion at the end of the sixteenth century. The Dutch Republic was, and at the same time allowed for, the intertwined accretion and expansion of both national and world accumulation by making the organization of state and society directly useful to Dutch (and non-Dutch) capital, and *vice versa* – in braudellian terms, the identification of state, capital and society: networks of accumulation and governmental-business agencies were re-arranged to attain these goals, namely, accumulation of power. Such a movement and process of power accretion was, for the historical premises already explored, of capitalist sort..

The Dutch Republic was structured on and innervated by the capitalist logic of power from the ground. Such an in-built complexion propelled as never happened theretofore the growth and the expansion of a European-level inter-state system of relations that, for the specific features of Europe itself, developed upon processes of world capitalist accumulation, systemic capitalist rationalization and societal capitalist embeddedness. The primacy of the logic of capital within Europe and the related capitalist strategy of power was slowly grasped and accorded by state rulers; as a consequence of the slow pan-European process of societal embeddedness, a profound reorganization of power relations within European society was put into operation in a long bout of three centuries that followed the rise of the modern world-system (1450 ca.). This double process of recasting of human thought and of re-elaboration of state-society-capital relations, both according to the capitalist logic, took the entire modern history to be carried out European-wide. Only in the nineteenth century it was topped off and the Great Divergence materialized as a consequence¹.

This new era of European states domination was heralded by the Dutch Republic at the end of the sixteenth century, a historical position of trailblazer that brought about

two general consequences: the first, here not strictly pertinent, was that the European interstate system found, after a century and a half of disorganized and disarticulated world capitalist expansion (1450-1600), the first organizational space of world accumulation that was strong enough and structured enough in its capitalist complexion to buttress and propel system dynamics; the second was that, pursuant to the general landscape of Europe compared with the Dutch historical landscape, no jurisdiction or “nation” could not nearly vie with the Dutch Republic in terms of capitalist accumulation of power. Such a condition of supremacy was maintained, in general, until the eighteenth century².

The greatest part of the literature would say that such an edge of power, moreover because of world scale and scope, was surprisingly maintained in the course of the seventeenth century *despite* material, territorial resources and human energies that in quantitative terms were by a great deal less than the those of the absolutist competitors. By contrast, it has been argued that was not despite these historical constraints, but *by virtue of* them that the Dutch hegemon emerged – although limits of course surfaced and then were encrusted in the eighteenth. In other words, relatively “small” in the context of seventeenth century ability, technology and understanding was a great advantage. Bigger territories, bigger populations and bigger basins of resources to control and organize were insurmountable problems for the other jurisdictions. Furthermore, for such jurisdictions were disorganized and disarticulated *active* centers of *feudal* power in the context of an expanding capitalist organization of world space³. Was it indeed a mere coincidence that the next hegemon of the capitalist world-system, the Great Britain, *became* in terms of size a medium state and an intermediate form of governance, between absolutism and Dutch republicanism, in terms of structure? And was it a mere coincidence that the British hegemon displayed a parallel path of historical embeddedness as here understood, but recasted in its own historical terms of

reference, according to its own long-run history, and climaxed in the late eighteenth century according to the new systemic conditions and contingencies⁴? No, it was not.

After 1590, the urban-rural networks of wealth, production and exchange caught alight through a new injection of historical vectors and factors. The hold of the urban-rural bloc in society was topped off by the structuring of a state machinery that allowed for the horizontal and vertical articulation of the urban-rural structure of accumulation. It was then dovetailed to external space through the expansion of networks, operations and sociospatial relations of power that were entirely geared to, and interlocked with, the accumulation of power of the Dutch jurisdiction *as a whole*. Exactly the *historical form* of this spatial articulation transformed the Dutch historical-capitalist space in a structured complex of concentrated capitalist power of world scale and scope; at the same time, it displayed the highest degree of internal – and external – logical and operative coherence compared with other jurisdictions. Dutch power has been understood thus as the outgrowth of such a coherent unity of state, society and capital, premised on and organized through the historical logic of capitalist accumulation. The Dutch became thereby the seventeenth-century hegemon, the first hegemon of the modern world-system, because Dutch society, Dutch capital and Dutch state worked hand in glove as an intersubjectively constituted capitalist reality – overlapped movements and integrated functions of each other, as no jurisdiction managed to do at that time; it was phased through the logic of capital accumulation which was indeed the logic of the modern historical-social system that was developing and expanding. In a nutshell: state, capital and society chimed with one another in the unfolding of their operations because their own operations were all patterned after historical capitalism which allowed to win the day in an emerging capitalist world system.

What has been maintained is that such a presumed three-cornered exchange of power turned into an organic and coherent bundle of historical relations of power precisely because the Dutch arenas of collective actions were not

autonomous arenas of social action. They [did] not have separate “logics”. More importantly, the intermeshing of constraints, options, decisions, norms, and “rationalities” [became patterned after] a single “set of rules” or a single “set of constraints” within which these various structures operate⁵.

At the heart of the Dutch regime was indeed the need to protect society, capital and the field of accumulation of societal power; in return, protection and accretion of societal accumulation would have provided resources and energies to protect Dutch rulers, state and jurisdiction, and to propel further the capitalist expansion of power, at world level as well as at local level. But it would be wrong considering this mode of regulating space as smooth or perfectly operating. And it would be of course wrong considering such a way of organizing space as an ethical or moral thrust of Dutch rulers towards people. The Dutch historical edifice was ridden with *natural* conflicts of interests and ongoing political, economic, social, and even ecological contradictions⁶. All these are intrinsically inherent in *any* polity of space and in *any* human policy carried on throughout the history of mankind. Only when the needs of those who rules overlap the needs of those who are ruled, that is, only when rulers’ needs *are* people’s needs – the *identification* of both interests –, a state and a society find a way out of the stalemate of self-interest and of the permanent struggle for power among irreconcilable interest groups.

This is what happened in essence to the Dutch in virtue of their long history of freedom and growth and the historical coherence of their societal ground in terms of logic of operation and interests: the power strategy the rulers carried on to cater to their

own interests, and the state interests as a consequence, adhered to the historical interests of their subjects acting within society. This happened because, contrary to other states, it was from the very ground of towns and countryside that rulers' power and interests – if the rulers themselves – came and to that ground that power and interests had to revert. The historical power of the urban-rural syndicates involved, as we have seen in the previous chapters, society, capital and early state at once. It was a historical power that did not discern the three arenas of collective action for it encompassed and enveloped them as one single field of operation and power abiding by a single set of rules and constraints: herein, the rules and the constraints of capitalism. This historical feature enabled the Dutch to organize their space in function of the societal needs themselves and to make their new armature – the new and modern state – at the service of society itself, «a function of society» – to develop the most powerful regime of accumulation in the XVII century. But, since it was from society that the capitalist thrust emanated, capital, state and society became one, a single bundle of patterned relations in that structured complex of concentrated capitalist power that was the Republic of the Seven United Provinces, the first hegemon of the capitalist world system.

An hegemon is an organization of human space which developed the highest level of coherence compared with other spaces and regimes of accumulation in definite jurisdictions. Compared with other regimes, the Dutch regime was an organization historically premised on the capitalist logic, in which the great industrial-commercial development interlocked the expansion of finance and was penetrated by networks of fiscality – direct and indirect taxation, differentiated in space – which allowed for the reproduction and redeployment of value throughout Dutch space. The state organized indeed historical commodity and financial markets that bolstered fiscal accumulation which in turn was redeployed by agencies and agents of state across the whole territory to boost the same material accumulation. At the same time the state financial policy

morphed into a movement of popular participation to the dynamic of general accumulation – that by contrast, was in general a classic moment of early-modern state coercion and cliquish accumulation of power. Popular *willingness, and capability*, to invest in markets and state was part of Dutch uniqueness. In doing so, the Dutch constructed a regime in which industry, trade, finance, fiscality buttressed each other from below through the state organization of agency and agents which stepped into economy not by seeking unproductive rents but producing value of their own through public activities. And this came about only owing to the historical entrenchment of a logic throughout the sociospatial landscape of the region, thereby permeating Dutch space as a whole. Such an entrenchment made coherent – which does not mean smooth uniformity of society, or *perfect* adherence to a historical rationality – the behavior of the Dutch, both rulers and subjects. And this was the actual uniqueness of Dutch power in the seventeenth century: the Dutch rowed (in general) in the same direction, despite harsh conflicts concerning the way by which such a “rowing” was to be put into operation – as instance republicanism-monarchism. On the contrary, they tapped into conflict and turned it into a positive movement of expansion⁷.

Therefore, state organization mirrored historical society and then helped further regulating and normalizing it when history posed constraints and materialized harsh conflicts. The state organization of material, financial and fiscal accumulation penetrated the historical structure of society through the reorganization of networks of agents and agencies of social care, which were driven in junction with new religious powers. *Dutch Religions*, Protestantism in particular, were in fact conducive to a pragmatic *flexible* intimacy that morphed into a social behavior geared to bolster the historical open-handedness of the Dutch. The protestant lead allowed a major hold of the historical logic of capitalism not because it owed a spirit favorable to it, but because it was so flexible in disciplining the inner and social landscape of the Dutch that adapted

pragmatically to their historical organization. It contributed to develop a kind of cultural control which did not stand in the way of Dutch historical dynamic, as occurred in other jurisdictions instead, but eased it. The cultural control of the variegated Dutch religious landscape was the pragmatic force which *tamed* an oligarchic logic of power, such as capitalism, and oriented it towards a *self-interested* generosity. The rich gave because they wanted to save their soul from damnation, but in so doing, they helped themselves to get even richer. In other words, they aided to regulate and normalize the social conflict that an excessive polarization of wealth and power might have engendered on its own. Polarization was high because intrinsic to capitalist development but during the Dutch seventeenth century it was not so high or unbridled to made for a destructive dynamic. The welfare of the state was, purportedly, the greatest achievement of the Dutch which truly distinguished the Dutch hegemon – and perhaps in general, a historical hegemon – from the most powerful competitors.

The Dutch state became thereby a hegemonic state, capable of projecting the greatest power outward – hegemony – because embedded into the very fabric of society through its capitalist complexion which made capital the lynchpin of Dutch power dynamics. In sum: state, capital and society chimed with each other, and this turned a regime of accumulation into an hegemonic regime of accumulation, the first hegemon of the history of the capitalist world-system. Retrieving Mann's scheme, the Dutch Republic was thus the product of an ensemble of sociospatial networks of power which interpenetrated each other to constitute the political, ideological, economic and military framework of the Dutch regime.

The Dutch revolt was prompted by religious contradictions in 1566, but took off after 1568 when the structure of accumulation was impaired by Spanish absolutism – Alva's descent. The Revolt in 1565/6 started off with the "Compromise of the

Nobility”, signed by four hundred lesser nobles of the outlying provinces⁸. The Compromise attempted to thwart the installation of the Inquisition into the Netherlands and its substantial failure unleashed the Dutch iconoclastic fury against Catholics. Fury emanated mainly from the south and from Antwerp whence it was diffused later across the Netherlands. The crucial point is that the early geography of revolt bears no relation to the main rebel thrust that later was to emanate from the North. That is, although religion was important for the Dutch in general, the struggle for the independence raged mainly for different reasons. Indeed, nonetheless William Orange, *pater patriae*, became leader of the rebellion, all the attacks during the first period, especially in 1568, failed and religious violence petered out. In keeping with this, I have argued that these reasons were related to the fact that the Spanish rulers attempt to cage and thus to impair the historical machine of Dutch accumulation – indeed, Amsterdam had been a stronghold of Catholics until the end of the century Israel says⁹. That is, Dutch-Spanish structural-historical contradictions mainly involved *Dutch materialism* not the *événementielle* of religion. In these respects hence, religion (ideological power) was important to spark off but not to propel the revolt across eighty years of war. It did not define the Republic in depth as well as its territorial organization and societal dynamics. It provided conditions out of which the state and the regime could be put into operation. Calvinist power in the north occurred later indeed; it was not the fuse but the result of the rebellion. As Mann says, ideological power, that is, Calvinist power, was the «immanent morale» which contributed to make the social edifice of the Dutch more stable, that is, to spawn a *Dutch community*¹⁰.

It was not by chance that the state had its expansion in the second phase of the Revolt, 1569-1576¹¹. Revolt called for military power which Mann defines as «the necessity of organized physical defense»¹². The Dutch built their military power not on coercion but on capital accumulation, and the rationalization which emanated from it.

Their very first spearhead of military power was not a regular army or navy, but people engaged in attacking Spanish wealth and accumulating and investing the proceeds. During the 1570s, the Sea Beggars gave rise to what Giovanni Arrighi called «inverted fiscal squeeze» through piracy and privateering¹³. In 1572, with an invasion from the west, the sea beggars provided the conditions for the rebellion in Zeeland and south Holland – both were not involved for the most in the early iconoclast fury. Polarization of forces and energies in the north concentrated resistance – Calvinist included – and this concentration of wealth and power allowed for military expansion¹⁴. Spatial concentration of military power resulted in turn in further social and wealth concentration. What followed this sociospatial process was indeed the new state heralded by a mini-state made up of Holland and Zeeland which represented the historical core of the Republic after 1581. Maurice of Nassau propelled the military revolution further by way of the means the new state provided: statewide fiscal-financial networks, agencies and agents; a state structure of capital accumulation interlocked with the fiscal-financial web; ideological pragmatism. By means of this, the Stadholder turned Dutch space into what Braudel called «a fortified island»¹⁵. The capitalist island of the maritime provinces allowed value to be invested into war and the general protection of Dutch space; the inland provinces provided spatial protection – a spatial buffer – to the destruction that war brought with it¹⁶. The “invisible” support of the in/land provinces was integral to the Dutch mechanism of military expansion by capitalist protection and as such integral to the success of the United Provinces. In doing so, Dutch space – especially Holland – was relatively unimpaired from the ravages of war, compared with the scale and the scope of the war itself. Military power begot a peaceful space that contributed to maintain freedom and growth. In this respect the Dutch Revolt permitted the world expansion of Dutch accumulation¹⁷.

On the one hand, we had a situation in which «old structures are adapted to new needs and a new situation», as Rowen says¹⁸ – the historical structure of urban-rural accumulation. On the other hand, we had a «creative response» to these new conditions – state fiscality, social provision, etc.¹⁹. The result was a structured complex of concentrated capitalist power which organized old features to create a new historical synthesis. It was not a medieval state or a variant thereof²⁰. It was not molded on, or patterned after, a nonexistence model of western development, but a state with its own historical features premised on a capitalist-brokerage complexion that chimed perfectly with its historical ground made of continual social bargaining²¹. Paraphrasing Brandon, The «complex system of cross-representation»²² interlocked the upper levels of *governance* «to local political elites while at the same time ensuring the involvement of the leading merchant families» – town governments (urban-rural syndicates) appointed delegates and sent them to the provincial States, which in turn sent delegations to the States-General. Fifty-eight cities²³, with their related countryside as integral part of them – the urban-rural complex – thereby had an *institutionalized* upper hand on the government and governance of Dutch space as a whole – state, society and economy. Thereby, the political organization of accumulation of the Republic became «so intertwined» in its spatio-political, -economic and -social characters, as Rowen suggests²⁴, that Dutch patterns of power projection in world space was the result and mirror of it – hegemony²⁵. In Mann's fashion, the sociospatial networks of power, which emanated from Dutch historical society, thereby integrated and supported each other in a unique fusion (through the structuring) of the Dutch state. In a nutshell: what the state afforded was the opportunity to extend, expand and strengthen to the full the urban-rural capitalist praxis – that is, organized capitalist accumulation – , or what Mann calls «circuit of praxis», which enabled a «stable, sociospatial blend of extensive

and intensive power, and of diffused and authoritative power». In other words, capital-based regulation and normalization of the Dutch space of accumulation²⁶.

This was the Dutch regime of accumulation. And by means of this extended circuit of praxis from the societal ground that world accumulation could unfold: it expanded state power and allowed for the intensification and articulation of the spatial concentration and centralization of the political-economic command in the sphere of the European economy and the sway on politics of Europe, in a self-sustaining (but limited) structural mechanism of power. It, in sum, was organized so that the accumulation of capital via historical-structural innovation the state represented was enforced by the very structure of urban-rural relations of power that could turn an accrual of potentially productive resources from outside to the service of domestic and world capitalist development at once²⁷.

The United Provinces, and historically, Holland, were in between the Baltic, the Atlantic, and the Rhine trade routes. Especially the Baltic and Rhine networks of Dutch accumulation were developed during the regional cycle of formation in the XIV-XVI centuries as we have seen. After the fall and the sack of Antwerp in 1585, and the related political and military maneuvers of the Dutch²⁸, the center of the European economy was *easily captured by them* by virtue of their unique historical structure of accumulation, wealth and markets which could brace, boost and expand *actively* systemic processes of capital accumulation. The Dutch enacted the recentering of the European economy towards (and *from*) Dutch space. Amsterdam was its natural core since the historical role of node of north-European commerce and finance²⁹. The swelling immigration from the south eased the recentering and concentrated further historical value, both material and human, into Dutch space. Many were the points of attraction for the stateless mass of migrants. The Mediterranean Cologne, north-western Germany, Hamburg, Frankfurt, Rouen, and London were also major important shores.

But stateless people needed state protection and hospitality that, among the other jurisdictions, only the United Provinces *were willing to offer and capable of providing* – that is, stateless masses longed for «protection and active support of a powerful state»³⁰. The tranquil space of the Republic became fruitful for both the Dutch, but also for the foreigners who gathered in Amsterdam but also in Leiden, the most important industrial center of the Republic throughout the seventeenth century. This transference of European energies and value into Dutch space was then thrust out into a set of agencies which historically embodied Dutch world capitalist expansion and systemic cycle of accumulation: the VOC (1602), *Vereenigde Geocroyeerde Oostindische Compagnie* and the WIC (1621). VOC, in particular, was the archetypical operative synthesis of the Dutch regime in which accumulation of capital was conflated and intermeshed with the pursuit of power throughout Asia. It was the archetypical operative synthesis because here capital identified with its own political-military obverse, that is, borrowing from Braudel, VOC triumphed for one century and a half because capital became identified with the state, it was the state – but also with Dutch society! By contrast, as Christopher Hill said, it was a «department of state», not simply an arm of it as Israel tells us; it was an agency in which «politics and economics merged at every point»³¹. A similar state department was the Wisselbank, the Bank of Amsterdam.

Dutch military power could be then deployed – premised on this new injection of value and forces – thanks to its capitalist logistics *within* Dutch space, which abroad operated through merchants, thanks to merchants and in favor of these merchants³². An English petition to Cromwell's government complained: «It is no wonder that these Dutchmen should thrive before us. Their statesmen are all merchants. They have travelled in foreign countries, they understand the course of trade, and they do everything to further its interests» on world scale³³. The Dutch regime of accumulation

as here understood was in fact able to expand on a world scale. By virtue of its domestic organization, the Dutch were able to put into operation strategies and structures through which their leading agencies promoted, organized, and regulated the expansion or the restructuring of the capitalist world-economy. That is, their domestic organization of capital, state and society enabled the installation of the first capitalist «regime of accumulation on world scale» of the modern world-system³⁴.

But was the Dutch regime hegemony³⁵? It was with some caveats. It was hegemony because, as far as the present perspective is concerned, the Dutch was with no doubt the most efficient and coherent organization of state, capital and society during the seventeenth century – or at least until the last decades of the century. On this basis the Dutch regime was able to project power outward and influence the main European competitors that, vying with the Dutch, endeavored to mimic it, but to no avail. This was a non performing politics of emulation. Its failure holds a very simple answer: wars, economic crises, great achievements in culture and science, systemic crashes, international competition, ecological changes, and so forth, made the capitalist world-economy advance, and along with it, the conditions, factors and vectors accountable for hegemony. France, England, Spain, Germany ended up to be of course in a radically different system in the eighteenth century compared with the situation of the sixteenth and early-seventeenth century. Different systemic conditions coupled with very different national-local historical prerogatives and as such both could not be encoded with the hoary Dutch pattern of power³⁶. Contenders had to develop new organizations of economy, state and society according to the coeval conditions of the world and their coeval national-local state of affairs³⁷.

What is at the stake here is the degree of influence, not the fact that the Dutch were *in fact* influent as no jurisdictions in the seventeenth century. Its hegemony was with little doubt of European scope. Many studies, old and new, bear out such a

condition³⁸. However, *with no doubt*, it was *not* hegemony on world scale. For the most, ecologies and economies throughout the world were harnessed, exploited, capitalized or appropriated. The greatest part of the social and political world was touched lightly by the Dutch. For example, scraps of Asian space were truly reorganized or restructured in their socio-political-ecological complexions. China, Japan, and India, among many others, were brushed. The *world* influence of the Dutch was feeble – not their ability and prowess to accumulate capital by itself. And this feebleness, as far I am concerned, accounts for the reason why the Dutch regime embodied the *lineages* of the hegemonies, and hence, hegemonies. British and US hegemonies were respectively on world scale and of global level – as Lucien Febvre understands “scale” and “level”³⁹. But it is tenable to envisage and say that their power stemmed from an internal organization of incomparable power and complexity that was to be activated, in essence and in general, in similar fashion and degree of coherence. This allowed to project a major power outward. So in this sense, the Dutch regime heralded the future: it was the first organic and structured organization of state, society and economy that was wholly embedded and patterned after the capitalist logic of power to dominate the modern world-economy, and to hegemonize European space thereon. It embodies the lineages of the British and US hegemon which spread such a “pattern” of socio-ecological commodification and appropriation – capitalism – throughout the social, ecological and political world by way of their power and hegemony.

Notes

Introduction

¹ Immanuel Wallerstein, 2011 [1974], *The Modern World-system, vol. I. Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century*, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles

² Joshua Goldstein, 1988, *Long Cycles: Prosperity and War in the Modern Age*, Yale University Press, New Heaven-London: p. 263

³ Immanuel Wallerstein, 2011 [1980], *The Modern World-System, II. Mercantilism and the Consolidation of the European World-Economy 1600-1750*, University of California Press, Berkeley: ch. 2

⁴ Leo Noordegraaf, 1993, Dutch industry in the Golden Age, in Karel Davids and Leo Noordegraaf (eds.), *The Dutch Economy in the Golden Age*, NEHA, Amsterdam: p. 132. As the great historian asserts: «profitability and the accumulation of capital were probably accepted phenomena in other organizational structures many centuries earlier» than the XVII century, p. 147

⁵ Zuijderduijn, 2009, *Medieval Capital Markets. Markets for Renten, State Formation and Private Investment in Holland (1300–1550)*, Brill, Leiden-Boston: p. 279

⁶ Oscar Gelderblom, Introduction, in Oscar Gelderblom (ed.), *The Political Economy of the Dutch Republic*, Ashgate, England: p. 2

⁷ Philip Gorski, 2003, *The Disciplinary Revolution Calvinism and the Rise of the State in Early Modern Europe*, The University of Chicago Press, London: p. XI, p. 55

⁸ Jan de Vries, 1978, An Inquiry into the Behaviour of Wages in the Dutch Republic and the Southern Netherlands, 1580-1800, in *Acta Historiae Neerlandicae. Studies on the History of the Netherlands*, Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, Netherland: p. 179

⁹ Classic: Marc Bloch, 1953, *The Historian's Craft*, Vintage Books, Caravelle

¹⁰ See Fernand Braudel, 1984, *The Perspective of the World*, Collins, London: pp. 17-19, 45

¹¹ Jean-Pierre Ricard, 1722, *Le Négoce d'Amsterdam*, Amsterdam; Stephen Quinn and William Roberds, 2007, “The Bank of Amsterdam and the Leap to Central Bank Money”, *The American Economic Review* Vol. 97, No. 2: pp. 262-265 and Stephen Quinn and William Roberds, 2009, An economic explanation of

the early Bank of Amsterdam, debasement, bills of exchange and the emergence of the first central bank, in Jeremy Atack Larry Neal (ed.), *The Origins and Development of Financial Markets and Institutions From the Seventeenth Century to the Present*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: pp. 32-70. See also Lucien Gillard, 2004, *La Banque d'Amsterdam et le Florin européen au Temps de la République néerlandaise (1610-1820)*, Éditions de l'Ehess, Paris; Jose De La Vega, 2013 [1688], *Confusion de Confusiones: Portions Descriptive of the Amsterdam Stock Exchange*, Martino Fine Books

¹² Giovanni Arrighi, 2010 [1994], *The Long Twentieth Century. Money, Power, and the Origins of Our Times*, Verso, London-NY: pp. 10

¹³ Pepijn Brandon, 2015, *War, Capital, and the Dutch State (1588-1795)*, Brill, Leiden-Boston

¹⁴ Charles Tilly, 1984, *Big Structures, Large Process, Huge Comparison*, Sage Foundation

¹⁵ Talcott Parsons, 1968, *The Structure of Social Action*, Free Press, New York: p. 263

¹⁶ Giovanni Arrighi, *The Long Twentieth Century*, pp. 102-103

¹⁷ Jason Moore, 2017, "The Capitalocene, Part I: on the nature and origins of our ecological crisis. Part I", *The Journal of Peasant Studies*: pp. 1-37; Jason Moore, 2017, "The Capitalocene Part II: accumulation by appropriation and the centrality of unpaid work/energy", *The Journal of Peasant Studies*: pp. 30

¹⁸ Michael Mann, 1987, *The Source of Social Power, vol. I*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: pp. 1-2

¹⁹ Michael Mann, *The Source*, p. 3

²⁰ Talcott Parsons, 1957, "The Distribution of Power in American Society The Power Elite. by C. Wright Mills", *World Politics*, Vol. 10, N. 1: pp. 139-141

²¹ Michael Mann, *The Source*, pp 7-8

²² Immanuel Wallerstein, 1991, *Unthinking Social Sciences. The Limits of Nineteenth-Century Paradigms*, Polity Press, Cambridge: cap. 18

²³ Arthur Eddington cited in Ilya Prigogine and Isabel Stengers, 1984, *Order Out of Chaos. Man's New Dialogue with Nature*, Bantam Book, USA-Canada: p. 9

²⁴ Immanuel Wallerstein, *Unthinking Social Sciences*, p. 240, 264, 242

²⁵ See Larry J. Griffin and Marcel van der Linden (eds.), 1999, *New Methods for Social History*, International Review of Social History, Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge, Cambridge; Joseph Fletcher, 1985, "Integrative History. Parallels and interconnections in the Early Modern period, 1500-1800", *Journal of Turkish Studies*, Vol. 9: pp. 37-57. Cf. Hayward R. Alker, 2013, "Historical

Argumentation and Statistical Inference: Towards More Appropriate Logics for Historical Research”, *Historical Methods: A Journal of Quantitative and Interdisciplinary History*, Vol. 17, N.3: 164-173

²⁶ Jonathan Israel, 1991, “The 'New History' versus 'traditional history' in interpreting Dutch world trade primacy”, *BMGN*, Vol. 56, N. 3: p. 478

²⁷ This section is a different rendition of Andrea Lo Bianco, 2017, “Historical Sociology. Metodi di un’analisi storico-sociale”, in *Journal Of Italian Sociology*, vol. 10: pp. 11-31

²⁸ Peter Burke, 1993, *History and Social Theory*, Cornell University Press New York: p. 1, 19

²⁹ Anthony Giddens, 1979, *Central Problems in Social Theory*, Macmillan London: p. 230

³⁰ The *Methodenstreit* is a debate which finds the intellectual roots in Gustav Droysen (1808-1884) – explaining vs. comprehending. The relevance of this debate is to involve further dimensions and manifold nuances: from Wilhem Windelband – nomothetic vs. ideographic, central for sociology – to Max Weber, whose relationship between history, sociology, historical sociology and *Methodenstreit* has been treated interestingly in A. Cavalli, 1980, “Il rapporto tra conoscenza storica e sociologica in Max Weber”, *Il Politico*, vol. 45, N.4: pp. 571-590. Immanuel Wallerstein, 1995, “History in Search of Science”, *Historyka*, Vol. 25: pp. 3-12; Karl Häuser, 1988, “Historical School and Methodenstreit”, *Journal of Institutional and Theoretical Economics*, Vol. 144, N. 3: pp. 532-542; . Cf. C. Calhoun, 2006, “The Critical Dimension in Sociological Theory”, in J. Turner (eds.), *Handbook of Sociological Theory*, NY: Springer, pp. 85-112

³¹ Charles P. Snow, 1959, *The Two Cultures and the Scientific Revolution*, Cambridge University Press New York.

³² Peter Burke, *History and Social Theory*, p. 14

³³ Ivi, ch. 1

³⁴ Anthony Giddens, , *Central Problems* , pp. 7-8).

³⁵ Philip Abrams, 1982, *Historical Sociology*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca/New York: p. IX, p. 335

³⁶ Philip Abrams, *Historical Sociology*, p. 302

³⁷ Philip Abrams 1980, “History, Sociology, Historical Sociology”, in *Past and Present*, vol. 87: p. 11; Philip Abrams, *Historical Sociology*, p 154

³⁸ General overview in D. Smith, 1991, *The Rise Of Historical Sociology*, Temple University, Press Philadelphia; G. Delanty G, F. I. Isin (eds.), 2003, *Handbook of Historical Sociology*, Sage, London,

Thousand Oaks, New Delhi; Theda Skocpol (eds.), *Vision and Method in Historical Sociology*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

See also G. S. Jones, 1976, "From Historical Sociology to Theoretical History", *The British Journal of Sociology*, vol. 27, N. 3, Special Issue. History and Sociology: pp. 295-305; V. E. Bonnel, 1980, "The Uses of Theory, Concepts and Comparison in Historical Sociology", *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 22, N. 2, pp. 156-173; M. A. Schwartz, 1987, "Historical Sociology in the History of American Sociology", *Social Science History*, Vol. 11, N. 1: pp. 1-16; J. R. Hall, 1992, "Where History and Sociology Meet: Forms of Discourse and Sociohistorical Inquiry", *Sociological Theory*, Vol. 10, N. 2: pp. 164-193; J. Mahoney, (2004), "Revisiting General Theory in Historical Sociology", *Social Forces*, Vol. 83, N. 2: pp. 459-489; E. S. Clemens, 2007, "Toward a Historicized Sociology: Theorizing Events, Processes, and Emergence", *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol. 33, 527-549

³⁹ Remarkable, David Hackett Fischer, 1970, *Historians' Fallacies. Toward a Logic of Historical Thought*, Harper, New York

⁴⁰ John H. Goldthorpe, 1991, "The Uses of History in Sociology: Reflections on Some Recent Tendencies", *The British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 42, N. 2: pp. 211-230.

⁴¹ Ivi, 225-226

⁴² Peter Burke, *History and Social Theory*, p. VIII

⁴³ Fernand Braudel, 2001, *I tempi della storia. Economia, società e civiltà*, Dedalo, Bari: p. 96, corsivo aggiunto. My translation from the italian version. Braudel continues: «non esistono scienze umane dai confini limitati, ciascuna di esse è una porta aperta sull'insieme del sociale che si apre su tutte le stanze e conduce a tutti i piani dell'edificio, a condizione che l'investigatore non si arresti nel suo cammino, mosso da un sentimento di riguardo nei confronti degli altri specialisti suoi vicini, ma essendo al contrario pronto ad utilizzare [...] le loro porte e le loro scale. [...]. Nel mescolare le scienze, devono prevalere i cattivi costumi. Occorre lavorare ad opere che coniughino tutte le scienze insieme. Cercare le problematiche totalizzanti del nostro tempo» i vi, pp. 289 e 111

⁴⁴ Nicos Mouzelis, 1994, "In Defence of 'Grand' Historical Sociology", *The British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 45, N. 1: pp. 31-36.

⁴⁵ Ivi, p. 33

⁴⁶ See for example Simonetta Cavaciocchi (eds.), 2014, *Schiavitù e servaggio nell'economia europea. Secc. XI-XVIII*, Firenze University Press, Firenze. This remarkable collection of contributions concerning

serfdom in Europe is willy-nilly swayed by, if not directly related to, Wallerstein's claims on the relationship between dependence and accumulation in west and east Europe in his highly contentious but, nonetheless, astonishingly influential *The Modern World-System Vol. I*. Wallerstein's historical sociology spurred on ongoing debates also in the traditional historical circuits.

Charles Tilly died in 2008, but his works are now more than ever literally crucial to historical sociologists, political scientists and historians alike. See the extraordinary Tilly's sway on world scholarship *in general* in Marjolein 't Hart, 2015, Coercion and Capital Revisited. Recent Trends in the Historiography of State-Formation, in *Economies, Public Finances, and the Impact of Institutional Changes in Interregional Perspective: The Low Countries and Neighbouring German Territories (14th-17th Centuries)*, Brepols Publishers: pp. 23-32

⁴⁷ See Previous references for Tilly and following references for Anderson

⁴⁸ See also Charles Tilly, 1988, "Future History", in *Theory and Society*, vol.17, N. 5, Special Issue on Breaking Boundaries, Social Theory and the Sixties: pp. 703-712, and Charles Tilly, 2007, "History of and in Sociology", *The American Sociologist*, vol. 38, N. 4: pp. 326-329

⁴⁹ Charles Tilly, 1984, *Big Structures, Large Process, Huge Comparison*, Sage Foundation: p. 14

⁵⁰ Ivi, 125-126; cap. 8

⁵¹ Ivi, ch. 5-6-7

⁵² Ivi, 146-147

⁵³ Ivi, p. 61; ch. 4

⁵⁴ Ivi, p. 14

⁵⁵ Ivi, p. 64.

⁵⁶ Perry Anderson, 1974, *Lineages of the Absolutist State*, NLB, London; Perry Anderson, 1974, *Passages from Antiquity to Feudalism*, NLB, London

⁵⁷ Perry Anderson, *Lineages*, p. 8

⁵⁸ Perry Anderson, *Passages*, p. 8

⁵⁹ Ch. 1;

⁶⁰ Andrea Lo Bianco, *Historical Sociology*

⁶¹ Charles W. Mills, 1959, *The Sociological Imagination*, Oxford University Press, New York: pp. 211-

⁶² Theda Skocpol, 1979, *States and Social Revolutions. A comparative analysis of France, Russia and China*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: p. 39

⁶³ Theda Skocpol, 1984, Emerging Agendas and Recurrent Strategies in Historical Sociology, in Theda Skocpol (eds.), *Vision and Method in Historical Sociology*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: p. 382. See also Theda Skocpol, 1987, “Social History and Historical Sociology: Contrasts and Complementarities”, *Social Science History*, vol. 11, N. 1: pp. 17-30

⁶⁴ Nicos Mouzelis, *In Defence*, pp. 33

⁶⁵ See David Hackett Fischer, *Historians' Fallacies*

⁶⁶ Nicos Mouzelis, *In Defence*, pp. 33-35

⁶⁷ Philip Abrams, *Historical Sociology*, pp. 333 e 335

⁶⁸ Jason Moore, The Capitalocene, Part I-II; Jason Moore, 2011, “Ecology, Capital and the Nature of our Time. Accumulation and Crisis in the Capitalist World-Ecology”, *Journal of World-System Research*, Vol. 17, N. 1: 109-147; Jason W. Moore, 2016, The Rise of Cheap Nature, in Jason W. Moore (ed.), *Anthropocene or Capitalocene? Nature, History, and the Crisis of Capitalism*, PM Press, Oakland: pp. 78-115

⁶⁹ The classic standpoint argues that the Dutch succeeded in emerging out of war from Spain because Spain had too many fronts of war. The universal struggle in Europe enabled the Dutch to emerge as a strong state, Geoffrey Parker argues. When the European system stabilized, the Dutch were swallowed by the powerful national states – Geoffrey Parker, 1970, “Spain, her Enemies, and the Revolt of the Netherlands 1559–1648”, *Past and Present*, 49: pp. 72-95; Geoffrey Parker, 1975, *The Army of Flanders on the Spanish road, 1567–1659: The logistics of Spanish victory and defeat in the Low Countries' wars*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge. A second perspective extols the classic contradictions between republicanism and imperialism throughout human history: Republican institutions begot great economic attitude and ongoing expansionist thrust that brought about ever-increasing military capabilities. But once the classic imperial overstretch intervened, economic downswing along with the “betrayal of the bourgeoisie” and the mounting inter-state competition made for the fall of the Republic. See Arthur Weststeijn, 2012, *Commercial republicanism in the Dutch golden age. The political thought of Johan & Pieter De la Court*, Brill, Leiden-Boston; Paul Kennedy, 1988, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic change and military conflict from 1500 to 2000*, Random House, New York

⁷⁰ The original story described by Wallerstein comprises contentious historical analyses – such as the issue of serfdom and the relation between east and west Europe already recalled, or the problem of which areas of the planet were originally incorporated into the modern world-system during its rise and stabilization, XV-XVII century. See We are aware of the several incongruences the work of Wallerstein brings with it. However, what we pull from Wallerstein's scheme is his *general* view, logic, mechanism and laws of capitalist expansion. See in brief ...

⁷¹ T. K. Hopkins and Immanuel Wallerstein, 1982, *World-systems analysis: theory and methodology*, Sage Publications, Beverly Hills

⁷² Immanuel Wallerstein, 2011 [1980], *The Modern World-System, II. Mercantilism and the Consolidation of the European World-Economy 1600-1750*, University of California Press, Berkeley: p. XXIII, p. 51, p. 245; analysis of Dutch hegemony pp. 36-73

⁷³ Giovanni Arrighi, *The Long Twentieth*, pp. 130-148

⁷⁴ Romano, Ruggiero, 1962. "Tra XVI e XVII secolo. Una crisi economica: 1619-1622", *Rivista storica italiana*, Vol. 74: pp. 480-531; Bernard Slicher van Bath, 1963, *The Agrarian of Western A.D. 500-1850*, St. Martin's, New York; Violet Barbour, 1963, *Capitalism in Amsterdam in the Seventeenth Century*. Ann Arbor, Michigan; Fernand Braudel, 1972, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, II Voll., Collins, London and Fernand Braudel, 1982, *The Perspective of the World*, Collins, London; Jonathan Israel, 1989, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

⁷⁵ Jonathan Israel, *Dutch Primacy*, p. 11; Jonathan Israel, *The 'New History'*, pp. 472-473

⁷⁶ An overview in J. Thomas Lindblad, 1993, Foreign trade of the Dutch Republic in the seventeenth century, in Karel Davids and Leo Noordegraaf (eds.), *The Dutch Economy in the Golden Age*, NEHA, Amsterdam: pp. 219-250

⁷⁷ – an ensemble of time series and activities related to foreign trade encompassing the entire century. It is the only Dutch aggregate of data for a systematic quantitative analysis of Dutch foreign trade in the XVII century.

⁷⁸ Jonathan Israel, *Dutch Primacy*, pp. 121-196; Jonathan Israel, *The 'New History'*, pp. 469-471, 474; Leo Noordegraaf, *Dutch industry in the Golden Age*

⁷⁹ Thomas Lindblad, *Foreign trade*

⁸⁰ Jonathan Israel, *The 'New History'*, pp.475

⁸¹ Charles Tilly's interview on this topic found in: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b51Dkbh8XCA>

⁸² Charles Tilly (eds.), 1975, *The Formation of National States in Western Europe*, Princeton University Press, Princeton

⁸³ Charles Tilly, 1975, Reflection on the History of European State-Making, in Charles Tilly (eds.), *The Formation of National States in Western Europe*, Princeton University Press, Princeton: p. 42

⁸⁴ Charles Tilly, 1990, *Coercion, capital, and European States, 990-1990*, Basil Blackwell, Cambridge

⁸⁵ See Marjolein 't Hart, *Coercion and Capital Revisited*

⁸⁶ Charles Tilly, *Big Structures*, p. 147

⁸⁷ See great historical overview in Theodore K. Rabb, 1975, *The Struggle for Stability in Early Modern Europe*, Oxford University Press, Oxford

⁸⁸ Charles Tilly, *Coercion, capital*, pp. 28-29

⁸⁹ Charles Tilly, 1989, "Cities and States in Europe, 1000-1800", in *Theory and Society*, Vol. 18, N. 5: pp. 563-584; and Charles Tilly, 1994, Entanglements of European Cities and States, in Wim Blockmans, Charles Tilly (eds.), *Cities And The Rise Of States In Europe, A.D. 1000 To 1800*, Westview Press, Boulder, San Francisco and Oxford. Cf. very interesting, Wim Blockmans, 1989, "Voracious States and Obstructing Cities: An Aspect of State Formation in Preindustrial Europe", *Theory and Society*, Vol. 18, N. 5: pp. 733-755; Marjolein 't Hart, 2000, "Warfare and Capitalism: The Impact of the Economy on State Making in Northwestern Europe, Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries", *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)*, Vol. 23, N. 2: pp. 209-228

⁹⁰ Ivi, pp. 29-30

⁹¹ Recap in Michael Duffy (ed), 1980, *The Military Revolution and the State 1500-1800*, University of Essex Press, Great Britain: p. 1-8; Geoffrey Parker, 1976, "The "Military Revolution", 1560-1660—a Myth?", *Journal of Modern History*, vol. 48: pp. 195-214; Geoffrey Parker, 1996, *The Military Revolution: Military Innovation and the Rise of the West, 1500-1800*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press; Michael Duffy (ed), 1980, *The Military Revolution and the State 1500-1800*, University of Essex Press, Great Britain; Jeremy Black, *A Military Revolution, Military Change and European Society 1550-1800*, McMillan, London; Martin van Creveld, 2004, *Supplying War. Logistics from Wallenstein to Patton*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press: ch. 1;

⁹² J. Brewer, 1990, *The Sinews of Power: War, Money, and the English State 1688-1783*, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University; R. Bonney (ed.), 1995, *Economic Systems and State Finance. The Origins of*

the Modern State in Europe 13th to 18th Centuries, Clarendon Press, Oxford; Richard Bonney (ed.), 1999, *The Rise of the Fiscal State in Europe, C.1200-1810*, Oxford University Press, Oxford

⁹³ Rafael Torres Sanchez, 2012, *Military Entrepreneurs and the Spanish Contractor State in the Eighteenth Century*, Oxford University Press, Oxford: p. 3; Stephen Conway and Rafael Torres Sánchez (eds.), 2011, *The Spending of States: Military expenditure during the long eighteenth century. Patterns, organisation, and consequences, 1650–1815*, Saarbrücken: vdm Verlag; Richard Harding and Sergio Solbes Ferri (eds.) 2011, *The Contractor State and its Implications(1659–1815)*, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria: Servicio de Publicaciones ulpgc

⁹⁴ Jan Glete, 2002, *War and the State in Early Modern Europe: Spain, the Dutch Republic and Sweden as Fiscal-Military States, 1500–1660*, Routledge, London

⁹⁵ Marjolein ‘t Hart, 1993, *The Making of a Bourgeois State. War, Politics and Finance during the Dutch Revolt*, Manchester University Press, Manchester; Marjolein ‘t Hart, 2014, *The Dutch Wars of Independence Warfare and Commerce in the Netherlands 1570–1680*, Routledge, London-NY and Pepijn Brandon, *War, Capital*; Patrick O’Brian, 2009, State formation and the construction and maintenance of institutions for economic growth in the west and the east, 1415–1846, in Wolfram Elsner and Hardy Hanappi, *Varieties of Capitalism and New Institutional Deals. Regulation, welfare and the new economy*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge;

⁹⁶ Bas van Bavel, 2010, *Manors and Markets: Economy and Society in the Low Countries, 500–1600*, Oxford University Press, Oxford; C. J. Zijlenderdijn, *Medieval Capital Markets*; Jessica Dijkman, 2011, *Shaping Medieval Markets. The Organisation of Commodity Markets in Holland, c. 1200–c. 1450*, Brill, Leiden-Boston

⁹⁷ Charles Tilly’s interview on these topics found in: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b51Dkbh8XCA>

⁹⁸ Pepijn Brandon, *War, Capital*, p. 13«the great strength of the [...] social relations oriented solution outlined here is that it does not assign the state a passive role as a mere receptor of the ‘extern’ pressures of warfare or the ‘internal’ pressures of economic development. Instead, it envisions the state as a mediating structure within a complex of conflicting social forces»

⁹⁹ overview in Giovanni Arrighi, *The Long Twentieth*; Giovanni Arrighi and Beverly J. Silver, 1999, *Chaos and Governance in the Modern World System*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis-London.

¹⁰⁰ This paragraph draws on Paul Arblaster, 2006, *A History of the Low Countries*, Palgrave, London; Jonathan Israel, 1995, *The Dutch Republic : Its Rise, Greatness and Fall, 1477- 1806*, Oxford University press, New York

¹⁰¹ see Bas J. P. van Bavel and J. Luiten van Zanden, 2004, “The jump-start of the Holland economy during the late-medieval crisis, c.1350–c.1500”, *Economic History Review*, Vol. 57, N. 3

¹⁰² See Oscar Gelderblom, 2013, *Cities of Commerce. The Institutional Foundations of International Trade in The Low Countries*, Princeton University Press

¹⁰³ See references in Chapter 3

¹⁰⁴ See Alberto Clerici, 2004, *Costituzionalismo, contrattualismo e diritto di resistenza nella Rivolta dei Paesi Bassi (1559-1581)*, Franco Angeli, Milano: pp. 7-66

¹⁰⁵ Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-system*; Giovanni Arrighi, *The Long Twentieth Century*

¹⁰⁶ Jonathan Israel, *Dutch Primacy*, p.7 and 408;

¹⁰⁷ See Herman van der Wee, 1963, *The Growth of the Antwerp Market and the European Economy (fourteenth-sixteenth centuries)*, Springer, Dordrecht

¹⁰⁸ See Geoffrey Parker, *The Dutch Revolt*; Herbert H. Rowen, 1990, “The Dutch Revolt: What Kind of Revolution?” *Renaissance Quarterly*, Vol. 43, N. 3: pp. 570-590. See also Ivo Schoffer, 1961, “The Dutch Revolt Anatomized Some Comments”, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 3, N. 4: pp. 470-477

¹⁰⁹ Alberto Clerici, *Costituzionalismo, contrattualismo*

¹¹⁰ See among other, Jan de Vries and Ad van der Woude, 1997, *The First Modern Economy. Success, failure, and perseverance of the Dutch economy, 1500-1815*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: ch. 11, and pp. 509-510

¹¹¹ See Jonathan Israel, 1980, “The States General and the strategic regulation of the Dutch river trade, 1621-1636”, *BMGN - Low Countries Historical Review*, Vol. 95, N.3: pp.461–491

¹¹² See Jan de Vries and Ad van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*

¹¹³ See Patrick O'Brien et al. (eds), 2008, *Urban Achievement in Early Modern Europe Golden Ages in Antwerp, Amsterdam and London*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

¹¹⁴ see Violet Barbour, 1963, *Capitalism in Amsterdam in the 17th century*, The university of Michigan Press; Reinhard Wolfgang, 1987, *Storia dell'espansione europea*, Guida Editori, Napoli: p. 168

¹¹⁵ See F.S. Gaastra, 2007, The Organization Of The VOC, in *The Archives of the Dutch East India Company (VOC) and the Local Institutions in Batavia (Jakarta)*, Brill, Leiden: pp 13-60. Classic, Kristof Glamann, 1981, Dutch Asiatic trade, 1620-1740, Uitgeverij Martinus Nijhoff; Om Prakash, 1998, *European commercial enterprise in pre-colonial India*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: pp. 175-210

¹¹⁶ See P. C. Emmer, and W. W. Klooster, "The Dutch Atlantic, 1600-1800: Expansion Without Empire," *Itinerario*, vol. 23, N. 2: 48-69; Johannes Postma and Victor Enthoven, 2003, *Riches from Atlantic commerce : Dutch transatlantic trade and shipping, 1585-1817*, Brill Leiden

¹¹⁷ see Geoffrey Parker, 2006, *The Thirty Years' War*, Routledge, London-NY: pp. 33-165; Jonathan Israel, 1979, "The Holland Towns and the Dutch-Spanish Conflict, 1621-1648", *BMGN - Low Countries Historical Review*, vol 94, n 1: pp.41-69.

Chapter 1

¹¹⁸ Many others delved into the issue. The most eminent are Rodney Hilton, Takahashi, Perry Anderson and Eric Hobsbawm. For I cannot treat them all extensively, and since Anderson and Hobsbawm's theory and history are both widely known (Eric J. Hobsbawm, 1954, "The General Crisis of the European Economy in the 17th", *Past & Present*, N. 5: pp. 33-53, and Eric J. Hobsbawm, 1960, "The Seventeenth Century in the Development of Capitalism", *Science & Society*, Vol. 24, N. 2: pp. 97-112; Perry Anderson, 1974, *Lineages of the Absolutist State*, NLB, London; Perry Anderson, 1974b, *Passages from Antiquity to Feudalism*, NLB, London), I would like to sum up the kernel of the less quoted but equally eminent analysis afforded by Hilton, in R. H. Hilton and Christopher Hill, 1953, "The Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism", *Science & Society*, Vol. 17, N. 4: pp. 345-349. Such quotation reveals in advance some of the most debatable elements that are to fill the following pages: «[...] struggle for rent was the "prime mover" in feudal society [...].The economic progress which was inseparable from the early rent struggle and the political stabilization of feudalism was characterised by an increase in the total social surplus of production over subsistence needs. This, not the so-called revival of the international

trade in silks and spices, was the basis for the development of commodity production». What then produced decisive changes were factors «*all internal to*» feudalism for Hilton.

Important contribution to the debate was given by Takahashi and Mins also whose viewpoint sounds like a classic Marxist interpretation: «The question of the transition from feudalism to capitalism is not merely one of a transformation in forms of economic and social institutions. The basic problem must be the change in the social existence-form of labor power», H. K. Takahashi and Henry F. Mins, 1952, “The Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism: A Contribution to the Sweezy-Dobb Controversy”, in *Science and Society*, vol. 16, N.4: 315.

¹¹⁹ For a wide exploration and interactive explanation of the “feudal fetters” see Dimitris Milonakis, 1993/1994, “Prelude to the Genesis of Capitalism: The Dynamics of the Feudal Mode of Production”, *Science & Society*, Vol. 57, N. 4: pp. 390-419; see in brief David Laibman, 1984, “Modes of Production and Theories of Transition”, *Science & Society*, Vol. 48, N. 3: pp. 273-276. Cf. Herbert Gintis and Samuel Bowles, 1984, State and class in Feudalism, in Charles Bright and Susan Harding (ed.), *Statemaking and Social Movements: Essays in History and Theory*, Publisher, University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor: p. 46, who assert interestingly that there was no transition.

¹²⁰ Trade had theretofore been accounted the main historical vector of transition. Pirenne was the most eminent proponent of such an account. To understand Pirenne’s stance, see Henri Pirenne, 1914, “The Stages in the Social History of Capitalism”, in *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 19, N. 3: p. 504. According to the Belgian historian, merchants, since the eleventh century, were really capitalists for they had «instinct». Pirenne conceived historical capitalists as pure circulationists, and their instinct as pure accumulation through «wandering commerce»: «It is impossible to maintain that these men conducted business only to supply their daily wants, impossible not to see that their purpose is the constant accumulation of goods, impossible to deny that, barbarous as we may suppose them, they nonetheless possessed the comprehension, or, if one prefers, had their instinct for commerce on the large scale». The same instinct brought them to «increasing specialization» and «monopoly» unto «the progress of economic evolution», *ivi*, p. 510. Cf. Henri Pirenne, 2014, *Medieval Cities, Their Origins and the Revival of Trade*, Princeton University Press, Princeton: esp. ch. 4.

¹²¹ Dobb has a clear definition of «feudalism» in mind, based on the concept of serfdom: «It is "an obligation laid on the producer by force and independently of his own volition to fulfill certain economic demands of an overlord, whether these demands take the form of services to be performed or of dues to

be paid in money or in kind. [...] This coercive force may be that of military strength, possessed by the feudal superior, or of custom backed by some kind of judicial procedure, or the force of law», Maurice Dobb, 1946, *Studies in the development of capitalism*, Routledge, London-NY: p. 35-36

¹²² Maurice Dobb, *Studies*, p. 42, 46: «it was the inefficiency of Feudalism as a system of production coupled with the growing needs of the ruling class for revenue, that was primarily responsible for its decline; since this need for additional revenues promoted an increase in the pressure on the producer to a point where this pressure became literally unendurable. [...] The result of this increased pressure was [...] to provoke [...] a movement of illegal emigration from the manors [...] destined to drain the system of its essential life-blood and to provoke a series of crises in [the] feudal economy»

¹²³ For example, Dobb himself says that we should seek out, «a close correlation between the development of trade and the decline of serfdom in different area of Europe» if we are to believe the circulationist eddy. Such a correlation did actually occur, he himself acknowledges, in parts of European space, Dobb, *Studies*, p. 39

¹²⁴ Dobb, 1946, *Studies*, pp. 37-50, 70-79. See Ellen M. Wood, 1999, *The Origin of Capitalism. A Longer View*, Monthly Review Press, London-NY: p. 42: «One point stands out in the arguments of Dobb and Hilton: the transition to capitalism is a matter of liberating or 'shaking loose' an economic logic already present in simple commodity production. We are left with the overwhelming impression that, given the chance, the commodity-producing peasant (and artisan) will grow into a capitalist. The centre of gravity in this argument has shifted away from the city to the countryside, and class struggle has been given a new role, but how different are the assumptions underlying this argument from some of the main premises of the commercialization model? How far are we from the premise that the capitalist market is an opportunity rather than an imperative, and that what requires explanation in accounting for the rise of capitalism is the removal of obstacles, the breaking of fetters, and not the creation of a wholly new economic logic. [...] The explanations offered by Marxists like Hilton and Dobb, while in many ways devastating to the commercialization model and to its assumptions about the antithesis of feudalism and commerce, have not entirely escaped this trap, because they still in some important respects assume the very thing that needs to be explained»

¹²⁵ Although he inconsistently falters before the «indispensable contribution of the world market», Robert Brenner, 1978, “The Origins of Capitalist Development: A Critique of Neo-Smithian”, *New Left Review*, vol. 104: p. 76

¹²⁶ Robert Brenner, 1976, *Agrarian Class Structure and Economic Development in Pre-Industrial Europe*, in T.H. Aston, H. E. Philip (ed.), *The Brenner Debate Agrarian Class Structure and Economic Development in Pre-Industrial Europe*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: p. 20: «In sum, fully to comprehend long-term economic developments, growth and/or retrogression in the late medieval and early modern period, it is critical to analyse the relatively autonomous processes by which particular class structures, especially property or surplus-extraction relations, are established, and in particular the class conflicts to which they do (or do not) give rise».

¹²⁷ Notably the models put forward by Postan and Ladurie. See Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, 1966-1969, *Les paysans de Languedoc*, 2 vols. S.E.V.P.E.N., Paris ; M. M. Postan, 1972, *The Medieval Economy and Society: An Economic History of Britain in the Middle Ages*, University California Press, Berkeley. Brenner's early article comprises – pp. 25-30 – a brief critique of the so-called «commercialization model», only taken into account to fulfil his own argument upon the fallacy of the demographic theory. What will be termed «neo-Smithian critique» is extensively explored in Robert Brenner, *The Origins of Capitalist Development*.

In the demographic models, especially in the Ladurie's, long cycles of upswings and downturns based on secular trends systematically ended up to cause an overall stall since peasant production could not expand up to cater to the needs of the growing population, making the ensuing collapse of demographic and economic patterns the upshot of the cyclical standstill of Feudalism – food price hike and the consequential hardship and starvation in the rurality brought to depopulation which sparked off crisis that in turn gave rise to another cycle. Inasmuch as such a movement is accounted as general, it does not grasp nor it can explain, Brenner says, the wide differences in terms of development between East and West Europe, and between England and France for example. «In particular, their methods prevent them from posing what in my view are perhaps the two fundamental problems for the analysis of long-term economic development in late medieval and early modern Europe, or more generally, the "transition from feudalism to capitalism": (1) the decline versus the persistence of serfdom and its effects; (2) the emergence and predominance of secure small peasant property versus the rise of landlord / large tenant farmer relations on the land. In historical terms this means, at the very least: (1) a comparative analysis of the intensification of serfdom in eastern Europe in relation to its process of decline in the west; (2) a comparative analysis of the rise of agrarian capitalism and the growth of agricultural productivity in England in relation to their failure in France», Robert Brenner, *Agrarian Class Structure*, pp. 10-29, and

recap in p. 30. See Postan and Ladurie's rejoinder in: M. M. Postan and John Hatcher, 1976, *Population and Class Relations in Feudal Society*, in T.H. Aston, H. E. Philip (ed.), *The Brenner Debate Agrarian Class Structure and Economic Development in Pre-Industrial Europe*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: pp. 64-78; Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, 1976, *A Reply to Robert Brenner*, in T.H. Aston, H. E. Philip (ed.), *The Brenner Debate Agrarian Class Structure and Economic Development in Pre-Industrial Europe*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: pp. 101-106

¹²⁸ Robert Brenner, *Agrarian Class Structure*, p. 30

¹²⁹ *Ivi*, pp. 31-46; p. 36

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*: «their relative levels of internal solidarity, their self-consciousness and organization, and their general political resources - especially their relationships to the non-agricultural classes (in particular, potential urban class allies) and to the state (in particular, whether or not the state developed as a class-like competitor of the lords for the peasants' surplus)»

¹³¹ *Ivi*, p. 58. Indeed, as it has been just surveyed, the revolts that swept across France were against royal taxation, not against lords.

¹³² *Ivi*, p. 61. Cf. Guy Bois, 1978, *Against the Neo-Malthusian Orthodoxy*, in T.H. Aston, H. E. Philip (ed.), *The Brenner Debate Agrarian Class Structure and Economic Development in Pre-Industrial Europe*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: esp. p. 111-112

¹³³ Robert Brenner, *Agrarian Class Structure*, pp. 35, 48-49. See, pp. 51-54: «agricultural improvement was already having a significant effect on English economic development by the end of the seventeenth century can be seen in a number of ways: most immediately in the striking pattern of relatively stable prices and (at least) maintenance of population of the latter part of the century; in the long run in the interrelated phenomena of continuing industrial development and growth in the home market. [...] there were not the same sort of violent fluctuations in prices nor the crises of subsistence [neither] was there the marked demographic decline which came to dominate most of Europe at this time, the famous Malthusian "phase B". In short, England remained largely exempt from the "general economic crisis of the seventeenth century».

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*

¹³⁵ *Ivi*, pp. 54-62. Historical counterevidences to Brenner's analysis of the English path to capitalism – and thus of its uniqueness – in Mark Overton, 2006, *Agricultural Revolution in England: The Transformation of the Agrarian Economy 1500-1850*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: pp. 203-

207: «There is mounting evidence to show that there was not a coordinated relationship between landlord power, tenure, ownership, farm size and capitalistic farming. Landlords were frequently unable to exercise the power that Brenner attributes to them [...]. In general, economic differentiation was a process which took place among the tenantry. Moreover landlords, especially in the sixteenth century, showed little interest in developing their estates for capitalist tenant farming, and as a rule they were not very adventurous in promoting innovation in agriculture. The pioneers [...] were not the great landowners but smaller farmers [...]. [...] large farms were not necessarily a prerequisite for higher land productivity. [Contrarily to Brenner's theory,] the most dramatic advances in output and land productivity came in those areas (such as Norfolk) where lordship was relatively weak. [By contrast], the key to the relationship between institutional change and farming practice lay more with commercialisation and the market than with the social relations of production. The integration of local markets and a new willingness of farmers to exploit commercial opportunities provided the impetus for innovation and enterprise which led to the agricultural revolution». Very relevant, R. W. Hoyle, 1990, "Tenure and the Land Market in Early Modern England: Or a Late Contribution to the Brenner Debate", *The Economic History Review*, Vol. 43, N. 1: esp. p. 17. Cf. John E. Martin, 1986, *Feudalism to Capitalism. Peasant and Landlord in English Agrarian Development*, McMillan Press, Houndmills: ch. 4, 7-8

¹³⁶ It is well-known that Marx himself was concerned with the role of trade, market and money percolation, but his statements and arguments are non-linear, if contradictory. For example, Karl Marx, 1991, *Capital. A Critique of Political Economy, vol. 3*, Penguin Books in association with New Left Review, London-NY: ch. 20; see p. 450-451: «There can be no doubt [...] that the great revolutions that took place in trade in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, along with the geographical discoveries of that epoch, and which rapidly advanced the development of commercial capital, were a major moment in promoting the transition from the feudal to the capitalist mode of production. The sudden expansion of the world market, the multiplication of commodities in circulation, the competition among the European nations for the seizure of Asiatic products and American treasures, the colonial system, all made a fundamental contribution towards shattering the feudal barriers to production. And yet the *modern* mode of production in its first period, that of manufacture, developed only where the conditions for it had been created in the Middle Ages. Compare Holland with Portugal, for example. And whereas in the sixteenth century, and partly still in the seventeenth, the sudden expansion of trade and the creation of a new world market had an overwhelming influence on the defeat of the old mode of production and the rise of the

capitalist mode, this happened in reverse on the basis of the capitalist mode of production, once it had been created. The world market itself forms *the basis* for this mode of production». Cf. Karl Marx, 1971, *The Grundrisse*, Harper & Row, New York, Hagerstown, San Francisco, London: ch. 14.

As Gottlieb aptly puts it: class struggle-based interpretation as vector of transition, like the Brenner's one, conceals «any real argument as to why the "commercial changes," which necessarily include the rise of demand, should be seen as subsidiary to the "structure of class relations." If the former are "necessary" to "induce a transformation" of the latter [Brenner's words in *The Origin*, p. 76], then while the latter might shape the effects of the former, they are also shaped by them. Alternatively, of course, we might consider the *growth* of a world market as an inseparable aspect of the "structure of class relations". The identity of trader, producer for trade, etc., would then be essential to the class relations of late feudal/early capitalist society. [...]. It is, in fact, precisely because the growth of international and local trade constituted a decisive change in the class structure by introducing both new social actors and transforming old ones that a rigid distinction between the effects of "trade" and those of "class struggle" cannot be made. The resources for and the motivation which directed the transition from feudalism to capitalism came not solely from the social differentiation described by Dobb and Hilton, but also from the benefits of a local and international exchange and division of labor. As Wallerstein argues, the surplus which will fuel capitalist development comes partly from surplus on trade generated by successive dominant positions within a developing world-economy. As developing state structures help insure favorable conditions of trade, the capacity to benefit from unequal exchange both provides an investable surplus and constitutes a motivation for increased production» in Roger S. Gottlieb, 1984, "Historical Materialism, Historical Laws and Social Primacy: Further Discussion of the Transition Debate", *Science & Society*, Vol. 51, N. 2: p. 13-14

¹³⁷ Paul M. Sweezy and Maurice Dobb, 1950, "The Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism", *Science & Society*, Vol. 14, N. 2: p. 135, 159: «western European feudalism [...] was a system with a very strong bias in favor of maintaining given methods and relations of production [...]. It is inherently «conservative and change resisting».

¹³⁸ Contrarily to Dobb, Sweezy does not offer a systematic definition of feudalism, but serfdom stands out as absent in his analytic framework . Paul M. Sweezy and Maurice Dobb, *The Transition*, in p. 136: In feudalism, «markets are for the most part local and [...] long-distance trade, while not necessarily absent, plays no determining role in the purposes or methods of production. The crucial feature of feudalism in

this sense is that it is a system of *production for use*. Feudalism thus «is a system of production for use. The needs of the community are known and production is planned and organized with a view to satisfying the needs. [...] There is [...] none of the pressure which exists under capitalism for continual improvements in methods of production. There is a very strong tendency for the whole life of society to be oriented toward custom and tradition», Paul M. Sweezy, 1976, A Critique and A Rejoinder, in R. H. Hilton et al. (ed.), *The Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism*, Verso, London: p. 35.

¹³⁹ Paul M. Sweezy and Maurice Dobb, *The Transition*, pp. 142-146.

¹⁴⁰ Paul M. Sweezy, 1986, “Feudalism-to-Capitalism Revisited” , *Science and Society*, vol. 50, N. 1: p. 82: «Dobb argued that the weakening and disintegration of feudalism resulted from causes *internal* to the system (mainly the need of the lords for more revenue, leading to overexploitation of the serfs), while my contention was that the dominant causal factor was *external* to the feudal system (the revival of long-distance trade in the later Middle Ages followed by the accelerated growth of towns and the proliferation of market relations between town and countryside). I did not deny the need of the lords for more revenue, but argued that this need stemmed not from economic laws peculiar to the feudal system but rather from the availability of new and more sophisticated luxury goods (including arms), arising in the first instance from the revival of long-distance trade, and further stimulated by the spread of commodity production, division of labor, money-lending, etc.»

¹⁴¹ Paul M. Sweezy and Maurice Dobb, *The Transition*, p. 150-152. As Sweezy sums up later: «trade (and of course its concomitant commodity production) did indeed play a major role in undermining Western European feudalism and at the same time established the necessary preconditions for the rise of capitalism. The actual emergence of capitalism in its ultimately predominant form however, did not occur until some two centuries after the disintegration of feudalism. There was thus no significant connection between the two phases of the transition process - decline of feudalism on the one hand, and rise of capitalism on the other», Paul M. Sweezy, *Feudalism-to-Capitalism Revisited*, p. 81-82.

A similar claim has been made by Dobb himself: «the disintegration of the feudal mode of production had already reached an advanced stage before the capitalist mode of production developed, and that this disintegration did not proceed in any close association with the growth of the new mode of production within the womb of the old». Therefore such span of time «seems to have been neither feudal nor yet capitalist so far as its mode of production was concerned», Maurice Dobb, *Studies*, pp. 19-20. Or, Dobb says, such bout was «transitional, in the sense that the old was in process of rapid disintegration

and new economic forms were simultaneously appearing», Paul M. Sweezy and Maurice Dobb, *The Transition*, p. 162

¹⁴² Ivi, p. 155.

¹⁴³ Ivi, pp. 147. Such «inability» was consistent with, and sharpened by, market forces and the «extension of market relations between towns and countryside». Dobb's internal cause of the feudal terminal crisis is strongly challenged in Sweezy's view for it is associated directly to the lairds' need for cash, bred by the «external» thrust for luxuries. The flight of the peasants fed the expansion of the cities and their market economy. Cf. previous chapter1, pp. and note 74

¹⁴⁴ The second and crucial one is the refusal of the nineteenth-century scientific heritage in the social inquiry, namely, the segmentation and compartmentalization of the historical-social reality. The American scholar rejects the so called «holy trinity» – state, economy and society as separated historical arenas with specific and distinct sets of rules, investigated as disjointed and parted domains – as a scientific object and objective of any historical social inquiry. Immanuel Wallerstein, 2011 [1974], *The Modern World-system, vol. I. Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century*, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles: pp. 2-13; Immanuel Wallerstein, 1991, *Unthinking Social Sciences, The Limits of Nineteenth-Century Paradigms*, Polity Press, Cambridge: ch. 6.

¹⁴⁵ Immanuel Wallerstein, 1976, “From Feudalism to capitalism: Transition or Transitions?”, *Social Forces*, Vol. 55, N.2: p. 273. I cannot here explain extensively the terms employed by the scholar and their analytical implications. See in short Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System*, pp. 2-13; Immanuel Wallerstein, 2006, *World-System Analysis. An Introduction*, Duke University Press, USA: pp. 91-100

¹⁴⁶ Immanuel Wallerstein, 1974, 1980, 1989, 2011, *The Modern World-System, 4voll.* See Wallerstein's recap in Immanuel Wallerstein, 1983, *Historical capitalism*, Verso, London: pp. 7-74

¹⁴⁷ See Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System*, ch. 7 and Immanuel Wallerstein, *World-System Analysis. An Introduction*, pp. 7-74

¹⁴⁸ See ivi, ch. 7; Immanuel Wallerstein, *World-System Analysis. An Introduction*, ch. 2

¹⁴⁹ See Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System*, ch. 1

¹⁵⁰ Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System*, ch. 1 p. 18: western feudalism «is a series of tiny economic nodules whose population and productivity were slowly increasing, and in which the legal

mechanisms ensured that the bulk of the surplus went to the landlords who had noble status and control of the juridical machinery»

¹⁵¹ Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System*, p. 44. See p. 42: «In the long run, staples account for more of men's economic thrusts than luxuries. What western Europe needed in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries was food (more calories and a better distribution of food values) and fuel. Expansion into Mediterranean and Atlantic islands, then to North and West Africa and across the Atlantic, as well as expansion into eastern Europe, the Russian steppes and eventually Central Asia provided food and fuel. It expanded the territorial base of European consumption by constructing a political economy in which this resource base was unequally consumed, disproportionately by western Europe [...].Wheat was a central focus of new production and new commerce in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries». Cf. suggestions by Georges Lefebvre, 1956, “A Historian's Remarks on the Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism”, *Science & Society*, Vol. 20, No. 3: pp.241-246

¹⁵² Cf. Georges Lefebvre, *A Historian's Remarks*. The eminent French historian puts forth a brief but captivating and complex account by compounding together several factors: production, trade, state and society.

¹⁵³ Likewise to Brenner, and in a lesser extent to Dobb, also Hilton seems to falter on the role of trade: trade is a variable that «*must* be examined in the closest association with the investigation of changes in the mode of production», R. H. Hilton, 1952, “Capitalism-What's in a Name?”, *Past & Present*, N. 1: p. 39.

¹⁵⁴ Paul M. Sweezy and Maurice Dobb, *The Transition*, p. 143-144

¹⁵⁵ See for example Karl Polanyi, 2001 [1944], *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of our Time*, Beacon Press, Boston. In fact, even Sweezy supports such a line of reasoning in the end: «We are, I think, justified in concluding that while pre-capitalist commodity production was neither feudal nor capitalist, it was just as little a viable system in its own right. It was strong enough to undermine and disintegrate feudalism, but it was too weak to develop an independent structure of its own: all it could accomplish in a positive sense was to prepare the ground for the victorious advance of capitalism in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries», Paul M. Sweezy and Maurice Dobb, *The Transition*, p.153

¹⁵⁶ Sweezy's stance indeed focuses on the so called «system of production for the market», that is, a system premised on exchange relationships rather than productive relationships.

¹⁵⁷ See the previous bibliographical references

¹⁵⁸ Terence K. Hopkins and Immanuel Wallerstein, 1986, "Commodity Chains in the World-Economy Prior to 1800", *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)*, Vol. 10, N.1: pp. 156-170

¹⁵⁹ An in-depth critical examination of the "commercialization model" came from a later Brenner's article, Robert Brenner, *The Origins of Capitalist Development*

¹⁶⁰ Such question involves also dimensions that the original debate did not deal with explicitly. The debate was widened in a further strand of discussions launched by *Science and Society* in the 1980's: Roger S. Gottlieb, *Historical Materialism*; David Laibman, *Modes of Production*; Samir Amin, 1985, "Modes of Production, History and Unequal Development", *Science & Society*, Vol. 49, N. 2: pp. 194-207; Henry Heller, 1985, "The Transition Debate in Historical Perspective", *Science & Society*, Vol. 49, N. 2: pp. 208-213

¹⁶¹ Karl Marx, 1976, *Capital. A Critique of Political Economy, Vol. 1*, Penguin Books in association with New Left Review, Harmondsworth-NY: p. 875 and ch. 26 in general; see also Karl Marx, *Capital vol. 3*, ch. 47

¹⁶² Karl Marx, *Capital vol. 3*, ch. 20. It is well known that Marx talks of Holland as «the model capitalist nation of the seventeenth century» (Karl Marx, *Capital. Vol. 1*, p. 916). This claim was based also on the historical acknowledgement of the productive foundations of Holland that ensued from the industrial development of the middle ages *in junction* with trade. But, in the end, for Marx, the predominance of merchant capital, that is, the subordination of the industrial complex to the trading interests determined the failed "leap forward" to capitalist processes of production and a fully-fledged capitalist system of production and class relations *in Holland* (Karl Marx, *Capital vol. 3*, p. 446-451).

¹⁶³ An effective recap of Marx's theory of transition in Claudio J. Katz, 1993, "Karl Marx on the transition from feudalism to capitalism", *Theory and Society*, vol. 22: pp. 363-389

¹⁶⁴ Eric J. Hobsbawm, *The General Crisis*, p. 54.

¹⁶⁵ Cf. Eric J. Hobsbawm, *The Seventeenth Century in the Development*, p. 108: «the development of modern capitalism cannot be understood in terms of a single national economy or of the national economic histories taken separately, but only in terms of an international economy. [...] Broadly speaking, the capture of this entire world market- or most of it-by a single national economy or industry could produce the prospects of rapid and virtually unlimited expansion which the modest and confined capitalist manufacture of the period could not yet achieve itself, and thus make it possible for this modest

capitalist sector to break through its pre-capitalist limits. In other words, there was probably at this period not room in the European economy (including its colonies) for the initial industrialization of more than one country. Or, to put it another way round: a widespread simultaneous economic expansion everywhere in the advanced areas of Europe would probably have slowed down the preparation of industrial revolution»

¹⁶⁶ Immanuel Wallerstein, 1997, “Merchant, Dutch, or Historical Capitalism?”, *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)*, Vol. 20, N. 2: p. 254: «the only ideal proletariat is the semiproletarian», and this is the «dirty secret of capitalist exploitation» and survival. See extensively Immanuel Wallerstein, *Historical Capitalism*, pp. 13-46.

¹⁶⁷ Maurice Dobb, 1946, *Studies*, p. 195

¹⁶⁸ Sweezy mentions Holland only in his *The Theory of Capitalist Development* with no references to the question of “transition”. Paul M. Sweezy, 1962, *The Theory of Capitalist Development. Principle of Marxian Political Economy*, Dobson Books LTD, London: p. 296, 298.

¹⁶⁹ Robert Brenner, *Agrarian Class Structure*, p. 53

¹⁷⁰ Robert Brenner, 1976, The Agrarian Roots of European Capitalism, in T.H. Aston, H. E. Philip (ed.), *The Brenner Debate Agrarian Class Structure and Economic Development in Pre-Industrial Europe*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: pp. 319-320, 325-326. «By contrast, the English economy of the early modern period witnessed the gradual construction of mutually interdependent, mutually self-developing agricultural and industrial sectors at home», enabling to diverge the effect of Phase B in the second half of the seventeenth century to small or to the traditional sectors of the economy, like the cloth one. Indeed, «The appearance of an actual glut in grain production in these years, with accompanying lower prices, seems to have eased the effects of the cloth crisis and provided the basis for continuing growth» pp. 326-327.

¹⁷¹ P. Hoppenbrouwers, J. Luiten van Zanden (eds.), 2001, *The transformation of rural economy and society in the Low Countries (Middle Ages - 19th century) in light of the Brenner debate*, Brepsol. Earlier, van Zanden released an important theoretical-historical inquiry concerning a possible Dutch «third road to capitalism», J. Luiten van Zanden, 1993, *The Rise and Decline of Holland's Economy. Merchant Capitalism and The Labour Market*, Manchester University Press, Manchester-NY . See, *inter alia*, further perspectives in: Bas Van Bavel, 2007, “The Transition in the Low Countries: Wage Labour as an Indicator of the Rise of Capitalism in the Countryside, 1300–1700”, *Past and Present*, vol. 195: pp. 286-

303, and Bas van Bavel, 2010, “The Medieval origins of Capitalism in The Netherlands”, *Bijdragen en Mededelingen voor de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, vol. 125: pp. 45-80; Pepijn Brandon, 2011, “Marxism and the ‘Dutch Miracle’: The Dutch Republic and the Transition-Debate”, *Historical Materialism*, vol. 19, N. 3: pp. 106-146; Catharina Lis and Hugo Soly, 1997, “Different Paths of Development: Capitalism in the Northern and Southern Netherlands during the Late Middle Ages and the Early Modern Period”, *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)*, Vol. 20, N. 2: pp. 211-242. For an overall historical overview on early modern capitalism see Maarten Prak (eds.), 2001, *Early Modern Capitalism Economic and social change in Europe, 1400–1800*, Routledge, London-NY; See also valuable critiques in William H. Hagen, 1988, “Capitalism and the Countryside in Early Modern Europe: Interpretations, Models, Debates”, *Agricultural History*, Vol. 62, N.1: pp. 13-47; Charles Tilly, 1983, “Flows of Capital and Forms of Industry in Europe, 1500-1900”, *Theory and Society*, Vol. 12, N.2: pp. 123-142

¹⁷² Summed up in Jan De Vries, 2001, *The Transition to Capitalism in a Land Without Feudalism*, in P. Hoppenbrouwers, J. Luiten van Zanden (eds.), 2001, *The Transformation of Rural Economy and Society in the Low Countries (Middle Ages - 19th century) in light of the Brenner Debate*, Brepols: pp. 67-84

¹⁷³ Jan De Vries, 1973, “On the Modernity Of The Dutch Republic”, *The Journal of Economic History*, Vol. 33, N. 1: p. 198. See Jan De Vries and Ad van der Woude, 1997, *The First Modern Economy. Success, failure, and perseverance of the Dutch economy, 1500-1815*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: pp. 27-32

¹⁷⁴ De Vries and Ad van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, p. 161 ; see, also, *ivi*, pp.159-195

¹⁷⁵ Jan De Vries, 1974, *The Dutch Rural Economy in the Golden Age, 1500-1700*, Yale University Press, New Haven: pp. 119-121, and Jan de Vries, *The Transition to Capitalism*, pp 77-80

¹⁷⁶ See, more recent, Pepijn Brandon, *Marxism and the ‘Dutch Miracle*, and the concept of «urban-agrarian symbiosis», pp. 121-125

¹⁷⁷ See Jan De Vries, *The Transition to Capitalism in a Land*, pp. 81-82 and Jan De Vries and Ad van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, p. 207

¹⁷⁸ J. Luiten van Zanden, 2001, A third road to capitalism? Proto-industrialization and the moderate nature of the late medieval crisis in Flanders and Holland, 1350–1550, in P. Hoppenbrouwers, J. Luiten van Zanden (eds.), 2001, *The Transformation of Rural Economy and Society in the Low Countries (Middle Ages - 19th century) in light of the Brenner Debate*, Brepols: pp.85-101. Such insight is a later refinement of van Zanden’s thesis in J. Luiten van Zanden, *The Rise and Decline of Holland's Economy*

¹⁷⁹ J. Luiten van Zanden, *The Rise and Decline of Holland's Economy*, p. 31: «The process of commercialisation was made possible through two more or less coincidental circumstances: the availability of large surpluses of grain outside Holland – especially in Northern Germany and the Baltic – and the proximity of a flourishing market for relatively luxurious livestock products in the large, prosperous cities in the Southern Netherlands»

¹⁸⁰ Ivi, 30-31: «The farmers in Holland were virtually forced to shift to cattle farming [and dairying] and/or to the extensive cultivation of summer grains, since it became impossible to cultivate bread grain (outside the clay areas and the dunes). This *forced* transition [...] definitively closed off the prospect of subsistence farming for Holland's peasants»

¹⁸¹ J. Luiten van Zanden, *A third road to capitalism?*, p. 91. J. Luiten van Zanden, *The Rise and Decline of Holland's Economy*, p. 32 «The fact that Holland's population did not die out or emigrate when agricultural livelihoods virtually disappeared, must undoubtedly be attributed to the successful development of these non-agricultural activities»

¹⁸² J. Luiten van Zanden, *A third road to capitalism?*, p. 89

¹⁸³ J. Luiten van Zanden, *The Rise and Decline of Holland's Economy*, p. 4, 8. In other words, engagingly van Zanden combines capitalist accumulation by way of “non-capitalist” exploitation of labor. See p. 109: «We must conclude that the superiority of proto-industry, with its lower wages and its greater flexibility in the supply of labour, results from the link between agrarian activities and industrial (side) activities in the "peasant's" family business. By virtue of this link, the wage paid to labour in proto-industry could lie structurally beneath the reproduction costs of labour»

¹⁸⁴ J. Luiten van Zanden, *A third road to capitalism?*, p. 90, 97.

¹⁸⁵ See J. Luiten van Zanden, *The Rise and Decline of Holland's Economy*, pp. 35-40. Process of urban concentration was linked, for van Zanden, to the ecological crisis and the commercialization of lands. «As a result, part of the rural population was forced to look for work elsewhere or to develop other activities. Holland's rapid urbanisation after 1350 must be seen in this context», J. Luiten van Zanden, *The Rise and Decline of Holland's Economy*, p. 31. Cf. outstanding Bas J. P. van Bavel and J. Luiten van Zanden, 2004, “The jump-start of the Holland economy during the late-medieval crisis, c.1350–c.1500”, *Economic History Review*, Vol. 57, N. 3: pp. 503–532

¹⁸⁶ in fact van Zanden puts great (although not unique) emphasis on the level of nominal wages in eroding profit. To van Zanden, the deadline was 1670 ca. J. Luiten van Zanden, *The Rise and Decline of Holland's Economy*, pp. 29-40, 103-140, 17..

¹⁸⁷ See also, Peter Hoppenbrouwers, 2001, Mapping an unexplored field. The Brenner debate and the case of Holland, in P. Hoppenbrouwers, J. Luiten van Zanden (eds.), 2001, *The Transformation of Rural Economy and Society in the Low Countries (Middle Ages - 19th century) in light of the Brenner Debate*, Brepsol: pp. 41-66

¹⁸⁸ see for the concept of political accumulation Robert Brenner, 1976, The Agrarian Roots of European Capitalism, in T. H. Aston and C. H. E. Philpin (ed.), *The Brenner Debate Agrarian. Class Structure and Economic Development in Pre-Industrial Europe*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: pp. 236-242; and Robert Brenner, 1976, Agrarian Class Structure and Economic Development in Pre-Industrial Europe, in *ibid.*: p. 55-56

¹⁸⁹ Robert Brenner, 2001, "The Low Countries in the Transition to Capitalism", in *Journal of Agrarian Change*, Vol. 1, N. 2: pp. 173-188, republished in P. Hoppenbrouwers, J. Luiten van Zanden (eds.), 2001, *The Transformation of Rural Economy and Society in the Low Countries (Middle Ages - 19th century) in light of the Brenner Debate*, Brepsol: pp. pp. 275-338

¹⁹⁰ See for such region ...

¹⁹¹ Robert Brenner, *The Low Countries in the Transition*, p. 209. See p. 218: «Dutch owner-operator agriculturalists did not, then, freely choose to embark on the road to capitalism. They were coerced to do so, both coerced to become farmers and coerced to act like farmers. They were forced into market dependency by their forced separation from the means of subsistence under the pressure of ecological degradation. They were impelled by their subjection to productive competition, which resulted from their market dependence, to invest so as to specialize in order to survive»

¹⁹² Ivi, p. 210: «The fact remains that in the initial phases of the agrarian transformation probably a majority of the farmers were unable to muster sufficient levels of productivity to secure a full living on the basis of their dairy and livestock (or summer grain) production. They were therefore obliged to take up a wide variety of additional, complementary pursuits in their ample free time in order to make ends meet, including shipbuilding, freshwater fishing, brickmaking and the like. It cannot be over-stressed, however, that these were all, in keeping with their market dependence, commercially oriented, not subsistence-oriented»

¹⁹³ Ivi, 206-ff.

¹⁹⁴ Ivi, 195-196

¹⁹⁵ Ivi, 209-213

¹⁹⁶ Ivi, p. 230-233

¹⁹⁷ Cf. an harsh, pertinent, and from my standpoint, correct critique offered by Tom Brass, 2011, *Labour Regime Change in the Twenty-First Century*, Brill, Leiden-Boston: ch. 3, esp. pp. 86-90, 101-103, concerning the nationally-self-contained development of capitalism, the relationship between capitalist relations of power and re/production and «archaic» relations of power and re/production, and the relationship between systemic capital and national capital in a local context of «semi-feudal» structure and relations of production and exchange.

Chapter 2

¹ Peter J. Taylor, 2005, Dutch Hegemony and Contemporary Globalization, in Jonathan Friedman, Christopher Chase-Dunn (eds.), *Hegemonic Decline: Present and Past*, Routledge, London-NY: p. 118. Cf. Michael Mann, 1993, *The Source of Social Power, vol. II*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: pp. 59-63. Mann defines infrastructural power as a top-down process. Here infrastructural power is to be understood, in brief, as *the* organization of power which is both and at once a top-down and bottom-up process and which is of course inherent in the concept of trialectic we see below.

² “Trialectic” is a term first encountered in Jason Moore, 2017, “The Capitalocene Part II: accumulation by appropriation and the centrality of unpaid work/energy”, *The Journal of Peasant Studies*: pp. 1-37, although contextualized and employed for different – but not so distant – aims

³ Robert Gilpin, 1988, “Theory of Hegemonic War”, *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, Vol. 18, No. 4: pp. 591-613

⁴ IR is an extremely variegated ensemble of approaches and perspectives involving different premises, methods and epistemologies. About hegemony in IR, a cartography of the several approaches has been essayed. See Andreas Antoniadou, 2008, *From ‘Theories of Hegemony’ to ‘Hegemony Analysis’ in International Relations*, paper presented at 49th ISA Annual Convention, Panel: Hegemony, Security, and Defense in IR, San Francisco. For a detailed exploration of IR as academic subject, structure and history,

see Chris Brown and Kirsten Ainley, 2005, *Understanding International Relations*, Palgrave, Houndmills: ch. 1-3

⁵ Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye, 2012 [1977], *Power and Interdependence*, Longman, London; Robert Keohane, 1984, *After Hegemony. Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy*, Princeton University Press, Princeton. Robert Cox, 1983, "Gramsci, Hegemony and International Relations: An Essay in Method", *Millennium - Journal of International Studies*, vol. 12: pp.162-175; Robert Cox, 1987, *Power and Production. Social forces in the making of history*, Columbia University Press, NY. Robert Gilpin, 1987, *War and Change in World Politics*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge; Robert Gilpin, 1988, "The theory of hegemonic war", *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, Vol. 18, N. 4: pp. 591-613. G. John Ikenberry and Charles A. Kupchan, 1990, "Socialization and hegemonic power", *International Organization*, Vol. 44, N. 3: pp 283-315.

See, *inter alia*, John Agnew, 2005, *Hegemony. The new shape of global power*, Temple University Press: ch. 1-2. See also Mark Rupert, 1995, *Producing Hegemony. The politics of mass production and American global power*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: ch. 1-3, for an engaging map of perspectives on hegemony in literature

⁶ Hans Morgenthau, 1948, *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, Knopf, New York: pp.13-27 and Part III.

⁷ Kindleberger, 1986, *The World in Depression: 1929-1939*, University California Press, Berkeley: ch. 14; Kindleberger, 1996, *World Economic Primacy: 1500 to 1990*, Oxford University Press, Oxford: ch. 1. Kindleberger, 1981, "Dominance and Leadership in the International Economy: Exploitation, Public Goods, and Free Rides", p. 247. Ivi, p. 253: «the danger we face is not too much power in the international economy, but too little, not an excess of domination, but a superfluity of would-be free riders, unwilling to mind the store, and waiting for a store keeper to appear. [...] without a stabilizer, the system in my judgment is unstable». The collective goods version exposed in such essay assumes that all countries would benefit from the hegemonic framework of power. In the absence of a hegemon, they are in fact unable to achieve the common interest because of the institutional and strategic obstacles. The hegemonic lead intermeshes instead the strategy and the operations of the states towards collective goods.

Cf. the recent and enhanced reformulation of such perspective – although under the rubric «empire» – in Niall Ferguson, 2001, *The Cash Nexus. Money and Power in the Modern World, 1700-2000*, Basic Books, New York

⁸ C.I. consists of three general features: multiple issues, multiple channels of contact among societies, and inefficacy of military force for most policy objectives. Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye, *Power and Interdependence*, pp. 19-25, p. 37.

⁹ Robert Keohane, *After Hegemony*, pp. 35-54, 136-138, 184

¹⁰ Antonio Gramsci, 1971, *Selection from the Prison Notebooks*, International Publisher, NY: pp. 57-58. Benedetto Fontana, 1993, *Hegemony and Power On the Relation between Gramsci and Machiavelli*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis-London, among others, elaborated on Gramsci's Hegemony. He engagingly extols the widest notion of Gramscian *egemonia* as «the formulation and elaboration of a moral-intellectual and cultural conception of the world, whose elaboration throughout society transforms it into a way of life and a form of practice characteristic of an entire people». In this context, the state plays a peculiar role: «As a result, the state acquires an ethical content that transforms its repressive, class nature into one perceived as moral and universal. Thus the Gramscian state cannot rest on pure force; violence and coercion must always be mediated by the legitimating moments of consent and persuasion», p. 160 and 144.

By contrast, Perry Anderson, 1976, "The Antinomies of Antonio Gramsci", *New Left Review*, 100: pp. 5-78, elaborates on the contentious nature of the Gramscian hegemony, tracking down three forms of hegemony in Gramsci and their mutual repugnancy. Cf. Peter D. Thomas, 2009, *The Gramscian Moment. Philosophy, Hegemony and Marxism*, Brill, Leiden: ch. 2, 5-6

¹¹ Cox argues that hegemony as dominant mode of production on world scale *emerges out* of a web of manifold production relations systematized within national structures, linked each other by variegated and uneven power relationships. The qualitative difference in world orders' structure emanates from the form of state and of production which becomes hegemonic and therefore defines the world structure of accumulation, namely, the world hierarchy of power and production relations. In this inter-national system, production in one country becomes connected to the production of another country by way of networks and processes of the world economy to form «world systems of production». The state is the structural nodule within such web of world relations – which constitutes the international organization – and vector whereby the development of a specific structure of production relations becomes dominant and legitimate within a world order. The relationships among the states are patterned after the hegemon's structure of production relations, whose nature is defined by the class structure of its own. As a result, world hegemony's structure becomes the projection of the class structure and power, and the uneven

propagation thereof in space. The class structure in turn is patterned after the peculiar social relations of production that constitute it, which are «accumulated social power that determines the nature of production, the structure of authority as model by the internal dynamics of the production process, and the distributive consequences». The nature of the social relations of production defines thus the configuration of a social group involved in the process of power and production whose pattern is determined by the degree and the nature of power deployed within the process itself – the «power relation of production». Such hegemonic national and world infrastructure is the springboard through which hegemony comes established. Robert Cox, *Power and Production*, pp. 1-15, 17-34, 105-109.

¹² Robert Cox, *Gramsci, Hegemony*, pp. 171-173

¹³ Robert Cox, *Power and Production*, p. 106

¹⁴ See what Cox elegantly stated in a roundtable discussion at the Annual Convention of the International Studies Association (ISA) held in Washington, D.C. March 28-April 1, 1994, concerning the hegemony: «What is the nature of hegemony in the sense in which I use it? The problematic of hegemony is located in the overlapping and interactive structures of society, economy, culture, gender, ethnicity, class, and ideology which can be constitutive of and sustain political authorities. So I use hegemony here as a quality of the whole, not just a relationship among the parts. Dominance and subordination are relationships of the parts, and dominance is inherent in hegemony. But hegemony is more than dominance. Hegemony is a form in which dominance is obscured by achieving an appearance of acquiescence to this whole as if it were the natural order of things. So dominance is there, but it is less visible when we speak of hegemony. To press the point a little further, hegemony is an internalized coherence which has most probably arisen from an externally imposed order but has been transformed into an intersubjectively constituted reality». Robert Cox et al., 1990, “Hegemony and Social Change”, *Mershon International Studies Review*, Vol. 38: p. 366

¹⁵ Robert Gilpin, *War and Change*, p. 54. The more such systemic gap is ample, the more a world hegemony materializes itself in time and space. But Gilpin does not afford any systematic analysis and explanation of the *dynamics* that *gives rise to* such differential superiority. Given such an advantage, the scholar maintains, the state will be able to tap systemic opportunities and contradictions to advance its own interests and dominate the international relations.

¹⁶ Ivi, pp. pp. 54-105: Gilpin notes the remarkable influence of the «environmental factors and the modification of these factors» in the decision of a state to challenge whatever constituted order, both

modern and pre-modern; Gilpin says that such a decision is to be linked with the structural arrangements internal to the state and the societal mechanism for distributing benefits and costs to uphold the decision itself and to undertake overt action. Both environment factors and domestic mechanism impinge on the willingness and the opportunity as well as the capability of a state to challenge the international order. The state will be able to gain its hegemony within a scenario compounded by the favorable intermix of the two set of variables.

¹⁷ Ivi, p. 185

¹⁸ Ivi, p. 157: «once an equilibrium between the costs and benefits of expansion is reached, the tendency is for the costs of maintaining the status quo to rise faster than the capacity to finance the status quo. [...] it becomes more difficult to generate sufficient revenues to cover the protection costs, and the protection costs themselves increase over time. As a consequence of the increasing costs of protection and the decreasing benefits of empire or hegemony, the preservation of the status quo becomes even more difficult, and the international system enters a state of disequilibrium»

¹⁹ Ivi, p. 185-187, pp. 197-203, 210; Robert Gilpin, *The Theory of Hegemonic war*, pp. 601-603.

²⁰ Cf. reviews of Gilpin's landmark book in G. John Ikenberry (eds.), *Power, Order, and Change in World Politics*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

²¹ John Ikenberry and Charles A. Kupchan, *Socialization and hegemonic power*, p. 283

²² Ivi, 283-287

²³ Ivi, 209-292

²⁴ George Modelski, 1978, "The Long Cycle of Global Politics and the Nation-State", *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 20, N. 2: pp. 214-235; George Modelski, 1987, *Long Cycles in World Politics*, McMillan Press, Houndmills. Joshua Goldstein, 1988, *Long Cycles: Prosperity and War in the Modern Age*, Yale University Press, New Heaven-London. Giovanni Arrighi, 1990, "The Three Hegemonies of Historical Capitalism", *Review*, Vol 13, N. 3: pp. 365-408; Giovanni Arrighi, 2010 [1994], *The Long Twentieth Century Money, Power, and the Origins of Our Times*, Verso, London-NY; Giovanni Arrighi and Beverly J. Silver, 1999, *Chaos and Governance in the Modern World System*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis-London. Immanuel Wallerstein, 2011 [1980], *The Modern World-System, II. Mercantilism and the Consolidation of the European World-Economy 1600-1750*, University of California Press, Berkeley; Immanuel Wallerstein, 1983, "The Three Instances of

Hegemony in the History of the Capitalist world-economy”, *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*, vol. 24, N. 1-2: pp. 100-108

²⁵ Modelski conceptualizes the structure of the world as layered. It comprises three systemic levels. The widest one is the world system: «World systems are social systems constituted by states and processes of social interaction of the human species. The concept of 'world system' is an answer to the questions: How much, and what kind of, social interaction and institutionalisation is there when the world is looked upon *as a whole*? [...] The world system is a device for viewing the world's social arrangements as *a totality* [...]». In Modelski's theory, the so-called global system comprises and is defined by the *entire* set of human interactions put into play at global level instead: «it is a system of diverse interactions that attends to vital problems of international security and economic relations» as instance. In turn, the global polity, termed also as global political system, is defined by the *political* run of global interactions . All of three are partially differentiated in functions but utterly integrated, George Modelski, *Long Cycles in World Politics*, pp. 17-28

²⁶ George Modelski, *Long Cycles in World Politics*, pp. 144-160, 220-225; George Modelski, *The Long Cycle of Global Politics*, pp. 230-232: we have empirical evidences «for positing a basic association between nation-states and world power. [...] The nation-state proved to be the only organization capable of spearheading and then sustaining large operations at long distances and on a global scale. [...]. The nation-state mobilized the resources and also supplied the coherence, motivation and strength of purpose required for such extraordinarily ambitious and far-flung enterprises. [A] process of diffusion was thus initiated, [and it] was the universalization of this form of political organization as the most viable and most obviously desirable at the intermediate level. Not only were those major powers who competed among themselves selected out as nation-states, but they also became models for the whole world to imitate, irrespective of needs, special conditions or requirements»

²⁷ George Modelski, *The Long Cycle of Global Politics*, p. 214; George Modelski, *Long Cycles in World Politics*, p. 7-8: «The global political system (or, for short, the global polity) is a functionally specific set of relationships concerned with a defined range of problems, those attendant upon the organised pursuit of collective action at the global level. It is a management network centred on the relationship between a lead unit and the contenders for leadership»

²⁸ George Modelski, *The Long Cycle of Global Politics*, p. 217

²⁹ Gilpin sees hegemonic war as climax of the escalation of competition and emulation which rounds off a hegemonic cycle of power. But, of course, the end of a cycle is the inception of a new one.

³⁰ George Modelski, *Long Cycles in World Politics*, pp. 36-38

³¹ George Modelski, *The Long Cycle of Global Politics*, p. 217. The association between nation-states and world power runs the other way also: «Global power, in its turn, strengthened those states that attained it relatively to all other political and other organizations. What is more, other states competing in the global power game developed similar organizational forms and similar hardness: they too became nation-states. [...] A process of diffusion was thus initiated, and its third stage (after globalization and contestation) was the universalization of this form of political organization as the most viable and most obviously desirable at the intermediate level. Not only were those major powers who competed among themselves selected out as nation-states, but they also became models for the whole world to imitate, irrespective of needs, special conditions or requirements», *ibid.*

³² «Leadership cannot be viewed solely or primarily as a display of power or a manifestation of superiority; it must be seen more essentially as the accomplishment of essential services that give impetus and example to the global polity and, eventually, to the entire world system. What are these services? They are, in respect of global politics: (i) agenda formation, (ii) mobilisation, (iii) decision-making, (iv) administration, and (v) innovation», George Modelski, *Long Cycles in World Politics*, pp. 14-15

³³ i.e. the XV-XVI century incipient global system came organized to quench the thirst of gold and spices; the XIX century order was essentially structured, Modelski says, for example upon oil and cotton, and so forth

³⁴ George Modelski, *The Long Cycle of Global Politics*, pp. 226-230; George Modelski, *Long Cycles in World Politics*, pp. 227-228. Moreover, Modelski provides, but does not delve into, the overall features of a global power under the rubric of «factors of world leadership», *ivi*, pp. 220-225

³⁵ Joshua Goldstein, *Long Cycles*, p. 6. In his groundbreaking book, Goldstein provides an engaging, fresh and comprehensive synthesis concerning the academic debate upon hegemony and long cycles. See Joshua Goldstein, *Long Cycles*, Part I, esp. ch. 5

³⁶ *Ivi*, pp. 5-7

³⁷ *Ivi*, pp. 1-20

³⁸ *Ivi*, p. 288

³⁹ *Ivi*, p. 287

⁴⁰ Ivi, p. 281

⁴¹ See the splendid account about Arrighi's argument for a structurally-variant capitalism made by Jason Moore – an Arrighi's pupils – in Jason Moore, 2011, "Ecology, Capital and the Nature of our Time. Accumulation and Crisis in the Capitalist World-Ecology", *Journal of World-System Research*, Vol. 17, N. 1: esp. pp. 118-126

⁴² Giovanni Arrighi, *The Three Hegemonies*, p. 365-366.

⁴³ Ivi, p. 367-368

⁴⁴ Giovanni Arrighi and Beverly J. Silver, *Chaos and Governance*, pp. 26-27, Giovanni Arrighi, *The Three Hegemonies*, p. 368

⁴⁵ Arrighi's perspective is theoretically and historically phased in qualitatively differentiated, temporally different but overlapping and intertwined cycles of accumulation and power: systemic cycles of accumulation and hegemonic cycles are his cases. Giovanni Arrighi, *The Long Twentieth Century*, pp. 5-11, p. 89: «Systemic cycles of accumulation are defined here as consisting of a phase of material expansion followed by a phase of financial expansion promoted and organized by the *same* agency or group of agencies». The systemic cycle of accumulation comprises the bout of a hegemonic cycle, but it is analytically differentiated because premised on the investigation of the capitalist processes of capital accumulation at world-systemic level (regime of accumulation) rather than an investigation in state complexes of power properly (world hegemony). The first account is posited in Giovanni Arrighi, *The Long Twentieth Century*; the second in Giovanni Arrighi and Beverly J. Silver, *Chaos and Governance*. In fact, in Arrighi's scheme, any hegemonic cycle historically intertwines with the other, but any hegemonic cycle is preempted by the longer systemic cycle of accumulation – that intertwines with the next one in turn – which sorts out the capitalist arrangements of power on which the next hegemony will be premised. Roughly, the agencies and structures leading a systemic cycle will be the ones that will constitute the future hegemonic bloc.

When I talk of "systemic cycles of power accumulation, change and expansion" I refer to both systemic cycle of accumulation and hegemonic cycle at one time. In their historical twine lies the history of the modern world system.

⁴⁶ Along with the two book already cited, the last and boldest Arrighi's volume on the lineages of the twenty-first century power – Giovanni Arrighi, 2007, *Adam Smith in Beijing. Lineages of the Twenty-First Century*, Verso, London – rounded off more than 25 years of organic research – from his arrival at

Binghamton in 1979 to his death in 2009. Here we can only put forth the outlines of such an extraordinary perspective.

⁴⁷ Giovanni Arrighi and Beverly J. Silver, *Chaos and Governance*, pp. 26-36; Giovanni Arrighi, *The Long Twentieth Century*, p. 95

⁴⁸ From the perspective of systemic cycle of accumulation, the conjunctural shift signals the impact of competitive expansion and pressures on systemic processes of accumulation and it is accompanied by the ensuing conjunctural restructuring and reorganization of networks of capitalist accumulation, from being *mostly* premised on processes of value material production to being mostly premised on processes of financial accumulation. Within any cycle, the conjunctural world-systemic reorganization which ensues is heralded by the so-called «signal crisis» that marks the shift from a condition of systemic «material expansion» – in which an hegemony rises – to a condition of systemic «financial expansion» – in which a hegemony *tends* to decline. Giovanni Arrighi, *The Long Twentieth Century*, pp. 219-246

⁴⁹ «Systemwide financial expansions are the outcome of two complementary tendencies: an overaccumulation of capital and intense interstate competition for mobile capital», Giovanni Arrighi and Beverly J. Silver, *Chaos and Governance*, pp. 31-32

⁵⁰ Giovanni Arrighi and Beverly J. Silver, *Chaos and Governance*, pp. 33, 272

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ivi, pp. 33-34.

⁵³ The overall phases of development are deployed by the intertwining of systemic cycles of accumulation and of hegemonic cycles, between and with each other

⁵⁴ That is, a regime of accumulation on world scale. Giovanni Arrighi, *The Long Twentieth Century*, pp. 10

⁵⁵ Arrighi explores the relationship between the territorial logic of power and the capitalist logic of power, the dialectic of capitalism and territorialism, but he does not *directly* link the issue with the problem of the hegemony. Giovanni Arrighi, *The Long Twentieth Century*, pp. 179-218

⁵⁶ Regardless, we can appreciate Arrighi-Wallerstein's dialectic, general similarities and differences in the hegemonic function to the analysis of the capitalist world-economy through the following quotation. *From their systemic vantage point*, both interpretations are in fact interlocked, mutually completing, and explicative in their junction: «Hegemony is a critical mechanism in the functioning of the modern world-system. The cycles of hegemony are crucial markers in the cyclical rhythms of the capitalist world-

economy. In a sense, it is the rise and fall of the hegemonic powers that prevented the transformation of the world-economy into a world-empire – something that had happened regularly before the creation of the modern world-system. *The mechanism of hegemony allowed the modern world-system to become the first world-economy in the history of humankind to survive, flourish, and expand to encompass the entire globe.* Without it, capitalism as a historical system would not have been able to survive, and thereby to transform the world», Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System II*, p. xxvii, italics added. In short: whereas the American student emphasizes the necessity of hegemony if the world-economy is to survive, the Italian student stresses the necessity of hegemony to the historical change of the world-economy.

⁵⁷ Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Three Instances of Hegemony*, p. 107

⁵⁸ Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System II*, p. 113. In this sense, Wallerstein has been unfairly charged of Smithian circulationism. Class struggle is crucial to the world-system, both national and world-systemic.

⁵⁹ *ivi*, p. 38

⁶⁰ *Ivi*, p. 70, 113: «Class struggles in a capitalist world-economy are complex affairs and appear sinuously under many guises. [...] a state's strength correlates with the economic role of the owner-producers of that state in the world-economy; but if these assertions are not to be mere tautologies, we must have some independent *political* measures of this strength. We suggest five possible such measures: the degree to which state policy can directly help owner-producers compete in the world market (mercantilism); the degree to which states can affect the ability of other states to compete (military power); the degree to which states can mobilize their resources to perform these competitive and military tasks at costs that do not eat up the profits (public finance); the degree to which states can create administrations that will permit the swift carrying out of tactical decisions (an effective bureaucracy); and the degree to which the political rules reflect a balance of interests among owner-producers such that a working "hegemonic bloc" (to use a Gramscian expression) forms the stable underpinnings of such a state. *This last element, the politics of the class struggle, is the key to the others*». These features, and their different amalgam, represent elements promoting or stymieing the formation and the development of a proper agro-industrial bloc and its degree of efficiency.

⁶¹ The "Smithian" Dutch Republic seized the hegemony «*primarily* because no other country showed such a coherent, cohesive, and integrated agro-industrial production complex»⁶¹. Furthermore, «The

technological advances of previous centuries were precisely one of the key factors in Dutch agro-industrial efficiency», in Holland. Ivi, 66

⁶² Ivi, p. xxiii-xxvii: such process «doesn't have just two moments in time (rise and fall) but, by analogy with how Schumpeter conceived of Kondratieff cycles, four moments in time» that are: the moment of the slow decline of the hegemonic power, «during which two powers emerge as contenders for the succession»; the moment the absolute decline in which the balance of power in the world-system materializes. The third moment is the order breakdown the world war starts; the fourth moment is the rise of the new hegemony.

⁶³ Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Three Instances of hegemony*, p. 101, italics added

⁶⁴ Ivi, p. 105, italics added

⁶⁵ Ivi, pp. 106-108. Cf. Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System II*, p. xxiii

⁶⁶

⁶⁷ Hannah Arendt, 1979, *The Origin Of Totalitarianism*, A Harvest Book Harcourt Brace & Company, San Diego-New York-London. Such reasoning has been retrieved by David Harvey and then by Giovanni Arrighi, but to account respectively for Imperialism and the world expansion of the capitalist *system*, in David Harvey, 2003, *The New Imperialism*, Oxford University Press, Oxford; Giovanni Arrighi, *Adam Smith in Beijing*, pp. 222-234

⁶⁸ Hannah Arendt, *The Origin Of Totalitarianism*, pp. 131-132

⁶⁹ Ivi, p. 137, italics added

⁷⁰ Henri Lefebvre,

⁷¹ Hannah Arendt, *The Origin Of Totalitarianism*, p. 137

⁷² Theodore K. Rabb, 1975, *The struggle for stability in early modern Europe*, Oxford University Press, Oxford; Jan de Vries, 1978, *The Economy of Europe in an Age of Crisis, 1600-1750I*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge. As Guy Bois in general asserts: the expansion of capitalism has to be treated «as a by-product of the socio-economic functioning of the feudal system as a whole; it should not therefore be studied in isolation, but in the context of the overall development of European feudalism, the various elements of which are indissolubly linked. [...] Variations in both *the age and the degree of maturity* of the feudal system in one place as compared with another probably play a leading and certainly a very complex role *in the rhythms* which then affect the emergence and development of the capitalist structures», Guy Bois, 197, Against the Neo-Malthusian Orthodoxy, in T.H. Aston, H. E. Philip (ed.),

The Brenner Debate Agrarian Class Structure and Economic Development in Pre-Industrial Europe, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: pp. 114-115

⁷³ Immanuel Wallerstein, 2011 [1974], *The Modern World-system, vol. I. Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century*, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles; Charles Tilly (eds.), 1975, *The Formation of National States in Western Europe*, Princeton University Press, Princeton

⁷⁴ Hannah Arendt, *The Origin Of Totalitarianism*, p. 142

⁷⁵ Robert Brenner, 1976, The Agrarian Roots of European Capitalism, in T. H. Aston and C. H. E. Philpin (ed.), *The Brenner Debate Agrarian. Class Structure and Economic Development in Pre-Industrial Europe*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: pp. 236-242; and Robert Brenner, 1976, Agrarian Class Structure and Economic Development in Pre-Industrial Europe, in *ibid.*: p. 55-56: the centralized state was to develop at least in large part, «as an independent extractor of the surplus, in particular on the basis of its arbitrary power to tax the land [...]. The state could develop, as it ultimately did, as a competitor with the lords, largely *to the extent* to which it could establish rights to extract the surplus [...]"political accumulation" [is therefore] the build-up of larger, more effective military organization and/or the construction of stronger surplus-extracting machinery»

⁷⁶ «Absolutism was *essentially* just this: a redeployed and recharged apparatus of feudal domination [and] it was the new political carapace of a threatened nobility. It was a State founded on the social supremacy of the aristocracy and confined by the imperatives of landed property [whose] the irreducibly feudal character of Absolutism remained. It was a State founded on the social supremacy of the aristocracy and confined by the imperatives of landed property. [...]. No 'political' derogation of the noble class ever occurred in the Absolutist State. Its feudal character constantly ended by frustrating and falsifying its promises for capital [...].», Perry Anderson, 1974, *Lineages of the Absolutist State*, NLB, London: pp. p. 18, 41-42. To account for the uneven development of capitalism and the uneven unfolding of absolutist process of power formation see Michael Hechter and William Brustein, 1980, "Regional Modes of Production and Patterns of State Formation in Western Europe", *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 85, N. 5: pp. 1061-1094

⁷⁷ Ivi, p. 143, Italics added

⁷⁸ we can add that such «"progressive" ideology» was nothing but the heir of something else. Liberalism, the emblem of the nineteenth century and "progressive" corpus of ideas which the Great Britain embodied

and put forward world-wide by way of an ensemble of politics, economy, philosophy, science and empire, was nothing but the next in line to the corpus of beliefs which drove Dutch expansion and gave substance to the operations and strategy of the Republic. The Dutch “ideology” was encrusted in the «Grotian Moment» that historically provided propellant (a general model) to the next English combustion.

⁷⁹ Karl Polanyi, 2010 [1944], *The Great Transformation: the political and economic origins of our time*, Beacon Press, Boston

⁸⁰ Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*, pp. 75-76, 137

⁸¹ Ivi, pp. 75-76, italics added

⁸² Ivi, pp. 76-79

⁸³ Fernand Braudel, 1992, *Civilization and Capitalism, 15th-18th Century, Volume II The Wheels of Commerce*, Book Club Association, London: pp. 225-229

⁸⁴ Fred Block and Margaret S. Somers, 2014, *The Power of Market Fundamentalism. Karl Polanyi's Critique*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge: pp. 91-95

⁸⁵ Cf. Mark Granovetter, 1985, “Economic Action and Social Structure: The Problem of Embeddedness”, *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 91, N. 3, pp. 481-510

⁸⁶ Fernand Braudel, 1979, *Afterthoughts on Material Civilization and Capitalism*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore: p. 53; ivi, pp. 112-113: «capitalism is the perfect term for designating economic activities that are carried on at the summit, or that are striving for the summit. As a result, large-scale capitalism rests upon the underlying double layer composed of material life and the coherent market economy; it represents the high-profit zone».

⁸⁷ Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*, pp. 70-71, 60

⁸⁸ Fernand Braudel, *Afterthoughts*, p.63-64. In the end, my interpretation of Polanyi's thought overlaps Braudel's final articulation and conclusive statement on capitalism. But what overlaps is concept not history. What the Industrial Revolution brought on was an intensification and a radical penetration to the grassroots of society of the same process of embeddedness world-wide.

⁸⁹ I termed such bout of historical formation four centuries long as Dutch regional cycle of power formation and accumulation.

⁹⁰ See Giovanni Arrighi and Beverly Silver, *Chaos and Governance*; see also Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System II*, ch. 2

⁹¹ Fernand Braudel, *Afterthoughts*, pp. 64-65, italics added

⁹² To be sure, the qualification of “unlimited” must be embedded in the factual conditions of human development in a given moment of time, and thus contextualized as a function of means and resources historically available

⁹³ David M. Gordon, Richard Edwards and Michael Reich, 1994, Long swings and stages of capitalism, in David M. Kotz, Terrence McDonough and Michael Reich (eds.), *Social structures of accumulation: the political economy of growth and crisis*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: p. 13. Contrary to the SSA theorists however, the social environment in which accumulation takes place is here integral to capitalism and the processes of capital accumulation as well. Cf. *ivi*, pp. 14-16

⁹⁴ And it is mere precondition because «capitalist economic growth is not simply economic growth in the abstract. A critical feature of the specifically capitalist accumulation process is that it takes place in an environment of conflict. This is not accidental; capitalist relations of production and exchange generate conflict», David M. Kotz, 1994, Interpreting the social structure of accumulation theory, in David M. Kotz, Terrence McDonough and Michael Reich (eds.), *Social structures of accumulation: the political economy of growth and crisis*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: p. 54

⁹⁵ This is another way to express what I have previously said about the *source* of a *world* hegemony, that is the inner framework of institutional-economic and socio-ecological *patterned* relations of power, production and exchange. In so doing, hegemonic world expansion in the capitalist world system is to be understood as premised on a *patterned complex* of power relations which is the hegemon’s structure of power and embodies the source of the world hegemony in the modern world system.

⁹⁶ Jason Moore, 2017, “The Capitalocene Part II: accumulation by appropriation and the centrality of unpaid work/energy”, *The Journal of Peasant Studies*: pp 28-30. See Terence Hopkins in a note on hegemony. His focus is of course on the world-system as a whole, but nonetheless it is interesting calling him forth to stress the relation between state and capital in the modern world-economy, a stress that seems appropriate for it tends to connect Polanyi with Arendt and Braudel as here construed: «The capitalist world-economy as organizing system was brought during British hegemony to global “dominion”, though exactly what this metaphor implies remains to be sketched. All other systems of livelihood were either eliminated, crippled, and made dependent on the capitalists' accumulation of capital, or driven into the hills and there fenced-in as "reservations" (enclosures). The effective reach (penetration?) of capitalism as morality, however, versus the system's reach situationally, remains an open question for many peoples of Africa and Asia. (That is, however, another matter.) And British hegemony,

as "moment," ensconced the institutions of, inter alia, industrialization, interstate free trade (as opposed to interstate mercantilism), and a world currency standard. [...]. Let us assume that the interstateness and stateness (central authority plus civil society) that came into historical being during Dutch hegemony, and then was spread as idea and practice globally during British hegemony, were not "superstructure" to capitalist accumulation of capital but instead mechanisms (of rule) integral to the organizing process of capitalist world-economy as historical social system. Then, erosions of stateness/interstateness would be erosions of capitalist accumulation». Terence K. Hopkins, 1990, "Note on the Concept of Hegemony", *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)*, Vol. 13, N. 3: p. 410

⁹⁷ Henri Lefebvre ; cf. Cf. Jason Moore, 2017, "The Capitalocene Part II: accumulation by appropriation and the centrality of unpaid work/energy", *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, p. 11-12

⁹⁸ Cf. Alain Lipietz, 1987, *Mirages and Miracles: the Crises of Global Fordism*, Verso, London: pp. 14-15 ; cf. David M. Kotz, *Interpreting the social structure of accumulation*, p. 55. Cf. Jason Moore, 2017, "The Capitalocene Part II: accumulation by appropriation and the centrality of unpaid work/energy", *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, p. 21, about the difference between the «capitalist project» and the capitalist «historical process» thereof.

⁹⁹ See Michael Mann, 1987, *The Source of Social Power, vol. I*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: pp. 1-32

¹⁰⁰ Cf. David M. Gordon 1980, Stages of Accumulation and Long Economic Cycles, in Terrence Hopkins and Immanuel Wallerstein (eds.), *Processes of the World System*, Sage Publications, Beverly Hills

¹⁰¹ Stephen A. Resnick and Richard D. Wolff, 1987, *Knowledge and Class, A Marxian Critique of Political Economy*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago-London: p. 88

¹⁰² Immanuel Wallerstein, 1991, *Unthinking Social Sciences. The Limits of Nineteenth-Century Paradigms*, Polity Press, Cambridge: p. 264, 242. Or, put it differently, power develops because «conditions for capital accumulation *have become institutionalized*. In other words, these conditions become established not just as the current policy of the [state, or of a bold entrepreneur]; rather, they become embedded in the society's institutional structure», David M. Gordon et al., *Long swings and stages of capitalism*, p. 18

¹⁰³ See John Ruggie, 1983, "Continuity and Transformation in the World Polity: Toward a Neorealist Synthesis", *World Politics*, Vol. 35, N. 2: p. 275; cf. Giovanni Arrighi, *The Three Hegemonies*.

¹⁰⁴ We can also rephrase this assertion by using David Held's framework to understand democracy. Held asserts that modern democracy should be conceptualized and historicized as a «double-sided phenomenon: concerned, on the one hand, with the reform of state power and, on the other hand, with the restructuring of civil society. This entails recognizing the indispensability of a process [...] called 'double democratization': the interdependent transformation of both state and civil society», David Held, 1992, 1992, "Democracy: From City-states to a Cosmopolitan Order?", *Political Studies*, vol. 40: p. 20. By the same token, I understand here capitalism as the movement to reform state power and the restructuring of civil society. Capitalism entails therefore an interdependent transformation of both state and civil society turned under the logic of capital accumulation. I named such transformational process "interlocking embeddedness".

¹⁰⁵ See an example in Giovanni Arrighi, *The Long Twentieth Century*; Giovanni Arrighi and Beverly J. Silver, *Chaos and Governance*

¹⁰⁶ Marjolein 't Hart, 2014, *The Dutch Wars of Independence Warfare and Commerce in the Netherlands 1570–1680*, Routledge, London-NY: p. 6

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Jason Moore, 2017, "The Capitalocene Part II: accumulation by appropriation and the centrality of unpaid work/energy", *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, p. 10

¹⁰⁸ That is, the strongest states in the course of the absolutist process of state-making based on the high density and/or intensity of militarized coercion concentration

¹⁰⁹ Patrick O'Brian, 2009, State formation and the construction and maintenance of institutions for economic growth in the west and the east, 1415–1846, in Wolfram Elsner and Hardy Hanappi, *Varieties of Capitalism and New Institutional Deals. Regulation, welfare and the new economy*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: for instance p. 60, sums up the widespread inefficiency and incapacity of the European absolutist state structures to developing, before the 19th century, an apposite bureaucratic-fiscal infrastructure. See the classic overview in Douglass North and David Thomas, 1973, *The rise of the Western world. A new economic history*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: for example p.120. Michael Mann, *The Source of Social Power*, pp. 513-514: the conflict within society «became focused on the fiscal extraction process of inefficient *ancien regime* states, struggling to withstand the military presence of their more advanced rivals». See Ch. 1 Part I

¹¹⁰ See ch. 1 Part I (notes notably). The basic problem in the process of state-making was, as we have seen in the previous chapters, to cope with the «composite» nature of the early modern society in Europe. As

summarized by O'Brian in Patrick O'Brian, *State formation and the construction*, p. 56: «The 'Trajectory' towards 'centralization' (proceeding falteringly along diverse routes at different speeds across the continent within political arenas of embryo nations loosely governed by Weberian state in the making) is a history marked by varying degrees of stronger and weaker opposition from estates, aristocracies, urban oligarchies, churches, and other networks of power. Constrained by historically embedded centrifugal forces, rulers of Europe's feudal politics constructed and reconstructed several types of state [...]». Cf. De Vries who have a different perspective, in Jan de Vries, 1976, *The Economy Of Europe In An Age Of Crisis*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: p. 242-243.

¹¹¹ C. J. Boogman, 1982, The Union of Utrecht: its genesis and consequences, in J. C. Boogman (eds.), *Van spel tot Spelers: Verspreideopstellen*, The Hague: pp. 53-82. Such a secret was retained also by England, the next hegemony, in a more balanced relationship of power between locality and centrality, or, in Tilly's word, capital and coercion. In the context, and according to the state technology headway, of the XVIII-XIX century, a more balanced structure, not entirely centralized *and* not entirely localized, was the proper compromise to recreate the structural condition for a new, different hegemony, in a new and different historical context, national and systemic. In Tilly's, such balancing resulted in the historical passage from pure capital-intensive state power to capitalized-coercive state power.

¹¹² Cf. Charles Tilly, 1990, *Coercion, capital, and European States, 990-1990*, Basil Blackwell, Cambridge: pp. 30, 18-30. See p.17: «Capitalists, then, are people who specialize in the accumulation, purchase, and sale of capital. They occupy the realm of *exploitation*, where the relations of production and exchange themselves yield surpluses, and capitalists capture them».

¹¹³ Indeed, «[...] Holland constructed and managed the bureaucracies, departments and complex organizations required to raise revenues, solve problems, preserve stability and deliver arrays of public goods, including external security, that promoted economic growth sooner and more efficiently than [all the] others», Patrick O'Brian, *State formation and the construction*, p.61. But we probe such an assertion in the next historic chapter. This is the nub of the great work by Marjolein 't Hart, *The Making of a Bourgeois State*

¹¹⁴ I would like to suggest what I mean for both *in the context of a capitalist world system*, with no pretension of completeness of course. Very shortly: "concentration" is accumulation of *eco-financial* power by means of organic expansion of trade, industry, finance and agriculture in nature; "centralization" is accumulation of *political-economic* power by way of concentration. Both together

embody the *overt* facet of the hegemony. Their inter-twine is however outcome of an internal coherence which allows to breed and to project the hegemonic power outward.

¹¹⁵ That is, limits to Dutch capital, to Dutch state and to Dutch society – resilience to change – along with external shocks – rival competition and competitors’ political-institutional and socio-economic and military innovation. In short: system development. See in general Giovanni Arrighi, *The Long Twentieth Century*, ch. 2; Giovanni Arrighi and Beverly J. Silver, *Chaos and Governance*; Jason Moore, 2011, “‘Amsterdam is Standing on Norway’ Part I: The Alchemy of Capital, Empire and Nature in the Diaspora of Silver, 1545–1648, Part I-II”, *Journal of Agrarian Change*, Vol. 10 N. 1-2: pp. 33-68; pp. 188-227.

¹¹⁶ We could use Brenner’s apt words, but deconstructing them of their traditional Marxist significance inherent in his own view. Such an enforcement mechanism is so described in other words: «It is only a [mechanism] which is organized so that the accumulation of capital via innovation is enforced by the very structure of the social productive relations that can turn an accrual of potentially productive resources from outside to the service of economic development», Robert Brenner, 1978, “The Origins of Capitalist Development: A Critique of Neo-Smithian”, *New Left Review*, vol. 104: p. 67.

Chapter 3

¹ David S. Landes, 1969, *The unbound Prometheus; Technological change and industrial development in Western Europe from 1750 to the present*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: pp 20.

² Charles Tilly, 1989, “Cities and States in Europe, 1000-1800”, *Theory and Society*, Vol. 18, N. 5: pp. 583-584

³ Braudel, 1979, *Afterthoughts on Material Civilization and Capitalism*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore: p. 110. See what Michael Mann, 1987, *The Source of Social Power, vol. I*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: p. 375, says talking of transition: «we cannot equate this specific economic transition with the entire movement of European history. The capitalist mode of production, like all modes of production, is an ideal type, an abstraction. If capitalism came to dominate in *actual* social life, it was not likely to be as pure as the definition might imply. Like all modes of production, it required force, political institutionalization, and ideology, and its requirements were likely to result in compromise forms of social organization. To explain the rise of capitalism – indeed, of feudalism – we must trace the

interrelations of all four principal organizations of power: economic, military, political, and ideological. [...]. In view of this it seems unwise to use them [feudalism or capitalism] as general designations of either medieval or modern Europe. The process of European dynamism is *not* the transition from feudalism to capitalism», emphasis added

⁴ Cf. Giovanni Arrighi, 2010 [1994], *The Long Twentieth Century Money, Power, and the Origins of Our Times*, Verso, London-NY : pp. 5-11, p. 89

⁵ See important Michael Perleman, 2000, *The invention of capitalism*, Duke University Press, Durham, NC and Tom Brass, 2011, *Labour Regime Change in the Twenty-First Century*, Brill, Leiden-Boston. For the current reality, see variant in David Harvey, 2003, *The New Imperialism*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

⁶ Karl Marx, 1976, *Capital. A Critique of Political Economy, Vol. 1*, Penguin Books in association with New Left Review, Harmondsworth-NY: pp. 899-900; *ivi*, p. 134, quotation of William Petty, 1667, *Treatise of Taxes and Contributions*; published anonymously, London: p. 47. Cf. Michael Perleman, *The invention of capitalism*, ch. 2 and Tom Brass, *Labour Regime Change*, ch. 5. See Jason Moore, *The Capitalocene Part II*,

⁷ Quoted in Michael Perelman, *The invention of capitalism*, p. 74

⁸ Braudel, *Afterthoughts on*, p. 74

⁹ The former of ecological and socio-economic sort, the latter of political-institutional kind. Here I am to investigate factors and vectors *internal* to Dutch space. But to understand history, spatially-located vectors and factors should be always interlocked with *systemic* vectors and factors. See partially ch.1 in Part I; and, for a general rundown, Rich and Charles Wilson, 1977, *The Cambridge Economic History of Europe. The Economic Organization of Europe, vol. IV*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge; Theodore K. Rabb, 1975, *The Struggle for in Early Modern Europe*, Oxford University Press, Oxford. Immanuel Wallerstein, 1974-1980, *The Modern World-System, Vol. 1-2*; Giovanni Arrighi, *The Long Twentieth Century*; Giovanni Arrighi and Beverly J. Silver, 1999, *Chaos and Governance in the Modern World System*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis-London

¹⁰ Cf. Jason W. Moore, 2016, The Rise of Cheap Nature, in Jason W. Moore (ed.), *Anthropocene or Capitalocene? Nature, History, and the Crisis of Capitalism*, PM Press, Oakland: p. 101; see Jan Bieleman, 2009, *Five centuries of Farming A short history of Dutch agriculture 1500-2000*, Wageningen Academic Publishers, The Netherlands: p. 49: «At the end of the 16th century wheat yields, for instance,

had already reached a level that would only be improved significantly again in the second half of the 19th century. Recently, it has been established that in between, for a period of more than one and a half centuries, the crop yields varied from a minimum of 15 to a maximum of 25 hl/ha, or approx. 1,150 to 1,900 kg/ha». Jason Moore, *The Capitalocene Part II*, p. 28: «The shift from land productivity to labor productivity revealed a new law of value. It crystallized through a double dialectic. The first was premised on exploitation: abstract social labor/capital and wage-labor; the second, on appropriation: abstract social nature/capital and unpaid work. Through capitalization, labor productivity advances with the rising value composition of production; through appropriation, labor productivity advances by seizing Cheap Natures, reducing the value composition of production and advancing the rate of profit. If profitability is to rise, appropriation must advance faster – geographically and demographically – than exploitation».

¹¹ Jessica Dijkman, 2011, *Shaping Medieval Markets. The Organisation of Commodity Markets in Holland, c. 1200–c. 1450*, Brill, Leiden-Boston: pp. 234-235, 248-249, 270, 344. The rate of urbanization in the 16th century ranged from 45 to 55 per cent, Bas J. P. Van Bavel, 2006, “Rural wage labour in the sixteenth century Low Countries: an assessment of the importance and nature of wage labour in the countryside of Holland, Guelders and Flanders”, in *Continuity and Change*, vol. 21, N. 1: p.39; and Bas J. P. van Bavel and J. Luiten van Zanden, 2004, “The jump-start of the Holland economy during the late-medieval crisis, c.1350–c.1500”, *Economic History Review*, Vol. 57, N. 3: pp. 503, 505; Ivi, p. 505-506, table 1 for population: from 210.000 in 1300ca. to 400.000 in 1500ca. Cf. Peter C. M. Hoppenbrouwers, 2001, Town and Country in Holland, 1350-1550, in S. R. Epstein (eds.), *Town and Country in Europe, 1300-1800*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: p. 57

¹² Such a historical upshot has been explained also by the fact that Holland remained a frontier economy and a virgin ecology into the thirteen century, a fact that would link the feudal weakness with the ensuing structure of Holland economy, Bas J. P. van Bavel and J. Luiten van Zanden, *The jump-start of the Holland*. cf. H.P.H. Jansen, 1978, Holland's Advance, in H.P.H. Jansen (eds.), *Acta a Historiae Neerlandicae. Studies on the History of the Netherlands*, Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, Netherlands: p. 16

¹³ Jan Luiten van Zanden and Bas van Leeuwen, 2012, “Persistent but not consistent: The growth of national income in Holland 1347–1807”, *Exploration In Economic History*, vol. 49: p. 128. «Growth was persistent: the Holland economy shows remarkable resilience in this respect; it goes through a number of crises, due to harvest failures and dramatic decline of arable yields between 1370 and 1440, the Revolt

and the following civil war between 1572 and 1609, and the increased competition by its neighbors (from 1650s onwards), but it manages to adapt its economic structure and to resume its growth path after each successive crisis [...]. Apparently, this economy was able to adapt successfully to the situation of labor scarcity that emerged after 1348, and developed the right institutions and incentives to transform itself in a highly successful 'high wage economy', capable of generating positive trend growth». Jan de Vries, 1993, The labour markets, in Karel Davids and Leo Noordegraaf (eds.), *The Dutch Economy in the Golden Age*, NEHA, Amsterdam: p. 69, against van Zanden's account explored in chapter 1

¹⁴ Michael Mann, *The Source of Social Power*, p. 374. See p. 399: accordingly, in this respect, "capitalism" «is not a matter of how people acquired their own private resources from more communal "feudal" institutions, but rather a matter of how a few preserved them *through changing circumstances* – to appear eventually as "capitalists" – and of how the mass of the population lost their property rights to appear eventually as landless laborers»

¹⁵ C. J. Zijlenderdijn, 2009, *Medieval Capital Markets. Markets for Renten, State Formation and Private Investment in Holland (1300–1550)*, Brill, Leiden-Boston: pp. 27-70, 270-271: «The counts owed much of their success to reclamation of the peat region, a large, virtually uninhabited marshy area where independent lords and clerics had never gained control. When colonists had settled on the land, the counts could create a society very similar to a territorial state; the settlers answered directly to the counts, and paid taxes to them»; Bas van Bavel, 2010, *Manors and Markets: Economy and Society in the Low Countries, 500–1600*, Oxford University Press, Oxford: as instance p. 392: «His position became based on taxes and military service, not on manorial properties, personal connections, or arbitrary levies. This laid the basis for a modern-type relationship between prince and people, almost like that between state and citizen, without personal or feudal elements». Cf. Peter C. M. Hoppenbrouwers, *Town and Country in Holland*, p. 78

¹⁶ Jessica Dijkman, *Shaping Medieval Markets*, ch. 4 and 10; the scholar, pp. 347-349, avers the «near absence of urban coercion over the countryside»; Jan de Vries and Ad van der Woude, 1997, *The First Modern Economy. Success, failure, and perseverance of the Dutch economy, 1500-1815*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: ch. 11, and pp. 509-510: country and towns for the most «achieved a sort of symbiosis, or formed an economic continuum»; Jan de Vries, 2001, The transition to capitalism in a land without feudalism, in P. Hoppenbrouwers, J. Luiten van Zanden (eds.), *Peasants into Farmers?: The Transformation of Rural Economy and Society in the Low Countries (Middle Ages - 19th Century)* in

Light of the Brenner Debate: pp. 80-82: «a crucial achievement [...] was the avoidance of a polity of urban exploiters»; The instinct was present but came to be checked, both by the territorial lord and towns' competition: Marjolein 't Hart, 2001, *Town and Country in the Dutch Republic 1550-1800*, in S. R. Epstein (eds.), *Town and Country in Europe, 1300-1800*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: p. 84: «the high density of towns meant that urban [political] control over the countryside was strongly contested. Coercive moves by one town could always be hindered or mitigated by the actions of another. What is more, inter-urban rivalries involved several centres at the same time»; she talks of deep «rural-urban integration» through markets, p. 87, see p. 92; Marjolein 't Hart, 2014, *The Dutch Wars of Independence Warfare and Commerce in the Netherlands 1570–1680*, Routledge, London-NY: pp. 118-122 and finally Wantje Fritschy, 2017, *Public Finance of the Dutch Republic in Comparative Perspective The Viability of an Early Modern Federal State (1570s-1795)*, Brill, Leiden-Boston: p. 88. Such development was stimulated by the late occupation of land also, Bas J. P. van Bavel and J. Luiten van Zanden, *The jump-start of the Holland*: pp. 503–532; Bas van Bavel, 2011, “Markets for land, labor, and capital in northern Italy and the Low Countries, twelfth to seventeenth centuries”, *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, Vol. 41: p. 530.

Cf. Peter C. M. Hoppenbrouwers, *Town and Country in Holland*, pp. 64-69; 76-79.

¹⁷ Cf. extraordinary S. R. Epstein, 2000, *Freedom and Growth. The rise of states and markets in Europe, 1300–1750*, Routledge, London-NY

¹⁸ C. J. Zijlenderdijn, *Medieval Capital Markets*, pp. 185 and 191: the local structure of public power were «pivotal points of economic exchange [and] agents of institutional change [processed predominantly] as a bottom-up phenomenon»; pp.183-223. Summary p. 199: « In Holland the gap between legislation and economy was small. Economic elites had a large say in local government; together with sheriffs, they were responsible for legislation and institutional change. Both government agents and economic elites were likely to participate», and pp. 223-225

¹⁹ Among others: Douglass C. North, 1974, “Institutional Change and Economic Growth”, *The Journal of Economic History*, Vol. 31, N.1 : p. 3; Robert D. Putnam with Robert Leonardi and Raffaella Y. Nonetti, 1993, *Making democracy work: civic traditions in modern Italy*, Princeton University Press, Princeton: ch. 6; Daron Acemoglu, Simon Johnson, James Robinson , 2005, Institutions as the fundamental cause of long-run growth, in Philippe Aghion and Steven N. Durlauf (eds.), *Handbook of*

Economic Growth, Eslevier: pp. 388-396; Sheilagh Ogilvie, 2007, "Whatever is, is right"? Economic institutions in pre-industrial Europe", in *Economic History Review*, Vol. 60, N. 4: pp. 649–684

²⁰ Van Bavel and Van Zanden, *The jump-start*; Bas van Bavel, *Manors and Markets*, pp. 85-89. An instance: «[...] More important was probably the specific pattern of urbanization in Holland, where – in contrast to the southern Low Countries – urban giants were absent. The effects are highlighted in the process of standardisation of herring casks in the early 15th century, initiated by the Holland herring towns. *The driving force was clearly economic necessity*: customers abroad demanded uniformity. [...]. Again, stricter regulation of rural weights and measures was in the first place a reaction to economic circumstances: rural trade had expanded and direct links with interregional trade networks had developed. [All of this] is closely related to the specific balance of powers that characterised Holland's society», Jessica Dijkman, *Shaping Medieval Markets*, pp. 234-235.

²¹ Bas van Bavel, *Manors and Markets*, p. 60. Cf. Peter C. M. Hoppenbrouwers, *Town and Country in Holland*, pp. 69-75. See, interestingly, Michael Mann, *The Source of Social Power*, p. 413, italics added: «The transition that saw Europe leap forward was not primarily the late-medieval transition from feudalism to capitalism. *That process was largely the institutionalization of a leap* that had occurred much earlier, in the period that only our lack of documentation leads us to label the Dark Ages. By A.D. 1200 that leap, that dynamic, was already taking western Europe to new heights of collective social power». The institutionalization of the leap largely happened in Holland's region, as we shall see with a significant level of depth.

²² See summarize in Bas van Bavel, *Markets for land, labor, and capital*, p. 510: «Proof and accessibility of registration in a central, public place greatly enhanced transparency and security for potential buyers, including villagers. The same procedure [of the land transactions] was increasingly applied to transactions in the capital market, such as the registration of new mortgages and the selling of real-estate rents by a public court, thus protecting people from unexpected rent burdens on land that they had bought. It also reduced both insecurity and cost, conferring an equal position on all of the participants, both urban and rural». C. J. Zuijderduijn, *Medieval Capital Markets*, p. 204: «The contracts public bodies drew up and ratified were formalized and embedded in an extensive legal framework». Cf. Jessica Dijkman, *Shaping Medieval Markets*, pp. 249-271 and C. J. Zuijderduijn, *Medieval Capital Markets*, pp. 185-188 and ch. 5, esp. pp. 200-225; for non-local orders of formalization of activities see *ivi*, pp. 65-67. In the end, it is

tenable to say that «The institutional framework that the public sector created allowed for an increasing accumulation of capital», *ivi*, p. 274

²³ Jessica Dijkman, *Shaping Medieval Markets*, ch. 4 for the case of fish and dairy sectors and the positive impact of the institutions on transaction costs – to quantify cf. ch. 8; ch. 6 to assess the whys of such institutional set of rules; see C. J. Zuijderduijn, *Medieval Capital Markets*, pp. 200-223 for capital and land markets. To summarize, the whys are: to control market dynamics (against monopolies for example); to control quality and quantity of productions and exchanges of capital, goods and land; to check the problem of free-riding and the informational asymmetry issue; related to all, for a more accurate fiscal policy. Such a set of operations was largely a local affair in Holland. Institutional drivers in Holland trailed off transaction cost effectively. Openness was also a feature of the market structure in Holland. Popular savings investment was a consequence of the distinctive institutional structure of Holland, *ivi*, p. 240, 247.

²⁴ Peter Hoppenbrouwers and J. L. van Zanden, 2001, Restyling the transition Brenner debate Holland, in P. Hoppenbrouwers, J. Luiten van Zanden (eds.), *Peasants into Farmers?:* pp. 22-26, 36, according to whom, within a proper institutional framework and conditions, such as the Dutch ones, «commercialisation and specialization may therefore be a self-reinforcing process», in urban and rural areas alike; Bas van Bavel, *Manors and Markets*, p. 393. So, Jessica Dijkman, *Shaping Medieval Markets*, p. 321-324, reckons the urban labor devoted to market-oriented activities, non-agrarian and agrarian combined, from 82 to 90% for the towns with less than 2,000 inhabitants, 90 to 95% for the towns with 2,000 to 10,000 inhabitants, and 95 to 100% for the largest towns. The market orientation of the urban sector as a whole can thus be estimated at 88 to 94% in the middle of the 14th century and 92 to 97% around 1500. In the end, it is tenable to say that «around the year 1500 between 87% and 94% of the *total labour input of Holland's population* was devoted to the production of commodities and the provisioning of services through the market».. See Daron Acemoglu, Simon Johnson, James Robinson, *Institutions as the fundamental cause*, pp. 395-396. Such theoretical perspective fits the Dutch path of advancement.

²⁵ Jan de Vries, 1976, *The Economy Of Europe In An Age Of Crisis*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: pp. 25-29. See for the institutional foundation of Holland's international trades, Oscar Gelderblom, 2013, *Cities of Commerce. the institutional foundation of international trades, 1250-1650*, Princeton University Press, who witnessed, and thereby buttressed, the consideration aforementioned

about the institutional framework of Holland. His focus is on Amsterdam's international connections and her institutional scaffolding that propelled accumulation.

²⁶ C. J. Zijlenderduijn, *Medieval Capital Markets*, recap p. 184-185. See Jessica Dijkman, *Shaping Medieval Markets*, as instance Ch. 4 and pp. 347-349 in short; Bas van Bavel, *Manors and Markets*, p. 101: the town-country correlation pivoted on «the purchasing power of urban dwellers enhanced by the services they provided in religion, administration, industry or trade». Cf. Peter C. M. Hoppenbrouwers, *Town and Country in Holland*, pp. 60-64: «the late medieval rural economy was already highly commercialized. Villages both gained and lost from the development of denser and more complex market networks. They gained from lower transaction costs and improved opportunities to specialise, but they lost because commercial integration also increased the towns' reach into the economy of the countryside» as we shall see. Their linkage was also owed to the process of integration of markets, by way of the «uniform institutional framework». A limited example of homogeneity is offered by «the small differences in nominal wage between town and country», Bas van Bavel, *Markets for land, labor, and capital*, 525-526. See in general S. R. Epstein, 1994, "Regional Fairs, Institutional Innovation, and Economic Growth in Late Medieval Europe", *The Economic History Review*, Vol. 47, N. 3: pp. 459-482 .
See below

²⁷ Michael Mann, *The Source of Social Power*, p. 412

²⁸ Jessica Dijkman, *Shaping Medieval Markets*, notably ch. 4 and 6; J. Luiten van Zanden, 2001, A third road to capitalism? Proto-industrialization and the moderate nature of the late medieval crisis in Flanders and Holland, 1350–1550, in P. Hoppenbrouwers, J. Luiten van Zanden (eds.), esp. p. 89; Jan de Vries and Ad van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, ch. 11; Marjolein 't Hart, *Town and Country*, p. 87, ad p. 92 talks of «high degree of *institutionalised* bargaining between town and country which resulted overall in a relatively pacific relationship», italics added; Marjolein 't Hart, *The Dutch Wars of Independence*, pp. 118-122.

²⁹ C. J. Zijlenderduijn, *Medieval Capital Markets*, pp. 269-280 and Jessica Dijkman, *Shaping Medieval Markets*; Jan de Vries and Ad van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, ch. 11 and Jan de Vries, *The transition to capitalism in a land*, p. 81; Bas van Bavel, *Manors and Markets*, pp. 393-394 and Bas van Bavel, *Markets for land, labor, and capital*, p. 530.

³⁰ cf. Charles Tilly, 1990, *Coercion, capital, and European states, AD 990-1990*, Blackwell, Oxford: pp. 47-53, and W.P. Blockmans, 1989, “Voracious states and obstructing cities; An aspect of state formation in preindustrial Europe”, *Theory and Society*, Vol. 18: 733-755.

³¹ Van Zanden and van Bavel explains also the capital-intensive structure of Holland economy by using the concept of «frontier economy». In short: in a frontier economy, labor is scarce and there is plenty of land. As a result wages go up and a counterbalancing strategy of the employers is to invest in capital-intensive technologies rather than in labor intensification. Van Bavel and Van Zanden, *The jump-start*, pp. 523-526

³² See Bas van Bavel, *Manors and Markets*, esp. p. 362-ff; Jessica Dijkman, *Shaping Medieval Markets*, p. 234 and C. J. Zijlenderduijn, *Medieval Capital Markets*, pp 184-185, 274-280.

³³ Jan Luiten van Zanden and Bas van Leeuwen, *Persistent but not consistent*, 127-128, pp. 119-130. The bout here questioned is indeed considered as «a period of very rapid structural change», p. 125; Jansen, *Holland's Advance*; Bas van Bavel, 2010, “The Medieval origins of Capitalism in the Netherlands”, in *Bijdragen en Mededelingen voor de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, 125: pp. 49-50, 53; Bas van Bavel, 2003, “Early Proto Industrialization in the Low Countries? The Importance and Nature of Market-Oriented Non-Agricultural Activities in the Countryside in Flanders and Holland, c. 1250 – 1570”, *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire*, Vol. 81 N.4: p. 1144; Jessica Dijkman, *Shaping Medieval Markets*, ch. 4 and C. J. Zijlenderduijn, *Medieval Capital Markets*, ch. 4. cf. Peter C. M. Hoppenbrouwers, *Town and Country in Holland*, pp. 62-63

³⁴ See Miachel Mann, *The Sources of Social Power*, p. 25

³⁵ The eminent Italian historian Ruggiero Romano avers that only within a proper tangle of urbanity and rurality, economy and society as a whole could grow and thrive, Ruggiero Romano, 1971, *Tra le due crisi. l'Italia del Rinascimento*, Einaudi Editore, Torino.

³⁶ J. Luiten van Zanden, 1993, *The Rise and Decline of Holland's Economy. Merchant Capitalism and The Labour Market*, Manchester University Press, Manchester-NY: p. 32. I further stress the centrality of semi-proletarianized labor for proto-industry, that is a productive process which assumes as internal to the moment of capital reproduction only part of the production cost. The other part of the labor cycle is appropriated, unpaid – the moment of workforce reproduction as instance. Cf. Jason Moore, “*Capitalocene*”

³⁷ Wage labor defined as «as economically dependent but legally free contractual labour», Bas van Bavel, 2006, “Rural wage labour in the sixteenth-century Low Countries: an assessment of the importance and nature of wage labour in the countryside of Holland, Guelders and Flanders”, *Continuity and Change*, Vol. 21, N. 1: p. 39; Bas van Bavel, 2007, “The Transition in the Low Countries: Wage Labour as an Indicator of the Rise of Capitalism in the Countryside, 1300–1700”, in *Past and Present* (2007), Supplement 2: pp. 286-303

³⁸ Bas van Bavel, 2010, *Manors and Markets*, pp. ; Bas van Bavel, *Early Proto Industrialization*, pp. 1155-1156, 1159-1160

³⁹ Bas J. P. van Bavel and J. Luiten van Zanden, *The jump-start of the Holland*, pp. 523-529. This was to make also Dutch industries more competitive on international markets; Kaijser, 2002; William H. TeBrake, 2002, “Taming the Waterwolf: Hydraulic Engineering and Water Management in the Netherlands during the Middle Ages”, *Technology and Culture*, Vol. 43, N. 3: pp. 475-499. Bert Groenwoudt, 2012, “Versatile Land, High Versus Low. Diverging Developments in the Eastern Netherlands”, Proceedings of the Latvian Academy of Sciences, section A, n. 66-3: pp. 54-69 (Proceedings 24th session of PECSRL); t’Hart;

⁴⁰ Bas van Bavel, *Markets for land, labor, and capital*, p. 514: «From 1580 to 1620, burgher landownership in Holland increased to 50 percent or more of the "old" land and probably 80 to 90 percent in the newly created polders [...]. But Holland was an exception in the Low Countries» it is very interesting to note that «In Holland, [urban ownership’s] fiscal effects were weak, since burgher landownership there, unlike in other parts of Western Europe, was not exempt from central territorial taxes, and burgher landowners were not favored over their rural counterparts». Jan Bieleman, *Five Centuries of Farming*, p. 15: «A highly urbanised country emerged and as the urban economies flourished they had a great impact on the surrounding countryside, affecting the rural community and stimulating all kinds of agrarian activities. As a result, in the midst of this towns-land a great variety of farming systems emerged, eventually developing successfully over some five centuries into highly productive agribusiness complexes»

⁴¹ When we talk of institutions and institutional-historical approach, the markets can be aptly described as « as sets of institutions: rules, customs, and practices that structure the exchange of goods», Jessica Dijkman, *Shaping Medieval Markets*, p. 15

⁴² Bas van Bavel, *Markets for land, labor, and capital*, p. 510

⁴³ Bas van Bavel, 2009, *Rural Development and Landownership in Holland, c.1400–1650*, in Oscar Gelderblom (ed.), *The Political Economy of the Dutch Republic*, Ashgate, England: p. 177-178; *ivi*, p. 184: «two factors contributed to this transformation: the growth of burgher landownership and the increased clarity in the specification of leasing arrangements»; p.174: «in Holland, by contrast[of the rest of Europe, the] overlapping claims and restrictions on the sale of land were virtually non-existent. The land market was transparent and open to all, and from no later than the fifteenth century onwards, land was often sold in public, with most auctions being announced clearly and properly after Sunday mass. The public auctions created ample possibilities for wealth owners to purchase land».

⁴⁴ Bas van Bavel, *Markets for land, labor, and capital*, p. 509: «A network of public courts arose in the countryside, partly formed under the influence of village communities. Parties increasingly preferred to transfer land, and to register the transaction, in a public court rather than in private, primarily because of the stronger legal security vis-à-vis third parties». C. J. Zijderduijn, *Medieval Capital Markets*, pp. 184-185: «Until the late Middle Ages, landowners had political influence, and as a result, transactions in the land market caused the local balance of power to change. This gave public bodies incentives to monitor such transactions, and therefore common law prescribed that transfers of land and the creation of real rights had to be made in public, in front of the gathered community. This custom gradually shifted from publicizing transactions in front of the entire community to ratification by the local court.² In Holland this ancient principle of common law was codified in the 1245 charter of Haarlem, and it can also be found in many other legal sources»

⁴⁵ Bas van Bavel, *The Medieval origins*, p. 57-58; Bas van Bavel, *Manors and Markets*, p. 167-170 and Bas van Bavel, 2003, *The land market in the North Sea area in a comparative perspective, 13th-18th centuries*, in S. Cavachiocci (Eds.), *Il mercato della terra secc. XIII-XVIII. Atti delle "Settimane di Studi" e altri convegni*, Firenze University Press, Prato: p. 131; Bas van Bavel, *Markets for land, labor, and capital*, p. 508. Bas van Bavel, *Rural Development*, p. 178: «authorities in Holland started to take action against claims of sub-letting or inheritance of leases. Edicts were promulgated stipulating high fines in the case of infringements or even corporal punishment. Authorities also required written lease contracts to state the termination date of the lease. This requirement gave landlords the necessary security to enter into lease contracts. The new edicts were effective. They were increasingly enforced as is demonstrated by the verdicts of courts and councils». C. J. Zijderduijn, *Medieval Capital Markets*, pp 65-ff

⁴⁶ Bas van Bavel, *Rural Development*, p. 180-186.

⁴⁷ Bas van Bavel, *The Medieval origins*, p. 57. See Bas van Bavel, *The Land market in the North Sea*; Bas van Bavel, *Manors and Markets*, pp. 393-405

⁴⁸ Bas van Bavel, *Rural Development*, p. 168 and esp. pp. 180-190. A recap in pp. 188-189: «In the end it was their greater wealth that enabled urban dwellers to seize the opportunities that a more commercialized and specialized agriculture had to offer. In the towns of Holland the development of trade and industry led to the accumulation of capital in the hands of wealthy burghers to a degree exceeding that in all other parts of Western Europe. The estimated wealth of the province increased from 10 to 12 million guilders in 1500 to as much as 500, or even 550, million guilders in 1650. In real terms the wealth per capita increased threefold during this period, and was concentrated in the cities». See Jan De Vries, 1974, *The Dutch Rural Economy in the Golden Age, 1500-1700*, Yale University Press, New Haven: pp. 127-136. Cf. regional variation in Bas Van Bavel, 2001, *Elements in the transition of the rural economy: Factors contributing to the emergence of large farms in the Dutch river area (15th-16th centuries)*, in P. Hoppenbrouwers, J. Luiten van Zanden (eds.): pp. 179-201; Peter Hoppenbrouwers, 2001, *Mapping an unexplored field. The Brenner debate and the case of Holland*, in P. Hoppenbrouwers, J. Luiten van Zanden (eds.): pp. 41-66.

⁴⁹ Bas van Bavel, *Early Proto Industrialization*, p. 1156. For market of capital, product and labor, Bas van Bavel, *Markets for land, labor, and capital*; Bas van Bavel, *Manors and Markets*, pp. 393-405. However, all of them were typified by high openness and flexibility and juridicial formalization also, compared with other countries – see Jessica Dijkman, *Shaping Medieval Markets*. An example of ample institutional meddling in the market dynamics in Richard W. Unger, 2001, *A history of brewing in Holland 900-1900: economy, technology and the state*, Brill, Leiden-Boston: esp. ch. and pp.

⁵⁰ Bas van Bavel, *Rural wage labour*, p. 37, 62, table 7; *ibid.*, p. 48: in the Guilder Rivers area as instance, «A good third of the labourer was contracted per year, a little less than a third per assignment and the rest per day. Part of the labour input in agriculture came from migrant labour, particularly in diking, harvesting, pollarding and planting willows, but also in such labour-intensive tasks as binding hops, transporting dung and sawing wood»

⁵¹ Bas van Bavel, *Markets for land, labor, and capital*, p. 527-528: « In Holland, farmers often combined work on their own holdings with wage labor elsewhere, mostly as part of a seasonal labor cycle. The large reservoir of wage laborers in the countryside contributed to the substantial workforce available for infrastructural works (including digging and diking) in both town and country»; Bas van Bavel, *Rural*

wage labour, p. 40: «there were wage labourers living as servants in households, often as part of their life-cycle, as well as peasants with smallholdings performing wage labour in order to supplement their income, and full proletarians completely dependent on wage labour»

⁵² Bas van Bavel, *Rural wage labour*, pp. 65;

⁵³ Ivi: «The only exception to the importance of wage labour in the Holland proto-industries was the hemp sector, where the cultivation and part of the processing were done by peasants who owned the land, the raw material and the cheap equipment»

⁵⁴ Bas van Bavel, *Early Proto Industrialization*, pp. 1152–61; Bas van Bavel, *Rural wage labour*, p.53: «An example is the bleaching sector, with the bleacheries owned mainly by urban merchants, leaving the exploitation to a manager and five men and women per bleachery, all of whom worked for wages»

⁵⁵ Bas van Bavel, *Rural wage labour*, p. 51, p. 54

⁵⁶ See note

⁵⁷ Jessica Dijkman, *Shaping Medieval Markets*, p. 125, 130; Bas van Bavel, *Rural wage labour*, pp. 53-54. Migrations along with seasonal hired was part and parcel of the diffusion process of waged relations: «The rise of migrant labour in Holland, which is often dated to the Golden Age, thus appears to have had much older roots, and to have been connected partly to the rise of proto-industrial sectors from the fourteenth century onwards», *ibid.* Jan Luiten van Zanden and Bas van Leeuwen, *Persistent but not consistent*, p. 125

⁵⁸ Michael Perelman, *The invention of capitalism*, pp.75-76, emphasis added

⁵⁹ In terms of nominal wages – Holland was generally, although unevenly in time and space of course, an «high wage economy» – and of ample extension of the proletarian layer. Bas J. P. van Bavel and J. Luiten van Zanden, *The jump-start of the Holland*; cf. different insight in Jansen, *Holland's Advance*, asserting the hypothesis according to which Holland was a low wage economy from the scanty effect of the Black Death. Indeed, «There are a number of reports about the low standards of pay of Holland sailors in the late Middle Ages», p. 19. But the hypothesis of the «frontier economy» advanced by van Bavel and van Zanden seems well founded, both theoretically and historically. Even more if we consider the previous van Zanden's thesis related to the importance of the semi-proletarian substratum for the development of Holland's economy.

⁶⁰ J. Luiten van Zanden, *The Rise and Decline*, pp. 8–12, 77–79, Bas J. P. van Bavel and J. Luiten van Zanden, *The jump-start of the Holland*, p. 513; See Immanuel Wallerstein, 1997, “Merchant, Dutch, or Historical Capitalism?”, *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)*, Vol. 20, N. 2: pp. 243-254

⁶¹ Cf. Jason Moore, *Capitalocene, Part II*, p. 16

⁶² J. Luiten van Zanden, *The Rise and Decline*; Bas van Bavel, *Rural Development*, pp. 188-189: «In the end it was their greater wealth that enabled urban dwellers to seize the opportunities that a more commercialized and specialized agriculture had to offer. In the towns of Holland the development of trade and industry led to the accumulation of capital in the hands of wealthy burghers to a degree exceeding that in all other parts of Western Europe. The estimated wealth of the province increased from 10 to 12 million guilders in 1500 to as much as 500, or even 550, million guilders in 1650. In real terms the wealth per capita increased threefold during this period, and was concentrated in the cities».

See also Jason Moore, *Capitalocene Part II*, esp. pp. 20-24, for the concept of capitalization and appropriation, both integral to the process of capitalist world expansion, inherent in both capitalist relations of reproduction and capitalist relations of nature’s commodification and appropriation. «There was no fundamental rupture between ‘early’ and ‘industrial’ capitalism’s logic [...]. While the consequences were unquestionably different, the relations of capitalization and appropriation were not. These relations were governed by a specifically modern law of value that gave primacy to labor productivity in the commodity sector. This value relation found its clearest expression in early capitalism’s great commodity frontiers», p. 30. Cf. Tom Brass, *Labour Regime Change in the Twenty-First Century*, ch. 1

⁶³ See Bas van Bavel, *Manors and Markets*, p. 375: «From the 14th century on, commercial success in urban industries was also found in Holland, which experienced the greatest extent of commercialization in the 16th-century Low Countries. Not only did Holland have an extremely high urbanization rate, with urban industries and services almost solely aimed at the market, but there was a strong proto-industrial sector to which the same applied, as well as highly commercialized agriculture. In total, probably far more than three-quarters of the total output of the Holland economy was aimed at the market».

⁶⁴ Michael Perelman, *The invention of capitalism*, p. 32, 35, p. 88. Central, ch. 2, 4-5. Even Marx would seem well acquainted with this fact according to Perelman.

In truth, *from this stand point, a shifting strategic balance among wage and non-wage in space and time seems to be one of the secrets of capitalism’s thriving on world scale – at local, regional and*

global level. The strategic balance avails to check an inherent contradiction typical of capitalism and which affected the Dutch – see J. Luiten van Zanden, *The Rise and Decline*. To the present purpose, this friction is so sketched out: «while increasing self-provisioning augments the maximum possible rate of exploitation, it can restrict the actual production of surplus value by making people cling even more tenaciously to their traditional employments. Consequently, the mass of surplus value may actually fall as the potential rate rises. [...] In reality, primitive accumulationists had to be careful in applying their policies. Excessive pressure could create an exodus from the subsistence sector capable of overwhelming the capacity to employ wage labor. Too little pressure could allow too many people to remain in the traditional sector to satisfy the demands of would-be employers», Michael Perelman, *The invention of capitalism*, p. 88, see also pp.113-116 . It is not so far-fetched to say that, the Dutch managed to reproduce such a strategic balance. For a systemic-level gaze, see Wallerstein, Moore, Beckert.

⁶⁵ Bas van Bavel, *Early Proto Industrialization in the Low Countries?*, p. 1143 . Van Zanden tells us that about 40 % of total labor input was in industry, 20 % in services, 15 % in fishing and peat digging, and only about 25 % in agriculture at the inception of 1500. Jan L. Van Zanden, 2002, “Taking the measure of the early modern economy: Historical national accounts for Holland in 1510/14”, in *European Review of Economic History*, Vol. 6, N.1: pp. 131-163. Cf. the project of taking national measures completed in Jan Luiten van Zanden and Bas van Leeuwen, *Persistent but not consistent*

⁶⁶ Bas van Bavel, *Early Proto Industrialization*, p. 1143; Bas van Bavel, *The Transition in the Low Countries*, p. 55. cf. Jessica Dijkman, *Shaping Medieval Markets*, p. 325, table 7

⁶⁷ Jan L. Van Zanden, 1993, Economic Growth in the Golden Age: The Development of the Economy of Holland, 1500- 1650, in Karel Davids and Leo Noordegraaf (eds.), *The Dutch Economy in the Golden Age*, NEHA, Amsterdam: p. 21

⁶⁸ The strength and the extension of the middle classes in Holland region – and the scanty importance of nobility – was conducive to develop productions to feed themselves, which also found markets in north-west Europe, Bas van Bavel, *Manors and Markets*, pp.348; *ivi*, p. 367: «the Holland industries in particular benefited from this process, since they specialized in middle-range and mass consumption articles. Some of these became typical of Holland, including cheese, butter, turf, bricks, and chalk, and to a lesser extent, beer. All were produced more cheaply in Holland than elsewhere because of the plentiful supply of raw materials, the favourable institutional context, and the availability of cheap capital that enabled investments and economies of scale»; also Rent and wage differentials between town and country

were unusually small, Bas van Bavel, *Markets for land, labor, and capital*, p. 516, 526 and 528; see Jessica Dijkman, *Shaping Medieval Markets*, p. 130

⁶⁹ To gauge the advancement of the accumulation of capital and wealth see Jan L. Van Zanden, *Economic Growth in the Golden Age*, pp. 13-16, 21-23, p. 14: in the sixteenth century, the «total wealth was in the region of 10 to 12 million guilders, and since these estimates probably understate the actual level of wealth, 12 million guilders is a more likely figure than 10 million. This wealth consisted almost entirely (85 to 90%) of investment in agriculture, trade, and industry»; cf. Jan L. van Zanden, 1995, “Tracing the Beginning of the Kuznets Curve: Western Europe during the Early Modern Period”, *Economic History Review*, vol. 48 , N. 4: pp. 643-664. For a discussion of the socio-economic strata of Dutch society, although centered on the period starting from the 17th century, see Jan de Vries and Ad van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, pp. 561–5.

⁷⁰ Pepijn Brandon, 2011, “Marxism and the ‘Dutch Miracle’: The Dutch Republic and the Transition-Debate”, *Historical Materialism*, Vol. 19, N. 3: pp. 106–146, posits the concept of «urban-agrarian symbiosis», pp. 121-125; for credit facilities toward the countryside see C. J. Zuijderduijn, *Medieval Capital Markets*, esp. pp. 173, 181,

⁷¹ Jason Moore, 2000, “Sugar and the Expansion of the Early Modern World-Economy: Commodity Frontiers, Ecological Transformation, and Industrialization”, *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)*, Vol. 23, N. 3: p. 411. By borrowing from the biological sciences, we can say that capitalism became «ecologically dominant» since the late middle ages in such region. In the natural sciences, ecological dominance implies the wielding of a preponderant influence of one specie upon other species in an ecological whole. Transferring the concept: for the reasons aforementioned, the capitalist logic gained currency and set about wielding control and influence over the more common forms of sociality. In time hence, the feudal logic came to be displaced and weeded out from the ground. See, interesting, Bob Jessop, 2007, *The future of the capitalist State*, Polity Press, Cambridge: pp. 22-30

⁷² Here, accumulation by dispossession is historically linked with the process of (partial) proletarianization. However, concerning the world capitalist expansion, *I am prone to concur with the thesis posited by Brass, Labour regime Change* – see also Harvey’s critiques, pp. 151-154 – that sees the relation between capitalism, free workers (waged) and other relational forms of production (notably unfree, or unpaid however) as inherent to the development of the capitalist world system – that is of a «fully-functioning»

capitalism regardless time and space. In other words – but too glibly qualified to be sure – «primitive accumulation» as *ongoing* force integral to the capitalist accumulation of wealth and power world-wide.

⁷³ Jansen, *Holland's Advance*, p. 11-16. Jessica Dijkman, *Shaping Medieval Markets*, p. 229. Here «commodity frontier» is used without reference to the concept developed by Jason Moore. I use these term simply literally, as expansion of the frontier of the markets and consequentially of the commodities under the hold, or however sold off by, the Dutch in Europe. See recap in European perspective in James D. Tracy, 1990, *Holland Under Habsburg Rule, 1506-1566: The Formation of a Body Politic*, University of California Press, Berkeley: 21-25

⁷⁴ See Bas van Bavel, *Manors and Markets*, p. 368

⁷⁵ Bas J. P. van Bavel and J. Luiten van Zanden, *The jump-start of the Holland*, esp. p. 525

⁷⁶ Bas van Bavel, *Manors and Markets*, p. 367

⁷⁷ Take an instance of spatial synergism: «More important for the countryside than weaving and fulling were the preparatory activities performed for the urban cloth industry: most notably spinning. [...] most of the spinning was done for the Leiden cloth industry, which tapped labour sources all over Holland, but also for drapers from The Hague, Gouda and later Amsterdam». All this, after 1350 came to be progressively linked and based on outer importation – for example English wool. By means of the increasing capturing of flows of raw and semi-fabricated importations, the Dutch cloth industry came to devote more time, labor and capital to processes such as finishing, refinement and dyeing. Final stages of production like that imposed indeed extensive usages of fuel and expensive dye-stuff and thus could be only performed by means of large amount of capital, skilled labor and resources available in the larger urban-country agglomerates centered on cities like Haarlem, Amsterdam or Leiden. Cloth was a successful exportation with hefty profit returns because of labor-savings techniques, widespread usage of cutting-edge technologies, qualitatively-different productions and a resulting value for money, but the increasing international competition from the 16th century on forced Holland industries to withdraw somewhat toward the regional markets. Bas van Bavel, *Early Proto Industrialization*, p. 1130-33, 1159; Bas van Bavel, *Manors and Markets*, p. 348

⁷⁸ Bas Van Bavel and Oscar Gelderblom, 2009, “Land of Milk and Butter. The Economic Origins of Cleanliness in the Dutch Golden Age”, in *Past & Present*, 205, 1: p. 56-62. «By 1650, no less than 94 per cent of burgher lands was leased out», Bas van Bavel, *Rural Development*, p. 185. Cf. Bas van Bavel, 2002, “People and land: rural population developments and property structures in the Low Countries, c.

1300-c. 1600”, *Continuity and Change*, vol. 17, N, 1, pp. 9-37, which made connections also between neo-Malthusian assumptions with the change of social-property relations in the countryside. Jan Bieleman, *Five Centuries of Farming*, pp. 49-56.

⁷⁹ Bas van Bavel, *Early Proto Industrialization*, p. 1139-1140; Jessica Dijkman, *Shaping Medieval Markets*, pp.54-55, for the early rise of dairy trade in fairs pertaining to the «Wholesale of agricultural products», and esp. pp.135-142, to signal the importance of the formalization and institutionalization of the «weighing facilities» to the rise of the sector. Van Bas van Bavel, *Early Proto Industrialization*, p. 1158: «Around 1395, some 7,000 cheeses from Holland per year passed the same toll on the river Waal on their way to the markets in the Rhine region. At the beginning of the 16th century Holland cheese also conquered markets in the southern parts of the Low Countries, for instance at the Antwerp fairs»; Bas van Bavel, *Manors and Markets*, pp. 298, 334, 336-7, 349, 367

⁸⁰ Bas van Bavel, *Early Proto Industrialization*, p.1158-59; Marian Malowist, 1959, “The economic and Social Development of the Baltic Countries”, *Economic History Review*, Vol. 12, N. 2: pp. 180

⁸¹ Richard W. Unger, *A history of brewing in Holland 900-1900*, p. 107; p. 163: «The growth in the brewing industry in Holland in the years around 1400 had generated investment, both in physical and in human capital. Dutch brewing enjoyed the advantages of that investment through the sixteenth century with a supply of buildings and of experienced labor almost always available [and it proved] capable of adapting the technology, embraced in the fourteenth century, and of continuing to make technical advances to raise productivity and improve quality. [...]The economics as well as the technology of brewing favored consolidation. There were economies of larger scale production to be reaped. Greater capital investment yielded markedly lower unit costs and spread both fixed costs and labor costs across larger output. Larger firms could have more efficient connections with markets for their output either through direct sales to the houses of consumers or through sales to commercial outlets such as inns and taverns. Beer, even heavily hopped, was a perishable good so decreasing uncertainty about outlets for production could translate into better financial performance. Larger units could economize on administrative costs, so much so that smaller units often preferred to sub-contract work for larger ones». See in general ch.3-4-5 and Bas van Bavel, *Early Proto Industrialization*, pp. 1136-137, 1126. In the course of urban expansion, towns came to exerted strong political influence. Rural displacement in brewing after the sixteenth century was also the outcome of this meddling, see Richard W. Unger, *A history of brewing in Holland 900-1900*, p. 189

⁸² Bas van Bavel, *Early Proto Industrialization*, p. 1136

⁸³ Ivi, p. 1133

⁸⁴ Ivi, pp. 1140-1141; Jan de Vries and Ad van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, pp. 243-247. See origin in Jessica Dijkman, *Shaping Medieval Markets*, pp. 110-131

⁸⁵ Bas van Bavel, *Early Proto Industrialization*, p. 1158: «Particularly ships from Brielle were engaged in supplying English harbours with herring. Also, already at the end of the 14th century huge amounts of herring were shipped from Holland up the river Rhine. Each year some 150-200 shipments of herring, mainly on ships from The Hague and Brielle, passed the toll at Tiel, with a total of more than 400 last (= 600,000 liters), 221 which equals the total catch of some 16 herring-ships. Later, from about 1450, also markets in Flanders and Brabant were increasingly won by herring from Holland»;

⁸⁶ Richard W. Unger, 1978, *The Netherlands Herring Fishery in the Late Middle Ages: The False Legend of Willem Beukels of Biervliet*, University of California Press: p. 338; ivi, p. 339: «The quantities of herring shipped in the fourteenth century were small relative to the total volume of commerce. The figures were even less impressive the greater the distance from the centers of production. But what made the trade important was precisely that the herring could be moved over great distances [...]», see ivi, pp. 341-345

⁸⁷ Bas van Bavel, *Manors and Markets*, pp. 339-340 and Richard W. Unger, *The Netherlands Herring*, p. 341, 348-350, 353-354, p. 354 «Netherlands production of cured herring in the fifteenth century rose to a point where it could replace imports of Scania *tonharing*. But it was not until the mid-sixteenth century that Netherlands output reached that of the Baltic fishery at its height. By 1580 the Netherlands herring fishery produced about 20,000 lasts annually, more than twice the figure for the fourteenth century Scania fishery. The annual average export of herring to the Baltic in the 1560s was about 2800 lasts, almost two-thirds more than the quantity traveling in the opposite direction in the late fourteenth century. Netherlands fishermen and merchants reached and surpassed the record of the Scania fishery by tapping the growing market for food. They were able to take advantage of that potentially larger market for herring because of developments in their own fishery, the development of complementary techniques and the evolution of a legal and commercial framework for the industry at home and elsewhere in Europe».

⁸⁸ Lodovico Gucciaridini, 1581, *Descrittione di M. Lodovico Gvicciardini [...] di tvtti i Paesi Bassi, altrimenti detti Germania inferiore. Con piu carte di geographia del paese, & col ritratto naturale di piu terre principa*, p. 301. Translation in Rowen, 1972, *The Low Countries in Early Modern Times (The*

documentary history of western civilization, Palgrave-McMillan, London: pp. 8-9: «Because of its low and damp ground, this country produces very little wheat or rye. Nevertheless it has such a great abundance of them that it supplies other provinces, for these grains are shipped here from many regions, especially from Denmark and the Baltic»

⁸⁹ See G. J. Borger, 1992, *Draining-digging-dredging; the creation of a new landscape in the peat areas of the low Countries*, in Jos T. A. Verhoeven (ed.), *Fens and Bogs in the Netherlands. Vegetation, History, Nutrient Dynamics and Conservation*, Springer : pp. 146-147: «Although subsidence is a gradual process, it impeded the continuous cultivation of grain crops through the centuries. In general, cereal production ceased in the wetlands of the Low Countries in about the fifteenth century. It is, however, still uncertain whether this was due to subsidence-induced drainage problems, or to falling prices for agricultural products with the import of inexpensive cereals from France and the Baltic. As local farmers were unable to compete, many families had to face impending unemployment. Some kept their land partly under crops and produced plants such as hemp and hops, needed in the urban industries, but others abandoned their land and migrated to the growing cities. Some responded by switching to rough pasture or intensive livestock production and others resorted to digging peat and selling it for fuel. So, the ecological and economic conditions for human activity in the fenlands changed tremendously for a second time, as a result of shrinkage and oxidation of the peat soil»

⁹⁰ Cf. Michael Perelman, *The invention of capitalism*, pp. 98-100

⁹¹ Richard W. Unger, 1999, “Feeding Low Countries Towns : the Grain Trade in the Fifteenth Century”, *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire*, Vol. 77, N.2; Richard W. Unger, 1983, *Integration of Baltic and Low Countries grain markets, 1400-1800*, in J.M. van Winter (ed.), *The Interactions of Amsterdam and Antwerp with the Baltic Region, 1400- 1800*, Martinus Nijhoff, Leiden: p. 1

⁹² The early origin of Holland’s grain “country-trade”, and its integration, in Jessica Dijkman, *Shaping Medieval Markets*, p. 284; see ch. 3 and 8. Furthermore, «this dependence on grain imports had important effects. It probably gave rise to a pattern of price change over the year, deviating from what was customary in other countries, and it is likely that it stimulated interregional market integration», *ibid.* . Integration leaps out in the comparison of adjacent jurisdictions, such as Flanders and England.

⁹³ Milja van Tielhof, 2001, *Grain Provision in Holland ca. 1490-1570*, in P. Hoppenbrouwers, J. Luiten van Zanden: p. 204. See David Kirby, 1998, *Northern Europe in the Early Modern Time. The Baltic World 1492-1772*, Routledge, London-NY: p. 9: «In the summer of 1481, a Danzig shipowner recorded

that over one thousand ships, great and small, laden with corn, sailed westwards from the port, bound for Holland, Zeeland and Flanders. A century later, the port was regularly visited by over two thousand ships annually, carrying off quantities of grain from the Polish hinterland to the Amsterdam market. Almost half of the entire trade of the city of Amsterdam was with Danzig, which was also the port of origin of nearly 80 per cent of the rye imported into the Dutch city in the sixteenth century. So important was the trade that Dutch merchants refused to stop re-exporting Baltic grain to the Iberian peninsula during the war against Habsburg Spain. Small wonder that the Dutch saw the grain trade as ‘the source and root of the most notable commerce and navigation of these lands»

⁹⁴ Milja van Tielhof, *Grain Provision in Holland*, p. 205

⁹⁵ See as instance Marian Malowist, *The economic and Social Development*

⁹⁶ Among others, Bas J. P. van Bavel and J. Luiten van Zanden, *The jump-start of the Holland*.

⁹⁷ Milja van Tielhof, *Grain Provision in Holland*; See outstanding, Milja van Tielhof, 2002, *The 'Mother of All Trades': The Baltic Grain Trade in Amsterdam from the Late 16th to the Early 19th Century*, Brill, Leiden-Boston: esp. pp. 40-50 and 67-112. Cf. Marian Malowist, *The economic and Social Development*, p. 184: «During the first half of the sixteenth century, this export increased only at a slow rate; but, from the middle of the century, it rapidly gathered strength, eventually surpassing by three or four times the quantities exported at the end of the fifteenth century. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the toll registers indicate an even faster increase in these exports which, in 1618, attained the record figure of 75,000 *lasts* of rye and a considerable quantity of wheat». Not only profit from trade but also from speculation, sometimes of the financial sort (elementary options as instance). See *ivi*, p 185.

⁹⁸ See Marian Malowist, *The economic and Social Development*, p. 184: «Danzig was very important for the Dutch in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. We have proof of this, both from contemporary Netherlands sources and from the calculations of Unger and Posthumus, from which it appears that in the sixteenth century, for the years to which the evidence refers, nearly 80 per cent of the rye imported by sea to Amsterdam, came from Danzig. Of this quantity, only about 23 per cent was destined for the population of Amsterdam; the rest either was sold in the Low Countries or was exported to Portugal and, at some periods, to England and, later, to Italy» See also Oscar C. Gelderblom, 2003, “From Antwerp to Amsterdam: The Contribution of Merchants from the Southern Netherlands to the Commercial Expansion of Amsterdam (C. 1540-1609)”, *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)*, Vol. 26, N. 3: pp. 250-255.

⁹⁹ Richard W. Unger, *Integration of Baltic and Low Countries*, p.1, 2, 8, 10; Milja Van Thielof, *Grain Provision in Holland*, pp. 206-207, 214-215. See Bas van Bavel, *Manors and Markets*, pp. 337-340. See Robert Brenner, 2001, “The Low Countries in the Transition to Capitalism”, in *Journal of Agrarian Change*, Vol. 1, N. 2: pp. 173-188, republished in P. Hoppenbrouwers, J. Luiten van Zanden (eds.), 2001, *The Transformation of Rural Economy and Society in the Low Countries (Middle Ages - 19th century) in light of the Brenner Debate*, Brepsol: pp. pp. 275-338. See Jansen, *Holland's Advance* and W. P. Blockmans 1993, *The Economic Expansion of Holland and Zeeland in the Fourteenth–Sixteenth Centuries*, Aerts, Henau, Janssens and van Uytven (eds.). See Marian Malowist, *The economic and Social Development*, p. 185: «the rapidly growing interdependence of the economies of Poland and Holland was already very great in this period. Every disturbance in the delivery of grain and timber from the coasts of the Baltic, that is, especially from Poland, produced a rise in the cost of living in Holland and the other provinces of the Low Countries [...]».

¹⁰⁰ Hapke R (ed.), 1913, *Niederlndischen Akten und Urkunden zur Geschichte der Hanse und zur deutschen Seegeschichte* (2 vols.). Munich-Leipzig, vol. 1. p. 200, quoted in David Kirby, *Northern Europe* p. 8. See Marian Malowist, *The economic and Social Development*, p. 181-183

¹⁰¹ Ivi, 201, pp.208-211; Jan Bieleman, *Five Centuries of Farming*, pp. 44-49; Jessica Dijkman, *Shaping Medieval Markets*, p. 284

¹⁰² When east flows came to be intensified and prioritized, Amsterdam became the grain warehouse of the Netherlands, as well as Holland for Europe, Ivi, 213-214

¹⁰³ Ivi, 216

¹⁰⁴ Jan de Vries, *The European Economy*, p. 32; Jan de Vries, *The transition to capitalism in a land*, pp.81-82

¹⁰⁵ Cf. previous references about Wallerstein, Moore, Beckert, Brass and Perleman

¹⁰⁶ Jason Moore, *The Capitalocene Part II*, p. 30. Manuel González de Molina and Víctor M. Toledo, 2014, *The Social Metabolism A Socio-Ecological Theory of Historical Change*, Springer, NY: p. 23

¹⁰⁷ Paul F. State, 2008, *A Brief History of the Netherlands*, Facts on file, NY: p.1; Such statement signals neatly Descartes's dichotomous vision of man and nature stressed by Moore as foundation of the capitalist logic of operation, Jason Moore, 2011, “Ecology, Capital and the Nature of our Time. Accumulation and Crisis in the Capitalist World-Ecology”, *Journal of World-System Research*, Vol. 17, N. 1: 109-147

¹⁰⁸ Simon Schama, 1987, *The Embarrassment of Riches*, Collins, London: p. 34

¹⁰⁹ Jan de Vries and Ad van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, p. 11-12: Dutch ecology as «a structure, channeling history, and as a catalyst of long-term developments [always in] tension between severe natural discomfort and a large potential for gain»

¹¹⁰ J. W. De Zeeuw, 1978, "Peat and the Dutch Golden Age. The Historical Meaning of energy-attainability", A.A.C. Bijdragen, Vol. 21: p. 25

¹¹¹ J. W. De Zeeuw, *Peat and the Dutch Golden Age*, pp. 4-5

¹¹² See Jason Moore, 2003, "Nature and the Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism", *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)*, vol. 26, N. 2: esp. pp. 105-115, assessing feudalism's demise as a socio-ecological systemic crash.

¹¹³ Karl Marx, *Capital, Vol. III*, p. 937: « [...]. On the other hand, large landed property reduces the agricultural population to an ever decreasing minimum and confronts it with an ever growing industrial population crammed together in large towns; in this way it produces conditions that provoke an irreparable rift in the interdependent process of social metabolism, a metabolism prescribed by the natural laws of life itself. The result of this is a squandering of the vitality of the soil»

¹¹⁴ Tamara L. Whited, Jens I. Engels, Richard C. Hoffmann, Hilde Ibsen and Wybren Verstegen, 2005, *Northern Europe. An Environmental History*, ABC-CLIO: pp. 69-70. Feudalism affected environment of course but it did not spoiled nor degraded ecology intensively, but extensively. For feudalism was a system leaning toward a production for use, spatially-located reclamation and colonization were solutions to the ecological/economic crisis it produced on the soil.

¹¹⁵ Jason Moore, *Ecology, Capital and the Nature*

¹¹⁶ Jason Moore, *Sugar and the Expansion*; J. W. De Zeeuw, *Peat and the Dutch Golden Age*, p. 24 «In regard to heating energy the Dutch lived a style – measured to contemporary foreign criteria – as if they used the greater part of their territory for nothing else but energy production and distribution»

¹¹⁷ see an instance in G. J. Borger, *Draining-digging-dredging*, p. 150: «it is often supposed that the woods were exhausted at that time of rising population by the increasing intensity of woodland exploitation [in the late Middle Ages]. But it is doubtful whether the self-renewing capacity of the woods was in fact destroyed by the requirements of a growing population for an increasing volume of timber and fuel»; J. W. De Zeeuw, *Peat and the Dutch Golden Age*, p. 21

¹¹⁸ Ivi, p. 95

¹¹⁹ With Jason Moore, “value” is a relation inherent in the commodity-centered scheme of power production which incorporates «a double movement of exploitation and appropriation», See Jason Moore, *The Capitalocene Part II*, p. 15; Indeed, The term “landscape” in the sixteenth century Dutch strongly connoted «human modification and occupation of a given area», Tamara Whited et al., *Northern Europe. An Environmental*, p. 125

¹²⁰ J. W. De Zeeuw, *Peat and the Dutch Golden Age*, p. 25: « the Dutch lived as if their country was twice its actual size [and] as if their country had two floors [and] every hectare yielded a double crop: one of that which was actually grown (on the ground level) and the other a full harvest of fire-wood and horse fodder (on the imaginary first floor)»

¹²¹ Groenewoudt, 2010, *Versatile land ...*, p. 61: Deforestation expanded beyond Holland, eastward: «Historical sources inform us that by the end of the seventeenth century there was virtually no woodland left that could be used as wood pasture or for any other purpose in large parts of the eastern Netherlands. By that time open, ultimately virtually treeless landscapes had become wide-spread»

¹²² Tamara Whited et al, *Northern Europe. An Environmental*, p.81: «The transportation of timber along the Rhine to Dutch markets reveals a fascinating picture of the scale of deforestation in the hinterland of western Europe’s longest river. Trunks for the production of planks and masts were formed into massive rafts, with a maximum length of about 300 meters, a width of 50 meters, and a draught of 2 meters. Several hinged parts made steering possible on the winding river. The rafts were manned by hundreds of people, who would seek further employment on ships or elsewhere once they reached the borders of the North Sea»

¹²³ J. W. De Zeeuw, *Peat and the Dutch Golden Age*, p. 5

¹²⁴ Tamara Whited et al, *Northern Europe. An Environmental*, p.81. See Fishing technology advancement by way of capital investment in Karel Davis, *The Rise and Decline of Dutch Technological Leadership. Technology, Economy and Culture in the Netherlands, 1350–1800 vol. 1*, Brill, Leiden-Boston: pp.

¹²⁵ J. W. De Zeeuw, *Peat and the Dutch Golden Age*, p. 6; for peat throughput see Charles Cornelisse, 2006, The Economy of Peat and its Environmental Consequences in Holland during the Late Middle Ages, in Hilde Greefs, Marjolein 't Hart (ed.), *Water management, communities and environment : the Low countries in comparative perspective, c. 1000-c. 1800* : pp. 95-123; Jan de Vries and Ad van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, pp. 37-41; peat came to be even exported, Jessica Dijkman, *Shaping*

Medieval Markets, p. 130: «at the end of the Middle Ages peat exports from Holland to the southern Low Countries increased significantly».

¹²⁶ TeBrake, 2002, *Taming the Waterwolf: Hydraulic Engineering*, p. 481-485; Petra J. E. M. van Dam, 2002, "Ecological Challenges, Technological Innovations: The Modernization of Sluice Building in Holland, 1300-1600", *Technology and Culture*, Vol. 43, N. 3: pp. 505-506

¹²⁷ Petra van Dam, *Ecological Challenges*, pp. 505: «By the end of the fourteenth century, Dutch peasants had given up farming the peat lands because the groundwater level was too high, and commercial peat digging became an important activity in the countryside. Peat cutters dug into the peat cushions to a depth of four to six meters, until they reached the clay subsoil». Consequentially, «severe ecological crisis occurred in these wetland areas during the late Middle Ages, caused mainly by the subsidence of the drained peat bogs [...] since drainage for agriculture and digging peat for fuel were the main factors causing the bogs to sink», pp. 500-501. See Tamara Whited et al., *Northern Europe. An Environmental*, p. 65

¹²⁸ TeBrake, 2002, *Taming the Waterwolf: Hydraulic Engineering and*, p. 497. In parts of Holland region such as Western-Drente, Friesland, Overijssel and Utrecht, peat excavation began by 1300, and instantly peat became «a substantial industry» by itself in the growing network of urban markets.

¹²⁹ As instance: lakes of increasing scale, for example, came to crowd most of the area between the rivers Oude Rijn, Gouwe and Hollandse IJssel and threatend the villages of Nieuwerkerk, Zevenhuizen, Moerkapelle and Waddinxveen around 1600. «In 1630 the church of Jacobswoude, north of the Oude Rijn, was pulled down because by then the rest of the village had been swallowed by the waves of encircling man-made lakes» J. W. De Zeeuw, 1978, *Peat and the Dutch Golden Age*, p. 13. «The formation of large lakes started somewhat later, brought about principally by the commercialization of peat mining», Petra van Dam, *Ecological Challenges*, p. 506. Once eventually the pumping mills came into full operation during the 16th century, peat extraction was further intensified through deeper dredging and water control whose ecological consequences came to be manifest, TeBrake, *Taming the Waterwolf: Hydraulic Engineering*, p. 497 and G. J. Borger, *Draining-digging-dredging*, pp. 156-157: «the peat layers were dredged away to a depth of several meters below the polder water table. Such deep dredging greatly enlarged the volume of the available peat reserves for the making of fuel. The rural economy benefitted largely from investments in large-scale fuel production and in transport facilities as long as the turbaries flourished. But as a result of wave erosion and illegal excavation ditches were broadened into

small lakes and strips of water coalesced into broad meres (Dutch: 'plassen'), which menaced surrounding dikes, roads and even villages. So, in the long run, the excavated area changed into a large water body with only small strips of poor, almost worthless peatland»

¹³⁰ van Bavel, *Early Proto-Industrialization in the Low Countries?*, pp. 1137-1138. Peat-digging was an important means of livelihood for the rural areas : «peat-digging in the Holland region developed strongly in the 14th century. This was partly a result of the growing demand from the urban population for heating and urban industries for brewing and dyeing, but also from rural industries such as brick works and lime-kilns, both having a great need for fuel». The location of peat-digging was constantly shifting because of the exhaustion of the soil, but «the large-scale introduction of dredging peat below the water table with scoops from c. 1530 onwards, however, possibilities were created for a new round of large-scale extraction in Holland». Cf. Bas van Bavel, *Manors and Markets*, pp. 360-361

¹³¹ Peat was naturally abundant, see TeBrake, *Taming the Waterwolf: Hydraulic Engineering*, pp. 479-480

¹³² G. J. Borger, *Draining-digging-dredging*, p. 160-161 as instance: Peat «required the investment of large capital sums to exploit the remote, virgin peat bogs. So, the impenetrable bogs and extensive moors in other provinces were subject to speculative exploitation [...] Large-scale peat cutting spread over the Netherlands in the sixteenth and seventeenth century in order to supply fuel for the fast growing towns of Holland. At first the peat areas were co-operatively drained by groups of individuals, but early in the seventeenth century companies were set up in the provinces of Groningen, Friesland and Drenthe. These companies were in part financed by citizens of the towns of Holland and in part by the wealthy inhabitants of the towns and countryside of these three provinces. By the 1620s however, urban capitalists mainly from Holland had full control of the peat digging operations in Groningen and Friesland. The companies under their control dug canals, established villages to house thousands of temporary laborers, and shipped enormous quantities of peat to the cities of Holland»

¹³³ See an instance G. J. Borger, *Draining-digging-dredging*, p. 156; Petra van Dam, *Ecological Challenges*; TeBrake, *Taming the Waterwolf: Hydraulic Engineering*

¹³⁴ G. J. Borger, *Draining-digging-dredging*, pp. 150-157

¹³⁵ Bas van Bavel, *Manors and Markets*, pp. ; TeBrake, 2002, *Taming the Waterwolf: Hydraulic Engineering*; . W. De Zeeuw, *Peat and the Dutch Golden Age*; not for nothing, «During the period 1300-1600, water management institutions in the Netherlands underwent a significant process of centralization and reinforcement», Petra van Dam, *Ecological Challenges*, p. 502

¹³⁶ Ivi, pp. 10-15. Cf. TeBrake, 2002, *Taming the Waterwolf: Hydraulic Engineering*, pp. 481-482. Especially from early modern times, also the «ore deposits were systematically mined on an ever expanding scale. The ore was transported to iron melting works in the region [...] to be processed into cast iron. These iron works were able to develop thanks to a unique set of specific regional circumstances, namely the availability of ore, cheap labour and the necessary sources of energy (charcoal and hydropower)», Groenewoudt, 2010, *Versatile land ...*, p. 63; Tamara Whited et al, *Northern Europe. An Environmental*, p. 70: «South Holland's vast but equally artificial Haarlemmermeer, located between Haarlem and Leiden, not really drained until the nineteenth century, also resulted from late-medieval peat exports for urban energy needs». For a reckoning of energy consumption see Charles Cornelisse, *The Economy of Peat*, pp. 98-103

¹³⁷ TeBrake, 2002, *Taming the Waterwolf: Hydraulic Engineering*, p. 499; Jan Bieleman, *Five Centuries of Farming*, pp. 37-38

¹³⁸ G. J. Borger, *Draining-digging-dredging*; Petra van Dam, *Ecological Challenges*, esp. pp. 506-519; Clè Lesger, 1993, Intra-regional trade and the port system in Holland, 1400-1700, in in Karel Davids and Leo Noordegraaf (eds.), *The Dutch Economy in the Golden Age*, NEHA, Amsterdam: summarized in pp. 208: «The most important contribution a well-functioning intra-regional transport system can make to a regional economy is that it allows specialization on a local and sub-regional level. Indeed, in Holland the economy was characterized by a large degree of geographical specialization [...]. Ports specialized as well. Because of an intra-regional transport system the inhabitants of these cities could fall back on other centres for the goods they themselves did not produce, and for the sale of their own produce. This kind of specialization in Holland was tremendously important, for [...] it was only possible to profit from economies of scale by geographically concentrating economic activities. It may also be expected that the concentration of specific economic activities facilitated innovations in the production of goods and services. [...] The existence of a properly functioning intra-regional transport system was a precondition for specialization and its positive effects on the economy»

¹³⁹ Andrew Warheam, 2006, Water Management and Economic Environment in Eastern England, The Low Countries and China. 960-1650. Comparison and consequences, in Hilde Greefs, Marjolein 't Hart (ed.), *Water management, communities and environment : the Low countries in comparative perspective, c. 1000-c. 1800* : p. 11 and 26; TeBrake, 2002, *Taming the Waterwolf: Hydraulic Engineering*, p. 498-499; Petra van Dam, *Ecological Challenges*, p. 506-517; J.W. De Zeeuw, *Peat and the Dutch Golden*

Age: «Without turf and inland navigation this would again create an impossible situation: all inhabitants would have had to have occupied themselves with the winning and transporting of energy sources; nobody would have been left to apply this energy in industrial processes or to perform other social activities». But the capitalist logic of operation acted as a socio-ecological propellant to grow as a whole, socially, economically, institutionally and embedded in a framework of manipulated natures

¹⁴⁰ Such circuit seizes *appropriation as internal to value relation*, cf. Jason Moore, *The Capitalocene Part II*, p. 12; Moore, 2012, *Cheap Food & Bad Money: Food, Frontiers, and Financialization in the Rise and Demise of Neoliberalism, Review (Fernand Braudel Center)*, vol. 33, N. 2-3: pp. 225-261; Jason Moore, 2017, “The Capitalocene, Part I: on the nature and origins of our ecological crisis. Part I”, *The Journal of Peasant Studies*: pp. 1-37; J. W. De Zeeuw, *Peat and the Dutch Golden Age*, pp. 25-30

¹⁴¹ Bas van Bavel, *Manors and Markets*, p. 307, 376, 404

¹⁴² Bas J. P. van Bavel and J. Luiten van Zanden, *The jump-start of the Holland*

¹⁴³ Jan de Vries and Ad van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, pp. 159-194 ; 509-510 – the Dutch title of this extraordinary collection of lifetime historical investigations and knowledge gathering arranged by de Vries and van der Wee was in fact «*Nederland, 1500-1815. De eerste ronde van moderne economische groei*» that is, «The Netherlands, 1500-1815. The First round of modern economic growth».

Jessica Dijkman, *Shaping Medieval Markets*, p. 344 and 357. Moreover, in her impressive and painstaking archival analysis (Jessica Dijkman, *Shaping Medieval Markets*, ch.7), Dijkman reasons that freedom and responsibility were both exactly at the roots of the institutional arrangements of both economy and society, «as form of self-organization». Notably, she delves into the merchant guilds and debt litigation: the former was «a community responsibility model»; the latter premised «on individual responsibilities» performed in «urban courts», *ivi* p. 237-249, *ivi*. 270-271.

¹⁴⁴ Michael Mann, *The Source of Social Power*, ch. 1

¹⁴⁵ Braudel, pp. 63-64. See next chapter for the elaboration of such insight, and note 103. See Jason Moore, *The Capitalocene Part II*, esp. pp. 28-30. Since capitalism is value-in-motion, «Power, then, is at the center of every moment of value» as well as value is at the center of every moment of power. This is what I have argued here, and I am to argue in the next chapters as well.

¹⁴⁶ See Michael Mann, *The Source of Social Power*, p. 15-16

¹⁴⁷ C. J. Zuijderduijn, *Medieval Capital Markets*, pp. 269-271. An example is offered by Dijkman herself: Holland almost lacked guild. Thus «urban authorities provided the rules and enforcement mechanisms

needed to regulate trade. Related to their late rise, the young towns in Holland enjoyed self-government almost from the moment they emerged. The local court provided mechanisms for individual contract enforcement to traders and merchants almost from the start, facilitating – in Greif’s terminology – a smooth and early introduction of an individual responsibility system», Jessica Dijkman, *Shaping Medieval Markets*, p. 350. Such conditions may be well construed as a process of early “commercialization of political power”, or of market embeddedness within political institutions. Or, in other words, such necessary process of embeddedness, emanated, here as instance, from the nearly historical absence of the guilds, set up the conditions for the early and full involvement of local public authorities in the dynamics of the market.

See, related to the capital market, C. J. Zijderduijn, *Medieval Capital Markets*, p. 223: «Holland’s medieval capital markets depended heavily on government institutions. The county’s strong public sector was the natural ally of participants in the capital market seeking ways to reduce transaction costs. Holland’s late development and weak feudal structures allowed government institutions to create a virtual monopoly on voluntary jurisdiction; this was codified in the 16th and 17th centuries and survived until the fall of the Republic in 1795».

¹⁴⁸ C. J. Zijderduijn, *Medieval Capital Markets*, esp. pp. 269-271. See *ivi*, p. 190 as interesting example of how the path of “political commercialisation” proceeded across the centuries up to the 17th century public administration and law in the Dutch Republic. For an overview of the three-centuries-long jurisdictional coagulation process see *ivi*, pp. 27-70. Cf. James D. Tracy, 1990, *Holland under Habsburg rule 1506–1566. The formation of a body politic*, University of California Press, Berkeley. See Marjolein ‘t Hart, 1993, *The Making of a Bourgeois State: War, Politics and Finance During the Dutch Revolt*, Manchester University Press; Marjolein ‘t Hart, *The Dutch Wars of Independence*; Pepijn Brandon, 2017, *War, Capital, and the Dutch State (1588-1795)*, Brill, Leiden-Boston. This reasoning shall be elaborated in the next part.

¹⁴⁹ Michael Mann, *The Source of Social Power*, p. 477-481, 511-512. Peter J. Taylor, 2005, Dutch Hegemony and Contemporary Globalization, in Jonathan Friedman, Christopher Chase-Dunn (eds.), *Hegemonic Decline: Present and Past*, Routledge, London-NY: p. 118

¹⁵⁰ Joseph Schumpeter, 1947, “The creative response in economic history”, *The Journal of Economic History*, vol.7, N.2: p. 150. Cf. Giovanni Arrighi, 2010, *The Long Twentieth Century Money, Power, and the Origins of Our Times*, Verso, London-NY: p. 12.

¹⁵¹ Jessica Dijkman, *Shaping Medieval Markets*, pp. 345-352: as instance, «control over market institutions was in the hands of local merchant elites, who had good reason to promote rules and practices that prevented rent-seeking by the ruler or his officials». Indeed, a *balance of power* among governmental and business agencies was at the roots of the achievements, see pp. 157-158, 348 and 352. See also an example of how the balance of power mattered for the regional economy, recapped pp. 130-134; Bas van Bavel, *Early Proto Industrialization*, p. 1164; C. J. Zuijderduijn, *Medieval Capital Markets*, pp. 268-271

¹⁵² Peter C. M. Hoppenbrouwers, *Town and Country in Holland*, p. 58, Jan de Vries and Ad van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, p. 165; Jessica Dijkman, *Shaping Medieval Markets*, p. 344. Also, *ivi*, ch.6, notes that, in the late middle ages, the main institutional drivers were performed largely by towns and by means of their polity: for example the organization of weighing and measuring as well as their enforcement – inspection and verification by way of bailiffs and local representatives or aldermen – were performed by urban authorities. The related courts since their origin in the 13th century were the «bottom layer of the public jurisdictional system», *ivi*, p. 266; cf. C. J. Zuijderduijn, *Medieval Capital Markets*, pp. 46-52 and ch. 3 for the management and administration of the public debt fund performed by local authorities. But the urban *political* power in space was an outcome of the spatial expansion of the capitalist logic of operation, not its pre-condition as we saw. See to account for this movement of power in the Republic, Marjolein ‘t Hart, *The Making of a Bourgeois State*; Marjolein ‘t Hart, *The Dutch Wars of Independence*; Pepijn Brandon, *War, Capital, and the Dutch State (1588-1795)*, as instance pp. 63-64, table 1.2

¹⁵³ Albeit such a 16th century coagulation came co-produced with nobility. Until the eve of last decade of the sixteenth century, nobility played a remarkable role. In Brief, Pepijn Brandon, *Marxism and the Dutch Miracle*. pp. 125-128. See Henk Van Nierop, 1993, *The Nobility of Holland: From Knights to Regents, 1500–1650*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge; cf. James D. Tracy, *Holland under Habsburg*. Moreover, such a vertical strenghtening of urban politics had consequences upon the urban-rural relations, see Marjolein ‘t Hart, *Town and Country*, pp. 80-106

¹⁵⁴ Jason Moore, *Sugar and the Expansion*, p. 411; see also Jason Moore, 2000, “Nature and the Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism”, *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)*, Vol. 26, No. 2: 97-172

Chapter 4

¹ Brian Downing, 1993, *The Military Revolution and Political Change: Origins of Democracy and Autocracy in Early Modern Europe*, Princeton University Press Princeton: p. 246; David S. Landes, 1969, *The unbound Prometheus*, pp 20-21

² Frederic Lane, 1979, *Profits from Power: Readings in Protection Rent and Violence-Controlling Enterprises*, State University of New York Press, Albany: 86-87

³ William Aglionby 1669, *The Present State of the United Provinces of the Low-Countries as to the Government, Laws, Forces, Riches, Manners, Customes, Revenue, and Territory of the Dutch*, London: A.3-A5

⁴ Jan Bieleman, 2010, *Five centuries of farming. A short history of Dutch agriculture 1500-2000*, Wageningen Academic Publishers, the Netherlands: Part II.

⁵ Res Judicanda, 1658, Leiden: p. 146, quoted in Albert Hyma, 1938, “Calvinism and Capitalism in the Netherlands, 1555-1700”, *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 10, N. 3: p. 329

⁶ J.C Boogman, 1979, “The Union of Utrecht. Its genesis and consequences”, *BMGN - Low Countries Historical Review*, Vol. 94, N. 3: pp. 389

⁷ Herbert H. Rowen, 1988, *The Prince of Orange. The Stadholders in the Dutch Republic*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: p. 88

⁸ John H. Elliott, 2002, *Imperial Spain, 1469-1716*, Penguin Books, London: ch. 1 and ch. 5; Giovanni Arrighi, 2010 [1994], *The Long Twentieth Century Money, Power, and the Origins of Our Times*, Verso, London-NY: pp. 111-130

⁹ James D. Tracy, 2008, *The Founding of the Dutch Republic War, Finance, and Politics in Holland, 1572–1588*, Oxford University Press, Oxford: pp. 17-18. Notably in Holland indeed, resistance to increasing taxation and to increased predation was «especially strong». Great tax resilience in relation to powers *external* to the urban-rural complexes in Holland had a strong long-standing tradition, since the late middle ages, notably in the more advanced center of commerce and industry, where such a political-economic conflict was inbuilt and unabated. Interlopers were bitterly confronted, sometimes rejected, when they bit into the rich fleshes of the Hollanders. A deep-seated tradition of negotiations developed since then thereon. James D. Tracy, *Holland Under Habsburg Rule, 1506-1566. The Formation of a Body*

Politic, University of California Press, Berkeley: pp.17-19. See for Holland's towns cooperation *ivi*, ch. 3-4

¹⁰ A brief but thorough historical account of the economic interests in James D. Tracy, *Holland Under Habsburg Rule*, pp. 52-56

¹¹ James D. Tracy, *Holland Under Habsburg Rule*, pp. 94-108. James D. Tracy, *The Founding of the Dutch Republic War*, pp. 18-19: «A government was expected to promote the well-being of its subjects, but efforts to promote the general well-being often involved clashes with local interests. The huge quantities of Baltic grain warehoused in Amsterdam provided material for a classic conflict of this kind. To the government in Brussels, a duty on the grain re-exported from Amsterdam to other parts of Europe seemed an appropriate source of revenue, but the Hollanders resisted at every turn, generally with success. In a stream of memoranda to Brussels, they argued, plausibly, that a tax on exports from Amsterdam would cause price-sensitive Baltic merchants to find another market for their wares; for example, Emden (East Friesland) might have served just as well as an entrepot for the grain trade. Mary of Hungary did, as noted, override Holland's opposition to a general tax on exports in 1541, but the results were disappointing». See antecedents in James D. Tracy, *Holland Under Habsburg Rule*, ch. 1. Danish question in *ivi*, pp. 109-114.

¹² *ivi*, 94-114. Take another instance: Amsterdam's sheriff Willem Dirkszoon Baerdes was a focal point of juncture between economy and politics of the city. But something changed in 1550 and merchants instantly smelt a rat: «Baerdes's effectiveness was limited [...] by the bitter feud that seems to have begun as soon as he accepted appointment from the Queen (1550). Friction between locally elected magistrates and a sheriff appointed by the prince was commonplace in Holland's towns, but the struggle in Amsterdam had an intensity and a duration that suggests deep-seated animosity. [Baerdes was a constant source of reliable information on the vital grain trade. As need required, he could describe trading practices on the Torun grain exchange in Poland or explain how current prices in Lisbon were affecting grain markets in the Netherlands [and] he used the powers of his office to regulate the flow of grain out of the city according to a price-trigger mechanism first put into place by Mary of Hungary]. In any event, after 1550, Baerdes was refused admission to meetings of the *vroedschap*; he was not allowed to appoint a deputy, and when he finally did so, the burgomasters contested the appointment for years. Worst of all, in 1553 Baerdes, his wife, and daughter were accused of heresy by two informants who came forward

with the support of Meester Hendrik Dirkszoon and of the pastor of the Old Church, Floris Engelbrechtszoon», *ivi* p. 193-194

¹³ *ivi*, p. 114 and p. 210. Summing Up: «In protecting Holland's Baltic interests, the States spoke with a unanimity only rarely disturbed by divisions between seafaring and manufacturing towns or by animosities relating to the Dordrecht staple. The States spoke with wisdom, on behalf of the dynamic seaborne economy of the Netherlands, as against the short-sighted fiscal goals of Treasury officials, or Charles V's ill-considered schemes for placing a new king on Denmark's throne. When the seagoing trades were divided among themselves, as in conflicts between the Baltic traders of Amsterdam and herring fishers of the Maas estuary, their fractiousness no doubt reassured government officials that such subjects needed, after all, a firm hand from the top. But when the vital Baltic trade provided the basis for a firm consensus on Holland's interests, the provincial States were able, with some help from the great lords, to display the confidence and effectiveness of a body that was used to self-government». Also, James D. Tracy, *The Founding of the Dutch Republic*, pp. 61-63

¹⁴ James D. Tracy, *Holland Under Habsburg Rule*, pp. 139-146

¹⁵ Wim Blockmans, 1999, *The Low Countries in the Middle Ages*, in in Richard Bonney (ed.), *The Rise of the Fiscal State in Europe, C.1200-1810*, Oxford University Press, Oxford: p. 281, pp. 304-305. James D. Tracy, *Holland Under Habsburg Rule*

¹⁶ See James D. Tracy, *Holland Under Habsburg Rule*, ch. 4 and crucial ch. 5 and James D. Tracy, *A Financial Revolution*, ch. 3, 5-6;

¹⁷ The so-called Novennial Aid of 1558 is an important example of such movement of power devolution and deconcentration. James D. Tracy, *The Founding of the Dutch Republic*, pp. 37-48

¹⁸ James D. Tracy, *A Financial Revolution*, p. 114-120: «disputes over how revenues were to be spent indicate a tension fundamental to the political structure of the Habsburg Netherlands, a hard-to-categorize polity in which formerly independent provinces were (so it might have seemed) slowly being welded together into a single realm by the press of external circumstances as well as by the firm hand of Habsburg rule», and also thanks to the strength and the rootedness of internal long-standing socio-economic and institutional developments of the urban-rural complexes, ch. 2, part II.

¹⁹ See James D. Tracy, *A Financial Revolution*

²⁰ C. J. Zijlenderdijjn, 2009, *Medieval Capital Markets. Markets for Renten, State Formation and Private Investment in Holland (1300–1550)*, Brill, Leiden-Boston: p. 279

²¹ The urban-rural capital as complex of patterned relations were integral to the thrust toward state financial investments. Indeed, during the sixteenth century, «burghers were providing capital in return for the constitution of rent on peasant land, and were also acquiring title to rural properties», James D. Tracy, *A Financial Revolution*, pp. 177-187, 192. Furthermore, the “financial expansion” involved also the countryside on its own, participating itself to the capital-state maelstrom: «By about 1450, a few of Holland's villages had already obtained permission to sell *renten* on the "body" of the village, just as the towns had been doing. By the time of the 1514 *Informatie*, roughly two-thirds of Holland's approximately 180 villages had contracted debts of this kind. The *Informatie* also shows that a few villages had governments organized in the manner of towns, with the right to levy excise taxes on their inhabitants. In succeeding decades it was more common for villages to be granted the privilege of having a *vroedschap*. [...]. Indeed, the political and social logic of entrusting power to a closed corporation of wealthy men was the same for a village as for a town. As the Council of Holland remarked, “reason demands that the affairs of the common lands and the villages are more taken to heart by those who have a notable amount of property, and are taxed the highest”», James D. Tracy, *Holland Under Habsburg Rule*, p. 213. For the Spaniards' fiscal bargaining with the States of Holland see also *ivi*, pp. 168-192, notably 168-177.

²² Jonathan Israel, 1995, *The Dutch Republic : Its Rise, Greatness and Fall, 1477- 1806*, Oxford History of Early Modern Europe, Oxford University press, New York: p. 205: «In the end, the States had no alternative but opting for either Spain or Holland» lead, Israel asserts indeed

²³ See to understand the consequences of such a security, Douglass C. North and Barry R. Weingast, 1989, “Constitutions and Commitment: The Evolution of Institutional Governing Public Choice in Seventeenth-Century England”, *The Journal of Economic History*, Vol. 49, N. 4: p. 803-832; Douglass North and David Thomas, 1973, *The rise of the Western world. A new economic history*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge; C. J. Zijlenderdijn, *Medieval Capital Markets*; Jessica Dijkman, *Shaping Medieval Markets*; Bas van Bavel, *Manors and Markets*

²⁴ C. J. Zijlenderdijn, *Medieval Capital Markets*, pp. 185-188, 271, 276; Arie van Steensel ,2009, The Emergence of an Administrative Apparatus in the Dutch Towns of Haarlem and Leiden during the Late Medieval and Early Modern Periods, circa 1430-1570, in M. van der Heijden et al. (eds), *Serving the Urban Community. The Rise of Public Facilities in the Low Countries*, Aksant, Amsterdam: pp. 42-62; Ad Tervoort, 2009, “To the honor of our for concord and the common good”. Developments in Social Care and Education and Their Institutions in Dutch Towns (1300-1625), in *ivi*: pp. 89-106. C. J.

Zuijderduijn, *Medieval Capital Markets*, p. 200, sums up: «Ratification by the local court was not [still] mandatory, but it did provide contracting parties with optimal legal security. Thus, economic exchange was directed towards public bodies. Furthermore, the strength of ratification by local courts drove out competitors. Initially, nobles and clerics also had a say over transactions, but when public bodies expanded their services, ratification by noble and religious authorities quickly lost its attraction. Contracting parties turned to local courts to have wills, marriage contracts, and transactions in the markets for land and capital ratified, making them pivotal points of economic exchange [...]. Furthermore, local courts often refused to ratify transactions involving clerics, who were thus forced to look for other authorities that had contracting institutions. Finally, medieval society consisted of many privileged groups, each entitled to litigate before its own courts».

²⁵ To account for the early wave of supra-local and local state formation, Wim P. Blockmans and Walter Prevenier, 1999, *The Promised Lands. The Low Countries under Burgundian rule, 1369-1530*, University of Pennsylvania Press Philadelphia: pp. 88-99, 116-132, 142-150; Martin van Gelderen, *The Political Thought*, pp. 19-30; C. J. Zuijderduijn, *Medieval Capital Markets*, pp. 17-54 and 270-271 in sum.

²⁶ A good indicator of institutional strength is interest rates. In Holland interest rates were low during the early cycle, purportedly because of the influx of money the economic growth, especially the export industry, provided. The economic policy of the Urban-rural complex, as well as the decline of interest rates in Europe may be also co-factors. But the improved market organization and scope almost certainly created safe opportunities for investing savings, and this seems the best explanation for «the profound and structural decline of interest rates in Holland. [...] The emerging capital markets persuaded savers at home and abroad to buy *renten* and thus to increase the quantity of money in circulation. [In turn] declining interest rates – dropping heavily in the second half of the 14th and first half of the 15th centuries, from about 10 per cent to about 6.25 per cent – clearly contributed to the increasing volume and depth of the capital market». *ivi*, 242-247.

²⁷ C. J. Zuijderduijn, *Medieval Capital Markets*, p. 56-ff: «Interestingly, the counts of Holland were instrumental in this development because the rights to mint, to exchange, and to lend money were comital *regalia*. This could be quite profitable because offices of moneychangers were leased out for considerable sums. [...] Moneychangers had a dual function: they carried out the comital monetary policy and offered financial services to subjects». When the economy of Holland set about expanding, its inhabitants demanded credit facilities which the state provides with such official intermediaries.

²⁸ Registers and registrations for mortgages and for property rights for example, which accounts for debtor's rating on the ground; also, registration, that was geared to combat tax evasion, entailed a virtual monopoly on voluntary jurisdiction by local political powers that in fact obtained in the 1529 decree Under Charles V: «it ordered all transfers in the markets for real estate and capital to be ratified by the local court», *ivi*, pp. 65-67, p. 187. See extensive survey in *ivi*, ch. 5, esp. pp. 199-226. The skeleton of the institutional framework for the capital market (*renten*) already existed because embedded within the general institutional landscape of Holland, especially in the market for land, explaining why it emerged swiftly, *ivi*, p. 224. Cf. Arie van Steensel, *The Emergence of an Administrative*

²⁹ C. J. Zuijderduijn, *Medieval Capital Markets*, pp. 63-109, p. 275; Marjolein 't Hart, 2006, *Money and trust. Amsterdam moneylenders and the rise of the modern state, 1478-1794*, Paper for the IHEA Congress in Helsinki (21-25 August 2006) Session 13, "Citizens, Money and Urban Governments in Northern Europe in the Late Middle Ages and Early Modern Era", 25 August 2006: pp. 4-7. Purportedly in this regard, the early institutionalized market expansion may have been the effect of "democratizing" capital, that is, retarding or diluting through time the emergence of plutocratic, state or private, oligarchies capable of monopolizing power and wealth, compartmentalizing capital, exchanges and production. The absence of pure monopolies of political-economic power – power *balance* – may have been a further co-factor accounting for the *regional-wide release* of the capitalist relations of power.

³⁰ As instance, Amsterdam proved to be a «strong mediator between ruler and his subjects» because of the great portion of high political officeholders owed great share of loans market: «A significant part of the creditors were found among the Amsterdam political elite, yet numerous others were in a position to buy a bond too. The existing trust between the issuing party and potential investors was thus quite large and enhanced by the urban tradition in raising loans». Of course, merchants/entrepreneurs were the greatest part of financial investment of the state, Marjolein 't Hart, *Money and trust*, p. 6-7

³¹ Jan de Vries and Ad van der Woude, 1997, *The First Modern Economy. Success, failure, and perseverance of the Dutch economy, 1500-1815*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: 139 (also quoted by Zuijderduijn). Indeed, private accumulation of financial capital was widely spread and developed among the parties. Thousands of *rente* contracts were negotiated from the XIV century on and alienated through inheritance, endowment, and resale. Alienation to third parties was common even for other assets, such as obligation as in Dordrecht. What Zuijderduijn underlies significantly is that on «average both *renteniers* and *rente* payers were not significantly wealthier than the population at large.

This seems to indicate that market structures were capable of reallocating savings among large segments of the population. In this respect the capital market of Edam and De Zeevang differed somewhat from markets in cities in the north of Germany and the southern Low Countries, which were more dominated by elites and middle groups. Perhaps the large proportion of households owning real estate they could use to mortgage offers the most straightforward explanation for the importance of middle groups. The vast majority of the households in Edam and De Zeevang owned at least a house, so nearly all households had the securities required to sell *renten*», *ivi*, pp 227-241.

³² C. J. Zijderduijn, *Medieval Capital Markets*, p. 12. Three types of *renten* developed a) Private *Renten*: loans secured by real property, paying annual interest until and unless the principal was repaid; b) Urban *renten*: instruments of debt sold "on the body" of the town and secured by revenue from the more important *accijnsen*; c) *renten* issued by the States of Holland: instruments of debt issued by the States, secured by domain revenues placed in the keeping of the States, in the period between 1481-1484; revenue from the *ordinaris bede*, in the period 1515-1533; revenue from novel expedients, as we shall see, collected and disbursed by the States after 1542. See James D. Tracy, *Holland Under Habsburg Rule*

³³ Mortgage was an important institution for its diffusion and its certainty, required by its own spreading. Local court had to ratify the deed. Indeed, later, the Dutch republic was to declare invalid mortgage without registration. *Ivi*, p 185-187

³⁴ Arie van Steensel, *The Emergence of an Administrative*; C. J. Zijderduijn, *Medieval Capital Markets*, 116-117: an instance: «In 1371 Dordrecht appointed a committee to reorganize its public debt. Perhaps this committee was the first step in the appointment of treasurers (*tresoriers*), financial specialists predominantly responsible for managing public debt». Another one: «Treasurers appear in smaller cities as well. When Rotterdam's public debt hindered trade in 1436, the city government asked Philip the Good's permission to appoint a *Veertigraad*, an electoral college that would appoint four treasurers, who were supposed to reorganize city finances "so merchants may travel safely and engage in trade"». Another: «Thus, public debt and the threat of reprisals forced city governments to specialize. Treasurers improved financial administration: to prevent fraud, they started to record the residences in city accounts and the age of *renteniers* in contracts».

³⁵ «The counts of Holland did not have the authority to tax their subjects directly: taxes – *jaarbede* or *shot* – were first shared among cities and villages using a distribution code (*shotponden*), and then the public bodies apportioned the taxes among their subjects. Cities usually levied excise taxes on

commodities and incidentally used land or home ownership as the basis for apportioning direct taxes. In the countryside public bodies predominantly used landownership as an indication of wealth. Public bodies based their assessment on other capital goods as well» *ivi*, p. 192. Contracts and registrations allowed the public bodies to tax the profit on real estate more efficiently, p. 207

³⁶ To these purposes, intermediation services – offered by men such as Gillis van den Wijngaerd or Symon Claesz, «key figures in the capital market» – were important: endowed with contacts, brokers contributed to lower transaction costs and timing of operation, while providing credit rating, stimulating the expansion of trade and sales, and affording funding in advance, C. J. Zijderduijn, *Medieval Capital Markets*, pp. 112-115; p. 185

³⁷ *Ivi*, p. 170: «Public debt was not confined to the main cities: in the *Informacie* smaller public bodies claim to have contracted funded debt as well. The participation of smaller cities and even villages in capital markets is an excellent indicator of market structures»

³⁸ *ivi*, pp. 80-86, 170-181

³⁹ *Ivi*, ch. 5, esp. in sum pp. 181-185.

⁴⁰ *Ivi*, p. 89-90

⁴¹ *Ivi*, p 97.

⁴² *ivi*, pp. 108-109; pp. 272-273

⁴³ since 1515 most major towns had accepted to stand bail for the loans that were issued in the name of Holland, Marjolein 't Hart, *Money and trust*, p. 6

⁴⁴ Charles V in 1548 had defined the Dutch region in a well-defined unit, separate from the German Empire. In 1549 he made this unit an hereditary component in the House of Habsburg. He continued his constitutional changes by reorganizing the federal councils: a Supreme Court at Mechelen – court of appeal for the Provincial law courts; the Privy Council and the Councils of State and Finance. These formed Charles's central government which shared sovereignty with the provinces and their Estates.

⁴⁵ C. J. Zijderduijn, *Medieval Capital Markets*, p. 104: indeed «the main difference was neither the collective character, nor the use of future tax revenues as security, but the more centralized organization of *rente* payments, which shifted to the States»

⁴⁶ Since 1515, the Estates of Holland had started to issue public loans regularly for Charles

⁴⁷ James D. Tracy, *A Financial Revolution*, pp. 73-75, 86-97. Above all else, both changes had an important structural and a conjunctural effect: the first is about the creation of a base for a long-term debt,

a regular source of fiscality and creditworthiness for the future United Provinces (provincial excises), and the almost total management thereof; the second is about the *exacerbated* conflict on resources leading to the revolt

⁴⁸ James D. Tracy, *A Financial Revolution*, pp. 71-91; James D. Tracy, 2008, *The Founding of the Dutch Republic*, Oxford University Press, Oxford: pp. 37-45; Marjolein 't Hart, *Money and trust*, p. 6;

⁴⁹ James D. Tracy, *A Financial Revolution*, pp. 95-101, p. 221; *ivi*, pp. 165-ff (recap in table 20, p. 168-170) and James D. Tracy, *Holland Under Habsburg Rule*, pp. 124-134 to see the stunning engagement and interlocking of the political-economic combines of the cities with Provincial governments – the fusion of state and capital – notably of Amsterdam, at both provincial and urban level, and between them, in the XVI century. See also Marjolein 't Hart, 1999, *The United Provinces, 1579-1806*, in Richard Bonney (ed.), *The Rise of the Fiscal State in Europe, C.1200-1810*, Oxford University Press, Oxford: pp. 311-315

⁵⁰ *ivi*, pp. 63; Pepijn Brandon, 2011, Global power, local connections: The Dutch admiralties and their supply networks, in Richard Harding and Sergio Solbes Ferri (eds.), *The Contractor State and its Implications(1659–1815)*, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria: Servicio de Publicaciones ulpgc: p. 57-60

⁵¹ C. J. Zijlenderduijn, *Medieval Capital Markets*, p. 20

⁵² Wantje Fritschy, *Public Finance of the Dutch Republic*, pp. 65-73. To the purpose of servicing long-term debt indeed, the provincial receiver was more important than royal *beden* receiver already in 1560, and increasingly so.

⁵³ James D. Tracy, *Holland Under Habsburg Rule*, p. 211-213

⁵⁴ James D. Tracy, *A Financial Revolution*, pp. 89-97, 132-138, 165-192; James D. Tracy, *The Founding of the Dutch Republic*, pp. 42-43, shows another example of management efficiency of the States compared with Spain; Marjolein 't Hart, *Money and trust*, p. 6-7, James D. Tracy, *Holland Under Habsburg Rule*, p. 184-185; *ivi*, p. 212: «So long as a parliamentary body retained the power of the purse, one would expect it in the normal course of things to develop some sort of bureaucratic apparatus of its own, as well as a greater sense of its dignity. For the parliaments of the Low Countries provinces, this natural tendency was accelerated by the enormous war debts that the government accumulated and by the imperious practical need to convert bankers' loans at up to twenty-two percent into funded or long-term debt that could be supported at much lower rates. The fact that Antwerp's bankers came to trust no one but the provincial states to sign short-term obligations not the King, not his fiscal officials, not the

great lords of his council was another powerful inducement for the states to develop their own fiscal competency»; Marjolein 't Hart, 1989, Public loans and moneylenders in the seventeenth century Netherlands, *Economic and Social history in the Netherlands, vol. 1*: pp. 119-120: «Public finance in Holland differed from that of other states in three respects: first, the voluntary character of the loans; second, the stability in interest payments through regular and permanent taxation; and third, the broad distribution of the debt over domestic investors. The achievement of this smoothly functioning system of public finance was accomplished in the course of the sixteenth century. It enabled long-term credit planning and was based on an expanded pool of lenders»

⁵⁵ James D. Tracy, *A Financial Revolution*, pp. 95-97, pp. 116-124; James D. Tracy, *Holland Under Habsburg Rule*, pp. 183-185; James D. Tracy, *The Founding of the Dutch Republic*, pp. 48-51; Summed up in Wantje Fritschy, *Public Finance of the Dutch Republic*, pp. 65-67

⁵⁶ Henry Kamen, 2005, *Spain, 1469-1714: A Society of Conflict*, Longman, England: pp. 95; John H. Elliott, 2002, *Imperial Spain, 1469-1716*, Penguin Books, London: ch. 5

⁵⁷ Marjolein 't Hart, *Money and trust*, pp. 7-8, James D. Tracy, *A Financial Revolution*, pp.

⁵⁸ Oscar Gelderblom and Joost Jonker, 2011, “Public Finance and Economic Growth: The Case of Holland in the Seventeenth Century”, *The Journal of Economic History*, Vol. 71, N.1: p. 4. Historical account of the political ceiling in Marjolein 't Hart, *The Making of a Bourgeois State*, pp. 69-184

⁵⁹ Source: James D. Tracy, *A Financial Revolution*, pp. 168-176 and Marjolein 't Hart, *Money and trust*, p. 6-7.

⁶⁰ Jan Luiten van Zanden, 2009, *The long road to the Industrial Revolution: the European economy in a global perspective, 1000–1800*, Brill, Leiden-Boston: ch. 7, with Maarten Prak; p. 210. Maarten Prak and Jan Luiten van Zanden, 2009, Tax Morale and Citizenship in the Dutch Republic, in Oscar Gelderblom (ed.), *The Political Economy of the Dutch Republic*, Ashgate, England: pp. 143-165. Cf. Maarten Prak, 2003, The politics of intolerance: citizenship and religion in the Dutch Republic (seventeenth to eighteenth centuries), in R. Po-chia Hsia (ed.), *A Companion to the Reformation World*, Malden, Oxford and Melbourne: pp. 162-167, sums up the historical practice in the Dutch cities related to citizenship.

⁶¹ James D. Tracy, *Holland Under Habsburg Rule* powerfully conveys such insight; Martin van Gelderen, *The Political Thought*, pp. 29-30

⁶² James D. Tracy, *Holland Under Habsburg Rule*, pp. 181-185; Oscar Gelderblom and Joost Jonker, *Public Finance and Economic Growth*, pp. 3-4. «Holland showed noticeably greater unity and cohesion

by the 1560s than it did at the beginning of the century. The change resulted from the pressure of external events, from the growth of provincial institutions and responsibilities, especially in the fiscal sphere, and from a common political consciousness centered on the idea of defending the privileges of the province and of its component members», James D. Tracy, *Holland Under Habsburg Rule*, p. 209. The external pressure to which Tracy is referring is here specifically interpreted as the movement of absolutist expansion that backfired instead in an absolutist reverse with a vengeance.

⁶³ *ivi*, p. 185. To sum up p. 6: «If the United Provinces of the seventeenth century did indeed show a remarkable ability to govern themselves on the basis of a working consensus of their various elites, it was partly because elements of that consensus (such as management of a public debt) were *already traditional*, having been imposed on Holland and other provinces in the previous century. In short, Netherlands provinces of the sixteenth century, adapting to new circumstances partly by virtue of their traditional autonomy and partly by virtue of pressure from their Habsburg rulers, were undergoing what can be seen in retrospect as an apprenticeship in self-government». Indeed, «the Netherlands parliaments took a uniquely active role in managing the debt, by issuing low-interest *renten* in their own name, so that the capital raised could be used by the government to pay off high-interest bankers' loans. In other words, the Netherlands provincial states, already distinguished by a structure that gave urban magistrates an unusual degree of influence in affairs of state, had fiscal responsibilities that made them even more indispensable to their ruler than similar bodies were in other territories. For a variety of reasons, then, Netherlands town magistrates were in a peculiarly strong position to wield the power of the purse». These reasons took root in the fact that the urban magistrates were at same time great part of the urban capital, and of the rural interests as well (through investments in land and proto-industrial activities, thereby partially protecting also the rural landscape – not always! The urban economy came first at any rate – as an extension of the urban economy policy). James D. Tracy, *Holland Under Habsburg Rule*, p. 6, 41, 52, 60-61 (Although Tracy's interpretation gainsays capitalist development)

⁶⁴ Quoted in Henry Kamen, *Spain, 1469-1714*, p. 146. See pp. 128-181

⁶⁵ Jonathan Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, pp 155-220

⁶⁶ Wantje Fritschy, 2017, *Public Finance of the Dutch Republic in Comparative Perspective The Viability of an Early Modern Federal State (1570s-1795)*, Brill, Leiden-Boston: p. 86

⁶⁷ Alberto Clerici, *Costituzionalismo, contrattualismo*; cf. Martin van Gelderen, *The Political Thought*; Hans, Willem Blom, 1995, *Causality and Morality in Politics: The Rise of Naturalism in Dutch Seventeenth-Century Political Thought*, Rotterdam: pp. 33-66

⁶⁸ Brian Downing, *The Military Revolution and Political Change*, p. 216. Cf. Henk van Nierop, *Alva's Throne*.

⁶⁹ By 1668, early funds – provided by Calvinists – were already used up, Geoffrey Parker, 2002, *The Dutch Revolt*, Harmondsworth: pp. 94-98. Furthermore, The same Orange disposed great portion of his wealth up to pauperized it. In 1569, the army was temporary dismissed. Orange arranged loans through England: Queen Elisabeth accorded 0.6 million guilders, *ivi*, p. 148

⁷⁰ James D. Tracy, *The Founding of the Dutch Republic*, pp. 103-113, 179-186. During the 80's, the States of Holland tried to recoup creditworthiness. Only in 1594 the States agreed to sell *renten* again, but on the provincial credit, not on the one of the cities; Oscar Gelderblom and Joost Jonker, *Public Finance and Economic Growth*, pp. 1-9.

⁷¹ James D. Tracy, 2009, Holland's New Fiscal Regime, 1572–1576, in Oscar Gelderblom (ed.), *The Political Economy of the Dutch Republic*, Ashgate, England: p. 42: «At the first session of the new regime (15 July 1572), the Lords States voted to divert the excise and land-tax to the needs of war, specifically to the payment of the all-important town garrisons. This meant of course that interest payments on States of Holland *renten* were effectively suspended». See what happened later indeed, when the new reform of 1574 passed: «In theory, the *repartitiën* were usually intended to supply what was lacking from the *gemene middelen* to make up South Holland's monthly quotas of 30,000, 45,000, or 55,000 guilders; the loans involved should thus have been repaid from future *gemene middelen* income. But since the precious receipts were always needed for the war, the burgher loans had to be continued into an indefinite future». In this regard the viability of the financial market was obstructed, *ivi*, pp. 46-51.

⁷² *Ivi*, p. 45: «Out of necessity, the difference between *gemene middelen* income and the costs of war was made up by borrowing on a massive scale. Since burghers found their own town corporations more credit-worthy than the province of Holland, the provincial war budget depended on the willingness of the town corporations to serve as fiscal intermediaries. In other words, magistrates induced their fellow-townsmen to lend to the province by pledging the faith and credit of the town corporation as a guarantor for debts charged to the States»

⁷³ Wantje Fritschy, 2003, "A financial revolution reconsidered. Public finance in Holland during the Dutch Revolt, 1658-1648", *Economic History Review*, vol. 56: pp. 59-86; James D. Tracy, *Holland's New Fiscal Regime*; Oscar Gelderblom and Joost Jonker, *Public Finance and Economic Growth*, p. 2-3: this double strategy, the two historians asserts indeed, was «a dynamic process» boosted by the economic growth. Cf. Wantje Fritschy, *Public Finance of the Dutch Republic*, p. 62-73

⁷⁴ Jan de Vries and Ad van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, pp. 196-209, 272-279; Jonathan Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade*, pp. 17-36

⁷⁵ James D. Tracy, *The Founding of the Dutch Republic*, p. 125-126

⁷⁶ Wantje Fritschy, *Public Finance of the Dutch Republic*, pp. 90-91

⁷⁷ Wantje Fritschy, *A financial revolution reconsidered*, pp. 68-69; Wantje Fritschy, *Public Finance of the Dutch Republic*, pp. 84-ff

⁷⁸ Tracy, *The Founding of the Dutch Republic*, pp. 175-176. See also James D. Tracy, *Holland's New Fiscal Regime*, pp. 44-45. Cf. Wantje Fritschy, *Public Finance of the Dutch Republic*, pp. 69-73. The historian asserts the increasing role of the excises on beer and wine from 8 percent in the 1550s to 20 percent in the 1560s for the Holland's fiscality.

⁷⁹ Only for costs of the war not covered by the *gemene middelen*, money had to be raised on credit, James D. Tracy, *The Founding of the Dutch Republic*, p. 171-ff.

⁸⁰ «A number of provincial district receivers were appointed in addition to Holland's provincial receiver in Delft called, from then on, Holland's General Receiver. Five receivers were appointed in Holland's Southern Quarter, and seven in Holland's Northern Quarter, each tax district consisting of a city with its surrounding countryside containing other towns and villages, all receiving the same kind of provincial taxes and all at the same rate. In the end all eighteen cities that would come to be represented in the States of Holland would house a district receiver. The receivers remained officials of the province not of the city. They were not allowed to take orders from city governments in their tax districts. The collection of the taxes would be leased, and the auctions of the tax leases had to be supervised by two representatives from other districts to prevent fraudulent practices serving particular local interests. Not individual cities, but Holland's 'urban system' was the crucial fundament for its new fiscal system» Wantje Fritschy, *Public Finance of the Dutch Republic*, pp. 60-61

⁸¹ In sum Wantje Fritschy, *A financial revolution reconsidered*, pp. 59-74; James D. Tracy, *The Founding of the Dutch Republic*, pp. 103-109, 175-179. Against Fritschy, the distinguished historian here envisages

«a second phase of fiscal devolution». However, in fact, it can be well construed as a further round of financial urban creditworthiness consolidation – cities indeed were to provide «weekly 'loans' based on local taxation» to pay garrisons, pp. 113-115, 124-125

⁸² Wantje Fritschy, *Public Finance of the Dutch Republic*, pp. 86, 88

⁸³ Oscar Gelderblom and Joost Jonker, *Public Finance and Economic Growth*, p. 5, suggested that the reorganization ended to arrange a «uniform tax system». Uniformity spelt the presence of a relational continuum in fiscal matter between center and locality, an organizational improvement. Indeed provincial excises and the urban ones continued to be placed side by side. Wantje Fritschy, *A financial revolution reconsidered*, p.70, see p. 75 «In 1587 Holland decided to recognize city debt as provincial debt and from 1588 an amount of 1.5 million florins of what had been city debt was serviced by provincial taxation»

⁸⁴ Wantje Fritschy, *A financial revolution reconsidered*, pp. 80. Cf. Wantje Fritschy, *Public Finance of the Dutch Republic*, p. 61

⁸⁵ Wantje Fritschy, *Public Finance of the Dutch Republic*, pp. 104-112

⁸⁶ Cf. Henk van Nierop, 2003, *Alva's Throne – making the sense of the revolt of the Netherlands*, in Graham Darby (ed.), *The Origins and Development of the Dutch Revolt*, Routledge, London: pp. 29-48.

⁸⁷ H.G. Koenigsberg, 2001, *Monarchies, States General and Parliaments. The Netherland in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth century*, Cambridge University Press: p. 282. H. G. Koenigsberger, *Why did the States General*, pp. 106-111; p. 109: «It was the first time that anything as revolutionary and ambitious had been attempted in a major European country. It was, in its own way, as different from *dominium politicum et regale* as was absolute monarchy». Hans Blom, *Causality and Morality in Politics*, pp. 43-ff . See for a thorough historical account James D. Tracy, 2004, *For Holland's Garden, The war aims of the States of Holland, 1572-1588*, Third Golden Age Lecture delivered on 21 October 2004, Universiteit van Amsterdam: pp. 13-19; J.C Boogman, *The Union of Utrecht*, p. 388-389; Jonathan Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, pp. 291-297

⁸⁸ J. C. Boogman, *The Union of Utrecht*, p. 390

⁸⁹ James D. Tracy, *For Holland's Garden*, pp. 19-23; Wantje Fritschy, *Public Finance of the Dutch Republic*, pp. 95-101; Jonathan Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, pp. 276-290

This is not say that urban-rural capitalism developed fully-fledged also in Groningen for example, but that a logic of capitalist sort started to run the strategies of power of the States Generals as a whole, pursuant to the Holland(-Zeeland)'s lead, see C. Boogman, *The Union of Utrecht*, p. 389-400; by contrast

this is to say that conflict or contention was the norm but co-operation became – and was to be in time – the rule. See H. Wansink, 1971, *Holland and Six Allies: the Republic of the Seven United Provinces*, in J.S. Bromley and E.H. Kossmann, *Britain and the Netherlands, Vol. IV, Metropolis, dominion and Province*, Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague: pp. 133-156, Jonathan Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, pp. 247-252 and Wantje Fritschy, *Public Finance of the Dutch Republic*, pp. 112-121 to account for the power conflict and the socio-fiscal differences between the Provinces. This uphold even more the assumption according to which the Dutch Republic was logically-combined and respectful of the composite nature of Dutch society. The Republic's strategy was, and was to be, of encompassing, and up to an extent, respecting the sociospatial differences. A good instance is the difference in the quality and quantity of the taxes levied and the socioeconomic differences among the provinces that were geared to a respectful expansion of the different economies in order to propel or support the expansion of the Republic as a whole. as Boogman says: «there were such differences among the provinces in point of material prosperity (the wealthy province of Holland of course assumed a unique position) that the levying of the general consumption duties favoured by Holland did not turn out to be practicable»

⁹⁰ Jonathan Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, pp. 290; H. Wansink, *Holland and Six Allies*, p. 154: «It would be unwise, by way of a conclusion, to consider whether the Dutch Republic constituted a federal state (*bondsstaat*) or a confederation (*statenbond*). The Dutch constitution was far from static; it was in a process of constant change. So were the relations between metropolis and provinces. The highly complex machinery of government, however, made it possible for the different elements of Dutch society to be heard and to exercise their influence [through the] unifying factors working in the Republic: the stadholdership, Holland's hegemony, a form of nationalism developed by the Patriots, religion, common experience and common language. And supra-provincial ties between regent families could be added to this»

⁹¹ J.C Boogman, *The Union of Utrecht*, pp. 390-392

⁹² James D. Tracy, *For Holland's Garden*, pp. 24-25; Jonathan Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, pp. 246-247; J. C. Boogman, *The Union of Utrecht*, p. 401; see extensive J.L. Price, 1996, *Holland and the Dutch Republic in the Seventeenth Century: The Politics of Particularism*, Clarendon Press

⁹³ See H. Wansink, *Holland and Six Allies*, p. 139

⁹⁴ Quoted in Jonathan Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, pp 234

⁹⁵ Ivi, p. 19 and Martin van Gelderen, *The Political Thought*, pp. 199-211

⁹⁶ See De la court and wests..

⁹⁷ Since the outbreak of the Revolt in the 1570's the towns had 18 votes at their command in the Estates of Holland, whereas there was only one vote for the nobility. «The overwhelming majority of the Holland authorities was for that matter also apparently convinced that the pointer of the scales of Holland's interest in respect of the Union was clearly moving towards the credit side. The outer provinces might at times be somewhat obstructionist, it is true; however, resolutions of the Estates of Holland were far more frequently converted into Generality resolutions without too much difficulty.» J.C Boogman, *The Union of Utrecht*, pp. 393, 397

⁹⁸ Martin van Gelderen, *The Political Thought*, p. 59; Wantje Fritschy, *Public Finance of the Dutch Republic*, pp. 125-ff . Cf. James D. Tracy, *For Holland's Garden*, p. 1 for the original aims of the States General. For the main tasks of the central state see Marjolein 't Hart, 1993, Freedom and restrictions. State and economy in the Dutch Republic, 1570-1670, in Karel Davids and Leo Noordegraaf (eds.), *The Dutch Economy in the Golden Age*, NEHA, Amsterdam: pp. 105-130

⁹⁹ John H. Grever, 1982, “The structure of decision-making in the States General of the Dutch Republic 1660–68”, *Parliaments, Estates and Representation*, vol. 2, N. 2: p. 139, 151; J.C Boogman, *The Union of Utrecht*, p. 379. See what Rowen about Dutch political dynamics: «in a political structures such as that if the Dutch Republic, where there were so few paid officials and these were usually administrators rather than leaders, and where political power was distributed all up and down the scale across the country, governance was matter of persuasion than of command», Herbert H. Rowen, 1988, *The Prince of Orange. The Stadholders in the Dutch Republic*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: p. 88

¹⁰⁰ Marjolein 't Hart, *The Dutch Wars of Independence*, p. 34; Jonathan Israel, *Dutch Primacy*

¹⁰¹ J.C. Boogman aptly termed it a confederative federation: «the Dutch Republic must undoubtedly be considered as a *mixtum compositum*: a confederation of States with some essential features of a federal State. The Dutch 'confederative federation' was one of the hegemonic kind», J.C Boogman, *The Union of Utrecht*, p. 399. We could call the Dutch Republic also Holland's federal state, since the Hollands power and predominance in any confederal matters such as foreign policy, military and so on.

¹⁰² Summary in D. W. Davis, 2014, *A Primer of Dutch Seventeenth Century Overseas Trade*, Springer, Berlin and Jonathan Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade*, pp. 38-79; Jan de Vries and Ad van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, pp. 195-272, 350-409; Jason Moore, 2011, “‘Amsterdam is Standing on Norway’ Part I: The Alchemy of Capital, Empire and Nature in the Diaspora of Silver, 1545–

1648, Part I-II”, *Journal of Agrarian Change*, Vol. 10 N. 1-2: pp. 33-68; pp. 188-227; central, Marjolein ‘t Hart, *The Making of a Bourgeois State* and Marjolein ‘t Hart, 2014, *The Dutch Wars of Independence Warfare and Commerce in the Netherlands 1570–1680*, Routledge, London-NY; Pepijn Brandon, 2015, *War, Capital, and the Dutch State (1588-1795)*, Brill, Leiden-Boston; Violet Barbour, 1963, *Capitalism in Amsterdam in the 17th century*, The university of Michigan Press: esp. pp.60-85; Immanuel Wallerstein, 2011 [1980], *The Modern World-System, II. Mercantilism and the Consolidation of the European World-Economy 1600-1750*, University of California Press, Berkeley: pp. 36-73; Giovanni Arrighi, 2010 [1994], *The Long Twentieth Century Money, Power, and the Origins of Our Times*, Verso, London-NY: pp. 130-147.

¹⁰³ Wantje Fritschy, *Public Finance of the Dutch Republic*, pp. 89; cf. Marjolein ‘t Hart, *The Making of a Bourgeois State*

¹⁰⁴ Jan Luiten van Zanden and Bas van Leeuwen, 2012, “Persistent but not consistent: The growth of national income in Holland 1347–1807”, *Exploration In Economic History*, vol. 49: p. 126-127; Wantje Fritschy, *Public Finance of the Dutch Republic*, pp. 87-88

¹⁰⁵ See Marjolein ‘t Hart, *The Making of a Bourgeois State*, esp. pp. 118-148

¹⁰⁶ See chapter 3

¹⁰⁷ Jan Luiten van Zanden and Bas van Leeuwen, *Persistent but not consistent*; Oscar C. Gelderblom, 2003, “From Antwerp to Amsterdam: The Contribution of Merchants from the Southern Netherlands to the Commercial Expansion of Amsterdam (C. 1540-1609)”, *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)*, Vol. 26, N. 3: pp. 247-282 ; cf. Jonathan Israel, 1983, “the economic contribution of Dutch Sephardi Jewry to Holland’s Golden Age, 1595-1713, *TvG*, vol. 96: pp. 506-509

¹⁰⁸ Wantje Fritschy, *Public Finance of the Dutch Republic*, pp. 91, The provincial fiscality developed during the second part of the sixteenth century, displayed a rather regressive character, and this enabled the Dutch to balance the tax burden between luxury products and primary goods, both in expansion

¹⁰⁹ Alva essayed in an attempt of centralization of the tax system «in *all* the seventeen provinces at once» in order to cater to the military needs. During the biennial 1570-1572, by means of an amalgam of threat and bargaining, Alva’s plain worked: the «combination of the ‘hundredth penny’ and the largely increased *beden*-receipts from the Netherlands yielded the enormous sum of nearly 3.7 million on average per year». Furthermore the general difference between Alva’s regime and the Dutch fiscal policy «was

that most of the common means were taxed according to quantities, the tenth penny according to values».

Wantje Fritschy, *Public Finance of the Dutch Republic*, pp. 73-81, 86.

¹¹⁰ Aberto Tenenti, 1997, *Dalle Rivolte alle Rivoluzioni*, Il Mulino, Bologna: pp. 52-53; Martin van Gelderen, 1992, *The Political Thought*, pp. 260-263. See Andrew Pettegree, 1996, The politics of toleration in the Free Netherlands, 1572-1620, in Ole Peter Grell and Bob Scribner (ed.), *Tolerance and intolerance in the European Reformation*, Cambridge University Press: pp. 182-198

¹¹¹ I talk of predation. Indeed, «The States accepted the Hundredth Penny quite quickly, but the Twentieth and Tenth Penny aroused vehement opposition. The States realized that the two permanent taxes were meant to make the central government financially independent and that Alva's fiscal policy was an attempt to alter radically the balance of power in favour of the central government, to make Philip II *senior assoluto* in the Low Countries.», Martin van Gelderen, *The Political Thought*, p. 41. Cf. Cf. Henk van Nierop, *Alva's Throne*

¹¹² Charles Tilly, 1993, *European Revolutions, 1492 – 1992*, Blackwell, Oxford: ch. 3; Aberto Tenenti, *Dalle Rivolte alle Rivoluzioni*, p. 73,

¹¹³ Charles Tilly, *European Revolutions*, pp. 17-19, 105. A revolutionary sequence entails a scission of and a contention on sovereignty, a bout of struggle and the final reestablishment of the sovereignty with a new regime. The period of the struggle and of the change between the inception and the closure of the phase of multiple sovereignty is the revolutionary process. Tilly rejects indeed the advancement of Calvinism in the Northern Low Countries as a revolution

¹¹⁴ C. Boogman, *The Union of Utrecht*, p. 379. Even religious questions jeopardized the general political cooperation, *ivi*, p. 393

¹¹⁵ Johan Huizinga, 1968, *Dutch Civilization in the Seventeenth Century: and other essays*, Harper & Row, London: 21. C. Boogman, *The Union of Utrecht*, pp. 383-387

¹¹⁶ See, as instance, Martin van Gelderen, *The Political Thought*, pp. Jonathan Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, pp. 21-29, esp. 28-29 for the “proto-nationalist” revolt of the Dutch (Holland and Zeeland) at the death of Charles the Bold.

¹¹⁷ H. G. Koenigsberger, 1982, “Why did the States General of the Netherlands become revolutionary?”, *Parliaments, Estates and Representation*, Vol. 2, N. 2: p. 106, «What is surprising is that, until quite recently, historians have made so little attempt to study in depth just how and why Philip II did make the decision to send the Duke of Alva to the Netherlands and kill off the system of *dominium politicum et*

regale altogether and at the very moment when the position of the monarchy in this system was stronger than it had ever been. [...]Alva's regime effectively abolished all those parts of Netherlands public law which he regarded as getting in the way of absolute royal government [...].This was therefore *dominium regale* with a vengeance; but immediately the weaknesses of this system became apparent. The army on which it ultimately rested required vast sums of money. These sums could only be raised by massive and highly unpopular taxation. This situation was a prescription not so much for revolution as for armed rebellion and guerilla war by a determined minority». Henk van Nierop, *Alva's Throne*, pp. 35-38

¹¹⁸ *ivi*, pp. 27-30; pp. 36-37

¹¹⁹ Anonymous, 1581, *Broederlijke waerschouwinghe aen allen Christen broeders*, quoted in Alberto Clerici, *Costituzionalismo, contrattualismo*, p. 25. My translation from Italian

¹²⁰ Martin van Gelderen, *The Political Thought*, p. 27-30; Alberto Clerici, *Costituzionalismo, contrattualismo*, pp. 43-47, 61-65; See for historical account Jonathan Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, pp. 21-35,

¹²¹ Furthermore, the same Italian historian suggests that such ensemble of documents and constitutional checks on the rulers may be even termed as «un governo di tipo parlamentare», *ivi*, p. 61

¹²² *Ivi*, p. 55

¹²³ See *ivi*, pp. 27-29

¹²⁴ *ivi*, pp. 41, 43: in 1571, «in July Alva ordered the levying and collection of the Twentieth and Tenth Penny. The States were shocked and vigorously but vainly protested. [But] Probably nowhere was the Tenth Penny actually collected. [...] The obstructionism of the States was partly motivated by the popular anger Alva's decision had aroused. Numerous towns were confronted with riots and strikes, and particularly in Brussels, Alva's residence, it was extremely difficult to calm down popular fury»

¹²⁵ *ivi*, pp. 29-30; p. 121: «In his *Warning Orange* reminded the inhabitants of the Netherlands of their traditional form of government. He pointed out, in a language almost identical to Wesembeke's, that the Low Countries had been governed by their princes 'in all sweetness, right and reason' and 'in accordance with their freedoms, rights, customs and privileges', which the inhabitants, 'as exceptional lovers and advocates of their liberty and enemies of all violence and oppression', had acquired from their princes. To uphold these freedoms and privileges, *which had brought the fatherland great wealth and prosperity*, so it was added, the subjects had concluded a contract with their princes, confirmed and sealed by solemn oath, which bound the inhabitants to obedience only if their privileges were indeed maintained. Thus Orange

too referred to the clause of obedience of the Joyous Entry of Brabant and argued (passing over the question whether this charter applied to other Dutch provinces as well) that the inhabitants of the Netherlands had the right to disobey a prince who offended the privileges and freedoms. The Dutch were therefore urged to '*remember their usual freedom and prosperity*', to '*meet the commitment and promise they had to their 'fatherland'*' and to do everything to 'restore themselves with violence and power in their old usual liberty'», italics added

¹²⁶ Alberto Clerici, *Costituzionalismo, contrattualismo*, p. 63

¹²⁷ Martin van Gelderen, *The Political Thought*, p. 28: «They dealt with the problems of the day, and reflected the power relations between the parties involved; their application was never a simple legal matter, but depended primarily on fluctuations in power relations»

¹²⁸ Guido Bentivoglio, 1640, *Della guerra di Fiandre descritta dal cardinale Bentivoglio*, Venezia: part I, vol. 5: p. 110, italics added, and Alberto Clerici, *Costituzionalismo, contrattualismo*, p. 84

¹²⁹ William Temple, 1705, *Observation upon the United Provinces of the Netherlands*, London: pp. 39-40 (quoted also in Clerici, p. 84)

¹³⁰ Jacob van Wesembeek, 1568, *Rescript et Declaration du tres Illustre Prince d'Orange*, Antwerp, quoted in Alberto Clerici, *Costituzionalismo, contrattualismo*, p. 87

¹³¹ Martin van Gelderen, *The Political Thought*, p. 120

¹³² Anonymous, 1568, *Fidelle exhortation aux Inhabitans due Pays*, Knuttel, p. 11, quoted in Alberto Clerici, *Costituzionalismo, contrattualismo*, pp. 89-90

¹³³ Alberto Clerici, *Costituzionalismo, contrattualismo*, pp. 92, 96-105

¹³⁴ Van Wesembeke, *De Bewijsinghe vande onschult van mijn heere Philip van Baenreheere Montmorency, Grave van Hoorne* ; Jacob van Wesembeke, 1568, *La defense de messire Antoine de Lalaing, comte de Hoochstrate* ; Jacobvan Wesembeke, 1569, *La defence de Jacques de Wesenbekejadis conseiller etpensionnaire de la ville a"Anvers, contre les indeves et iniques citations contre luy decretees* ; Jacobvan Wesembeke, 1569, *Corte Vermaninghe aen alle christenen oft vonnisse oft advis, met grooter wreetheit the wercke ghestelt teghen Heer Anthonis van Stralen, Borghemeester van Antwerpen ende commissaris generael vanden Staten der Nederlanden*

¹³⁵ Martin van Gelderen, *The Political Thought*, pp. 115-119

¹³⁶ Antwerp, the Flanders and all the south never developed capitalism *as an embedded logic of power*. Antwerp was in essence a *passive space through* which flows of capital and value coursed – «a passive

staple [in] a passive condition of mere storehouse» of flowing value, Jonathan Israel, *Dutch Primacy*, p.7 and 408. C. Boogman, *The Union of Utrecht*, p. 389: «That the North was not lost to the cause of the revolt, that the Closer Union was at least to maintain itself, was mainly due to Holland. In explanation of the decisive role played by this province, I should particularly like to point to the fact that Holland, with its numerous towns, economically primarily concerned with maritime trade and fishing, was, as regards social structure, far more homogeneous than Brabant and Flanders and, accordingly, much less exposed to dissension and civil war. In the industrial cities of the South the class contradictions were far more pronounced than in the commercial cities of Holland and Zeeland. I have already drawn attention to the fact that Parma's military successes in the South can partly be explained by the sharp contrast, which also shows unmistakably the character of a class contradiction, between the Walloon nobility and the guild democracy in Ghent and other cities. In Holland the fanatical agitation of the radical Flemish calvinists would later be denigratingly described as 'flandriseren'».

Cf. Catharina Lis and Hugo Soly, 1997, "Different Paths of Development: Capitalism in the Northern and Southern Netherlands during the Late Middle Ages and the Early Modern Period", *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)*, Vol. 20, N. 2: pp. 211-242, for a very different – nineteenth-century-derived, standard – historical characterization of capitalism in the Netherlands: « In the long run, the Southern trajectory proved the most conducive to structural economic change by allowing industrial production to develop its own dynamics not controlled by the logic of circulating capital», p. 237

¹³⁷ Martin van Gelderen, *The Political Thought*, p. 46; E. H. Kossmann and A. F. Mellink, 1975, *Texts concerning the revolt of the Netherlands*, Cambridge University Press, NY: pp. 127-132; C. Boogman, *The Union of Utrecht*, p. 380; and cf. Ch. 3

¹³⁸ *Brief discours sur la negotiation de lapaix, qui se tradepresentement a Coloigne entre le Roy a"Espagne, & les Etats du Pays Bas* (Leiden, 1579) quoted in Martin van Gelderen, *The Political Thought*, p. 144; Alberto Clerici, *Costituzionalismo, contrattualismo*, p. 153. Hans Blom, *Causality and Morality in Politics*, p. 51

¹³⁹ Not having regular tax revenues of its own, the State General could not sell (enough) annuities on the credit of the 'common body' of the States General assembly itself. The urban-rural spaces moved in. H. G. Koenigsberger, *Why did the States General*, pp. 110-111; James D. Tracy, *For Holland's Garden*, p. 15. The idea about «general means» to pay the *United Provinces'* army popped up already in 1576. See Wantje Fritschy, *Public Finance of the Dutch Republic*, p. 112-132.

¹⁴⁰ James D. Tracy, *For Holland's Garden*, pp. 19-23: «Under Hapsburg rule, the [oligarchies] had been frustrated by watching their tax revenues go for “putting out fires” elsewhere, even as enemy soldiers made punishing forays into their own land, even their province. Now they had a chance of making sure the same thing did not happen again».

¹⁴¹ Wantje Fritschy, *Public Finance of the Dutch Republic*, pp. 121-125 for the Republic quota-system

¹⁴² Nor in Zeeland, neither in the other provinces to be sure, mechanism of this sort or a fully-fledged network of common means receivers came into existence «that could have reinforced the fiscal possibilities of its ‘urban system’ by allowing a very efficient access to large numbers of small lenders in the whole province like in Holland [...].Notwithstanding [...] a new fiscal system, similar to that which had resulted from Holland’s urban system, came into existence in Zeeland since the first meeting of a ‘free’ States-assembly in Zeeland, mainly consisting of a collectivity of cities, just like in Holland. By means of this new fiscal system, public revenue increased from less than 100,000 guilders in 1574 to more than 1.2 million guilders in 1600. The decline to about 0.8 million guilders in 1609 does not make the fiscal performance of this new fiscal system less impressive», Wantje Fritschy, *Public Finance of the Dutch Republic*, p. 111. However, «The autonomous development of the public finance of the other provinces did not preclude that their public finance became increasingly comparable to that of Holland. Holland remained financially always by far the strongest link in the federal chain, however, not only in its wealth and the size of its public revenue, but also in the sophistication of its financial policy and the quality and stringency of its financial administration», pp.161-163

¹⁴³ Jonathan Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, pp. 233-254. «Important in this respect was of course the cardinal fact that the wealthy maritime province was as a rule better able to fulfil its heavy financial commitments to the Generality than the other provinces. It moreover turned out that Holland was sometimes prepared to come to the aid of the admiralties financially and to make advances to other provinces on their quotas owed to the Generality. Holland’s federal mindedness had its firm base in the material interests of the province: with a view to the huge worldwide economic interests it was precisely this very province, this global commercial centre, which profited by a sound and efficient functioning of the Generality system», C. Boogman, *The Union of Utrecht*, p. 400. James D. Tracy, *The Founding of the Dutch Republic*, pp. 215-315; James D. Tracy, *For Holland's Garden*

¹⁴⁴ Hans Blom, *Causality and Morality in Politics*, pp. 50-51

¹⁴⁵ Karl Davids, *The Rise and Decline of Dutch Technological Leadership*, Brill, Leiden and Karl Davids, 1993, Technological change and the economic expansion of the Dutch Republic, 1580-1680, in in Karel Davids and Leo Noordegraaf (eds.), *The Dutch Economy in the Golden Age*, NEHA, Amsterdam: pp. 84-85; Jan Luiten van Zanden and Bas van Leeuwen, *Persistent but not consistent*, p. 125 and 128: «The Holland economy went through a phase of intense technological change, between the middle of the 16th and the middle of the 17th centuries, which was an important factor behind the rapid growth of GDP in this period; before and after this 'big wave', technological change was much slower, but it continued to contribute to growth after the 1660s»; Jan De Vries, *The Dutch rural economy*, pp. 188-90 and Jan de Vries, *The labour markets*, p. 56, 69

¹⁴⁶ Of course a major boom involved international trade which syphoned off an impressive volume of value at home and innervated in depth the structure of accumulation, but here we are focused on a different point. See Jonathan Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade*, pp. 1-292

¹⁴⁷ Jan L. Van Zanden, *Economic Growth in the Golden Age*, pp. 7-17, table 10; Leo Noordegraaf, 1993, Dutch industry in the Golden Age, in *ivi*: pp. 140-146; P.w. Klein and W. Veluwenkamp, 1993, The role of the entrepreneur in the economic expansion of the Dutch Republic, in *ivi*: pp. 29-30

¹⁴⁸ Jan L. Van Zanden, *Economic Growth in the Golden Age*, pp. 9-10; Oscar Gelderblom and Joost Jonker, *Public Finance and Economic Growth*; Jan de Vries, *The labor markets*, p. 62: «The argument that the rising wages in the decades after 1570 is the result of a vigorous growth in the demand for labour is bolstered by the behaviour of relative wages. The wages of unskilled labour - least able to create artificial scarcity of supply - rose more rapidly than did craftsmen's wages, causing the skill premium to decline from some 80 percent in the period 1550-1574 to 40 percent, and often less, in the decades after 1630. The relative rise of unskilled wages testifies to a rapid economic expansion pressing upon the supply of labor». Jan de Vries and Ad van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, pp. 632-646; Leo Noordegraaf, *Dutch industry in the Golden Age*, pp. 148-153

¹⁴⁹ Jan L. Van Zanden, 1993, Economic Growth in the Golden Age: The Development of the Economy of Holland, 1500- 1650, in Karel Davids and Leo Noordegraaf (eds.), *The Dutch Economy in the Golden Age*, NEHA, Amsterdam: p. 16 He estimates that wealth per capita in Holland rose from 300 guilders in 1600 to 650 guilders 50 years later; Jan de Vries, 1993, The labour markets, in Karel Davids and Leo Noordegraaf (eds.), *The Dutch Economy in the Golden Age*, NEHA, Amsterdam; Jan De Vries and Ad Van der Woude, *The First Modern economy*, pp. 116-17

¹⁵⁰ Jan L. Van Zanden, *Economic Growth*, p. 20

¹⁵¹ Sources: Dormans, *Het tekort*, 52, 69; I.M.F. Fritschy, *De patriotten en de financiën van de Bataafse Republiek* ('s-Gravenhage 1988; Hollandse historische reeks X) 36, 47-48, Jan L. Van Zanden, *Economic Growth*, p. 21

¹⁵² For a historical portrayal of Dutch military logistics see Olaf van Nimwegen, 2010, *The Dutch Army and the Military Revolutions, 1588–1688*, Woodbridge, Boydell: pp. 123-132. Cf. Geoffrey Parker, 1996, *The Military Revolution: Military Innovation and the Rise of the West, 1500-1800*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press: ch. 2, esp. pp. 61-81

¹⁵³ The increase in power the Dutch attained was related with no doubt to the improvement of the governmental dynamics of the Dutch war space, since «in the age of the military revolution, the skill of individual governments and generals in supplying war often became the pivot about which the outcome of armed conflict turned», Geoffrey Parker, 1996, *The Military Revolution*, p. 44. James D. Tracy, *The Founding of the Dutch Republic*, pp. 229-235 and ch. 11; Olaf van Nimwegen, *The Dutch Army and the Military Revolutions, 1588–1688*, pp 47-51; Marjolein 't Hart, *The Dutch Wars of Independence*, pp. 89-92, 159-163; Cf. Geoffrey Parker, *The Military Revolution*, pp. 65-81; Jeremy Black, *A Military Revolution*, pp. 46-51; Martin van Creveld, 2004, *Supplying War. Logistics from Wallenstein to Patton*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press: pp. 5-26

¹⁵⁴ Wantje Fritschy, *Public Finance of the Dutch Republic*, 147; Pepijn Brandon, *War, Capital, and the Dutch State*, pp. 213-215

¹⁵⁵ See Olaf van Nimwegen, *The Dutch Army and the Military Revolutions*, pp. 69-84

¹⁵⁶ Jan de Vries, *The labour markets*, p. 58. Between 1580 and 1620, «the effective supply of non-farm labor grew by nearly three percent per year».

¹⁵⁷ Ivi, p.69. See table 2a and 2b p. 73-74

¹⁵⁸ Marjolein 't Hart, *The United Provinces, 1579-1806*, pp. 310-315

¹⁵⁹ Marjolein 't Hart, 1989, “Cities and Statemaking in the Dutch Republic, 1580-1680”, *Theory and Society*, Vol. 18, N. 5: p. 679

¹⁶⁰ Marjolein 't Hart, *The United Provinces, 1579-1806*, p. 312

¹⁶¹ Cf. Olaf van Nimwegen, *The Dutch Army and the Military Revolutions*, pp. 73-74

¹⁶² Jan L. Van Zanden, 1993, Economic Growth in the Golden Age: The Development of the Economy of Holland, 1500- 1650, in Karel Davids and Leo Noordegraaf (eds.), *The Dutch Economy in the Golden*

Age, NEHA, Amsterdam: p. 16. He estimates that wealth per capita in Holland rose from 300 guilders in 1600 to 650 guilders 50 years later; Jan De Vries and Ad Van der Woude, *The First Modern economy*, pp. 116–17; Jonathan Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade*, pp. 1-292. Cf. Jan de Vries, *The labor markets*, p. 62: «The argument that the rising wages in the decades after 1570 is the result of a vigorous growth in the demand for labour is bolstered by the behaviour of relative wages. The wages of unskilled labour - least able to create artificial scarcity of supply - rose more rapidly than did craftsmen's wages, causing the skill premium to decline from some 80 percent in the period 1550-1574 to 40 percent, and often less, in the decades after 1630. The relative rise of unskilled wages testifies to a rapid economic expansion pressing upon the supply of labor.

¹⁶³ Although in the second half to the seventeenth century the equilibrium trap hit during the Anglo-Dutch wars. Oscar Gelderblom and Joost Jonker, 2011, *Public Finance and Economic Growth*, pp 10-15, 16-18, 25-27. See also cf. Oscar Gelderblom and Joost Jonker, 2009, *The Conditional miracle. Institutional change, fiscal policy, bond markets, and interest rates in Holland, 1514-1713*, Utrecht University working paper, March 26, 2009, and Marjolein 't Hart, *Public loans and moneylenders*, pp. 119-120.

For instance, interests paid to military solicitors can be considered as part of war expenditure in the form of short-term debts. This is compatible with the policy of «avoiding loans in life annuities», Wantje Fritschy, *Public Finance of the Dutch Republic*, p.161-163.

¹⁶⁴ Wantje Fritschy, *Public Finance of the Dutch Republic*, p. 156 asserts that «the most important part of public expenditure after 'war' was 'debt service', consisting of the interest payments and debt redemption on the provincial debts and the Generality debt»; see pp. 163

¹⁶⁵ Pepijn Brandon, *War, Capital, and the Dutch State*

¹⁶⁶ William Aglionby, *The Present State of the United*, p. 121

¹⁶⁷ Marjolein 't Hart, *The Dutch Wars of Independence*, pp. 126-147. Olaf van Nimwegen, *The Dutch Army and the Military Revolutions*, pp. 51 asserts that the *solliciteurs-militair* were the best agents for the organization of the financial-administrative relations between government and army until 1672.

¹⁶⁸ Pepijn Brandon, *War, Capital, and the Dutch State*, pp. 221-228

¹⁶⁹ Ivi pp. 66-70, 213-220

¹⁷⁰ Marjolein 't Hart, *The Dutch Wars of Independence*, p. 158

¹⁷¹ Wantje Fritschy, *A financial revolution reconsidered*

¹⁷² Wantje Fritschy, *Public Finance of the Dutch Republic*, pp. 174-187, 203. See also Marjolein 't Hart, *Freedom and restrictions*, pp. 111-115

¹⁷³ Wantje Fritschy, *Public Finance of the Dutch Republic*, p. 169; Wantje Fritschy, 2009, The Efficiency of Taxation in Holland, in Oscar Gelderblom (ed.), *The Political Economy of the Dutch Republic*, Ashgate, England: pp. 55-84, summed up data in pp. 74 and 83-84 ; Marjolein 't Hart, *Freedom and restrictions*

¹⁷⁴ Marjolein 't Hart, *The Dutch Wars of Independence*, pp. 43-48, 85-100, 170-190

¹⁷⁵ Jan de Vries, 2009, The political economy of bread in the Dutch Republic, in Oscar Gelderblom (ed.), *The Political Economy of the Dutch Republic*, Ashgate, England: pp. 85-114, showed the importance of the interlocking of provincial fiscality and the urban-rural structure of production that influenced the military behavior

¹⁷⁶ Wantje Fritschy, *A financial revolution reconsidered*, p. 79

¹⁷⁷ Marjolein 't Hart, *The Dutch Wars of Independence*, p. 89

¹⁷⁸ Jan Glete, 2000, *Warfare at the sea, 1500-1650. Maritime conflicts and the transformation of Europe*, Routledge, London: p. 43-44: The state navy «developed in a distinctly maritime and non-noble environment and here almost exclusively masters with a mercantile background were hired to command the warships of the state». The assertion made by Glete represent one of the main point explored further in Brandon's study here cited. The conceit of governmental-business agencies slips over the historical role, composition and operations of the Dutch Admiralties.

About the state organization: in sum, the state organized the general imposition of custom duties and tariffs for import-export, the so-called *convooiën en licenten* – of local origin. Fiscal accumulation related to commerce was managed by the five leading naval governmental-business agencies, the admiralties, in order to protect the Dutch sea space whence capital accumulation drew strength and momentum directly – protection rent – and indirectly but consistently – international trade protection. Despite their role of formal organisms of the state, the Admiralties were completely embedded into, and enveloped by, the urban-rural framework of power because grafted «through a complex system of cross-representation, tying the five separate boards to local political elites while at the same time ensuring the involvement of the leading merchant families», Pepijn Brandon, *War, Capital, and the Dutch State*, p. 83. Pepijn Brandon, *Global power, local connections*, pp. 55-57

¹⁷⁹ Jan Gleete, *Warfare at the sea, 1500-1650*, p. 43, p. 169. «Private entrepreneurs in warfare at sea had a market because the states often lacked the necessary administrative competence to run a navy. One of these competencies was the skill to create efficient teams of seamen to man the ships. Private ship-owners normally had close contacts with the seafaring communities. They were in a good position to find skilled and experienced masters, pilots, boatswains and quartermasters who in their turn might find seamen with the combination of maritime and martial skills which made the crew efficient»

¹⁸⁰ Pepijn Brandon, *Global power, local connections*, pp. 55-64. As Brandon notes, «The structure of naval administration assured strong influence of local elites», p. 57. Despite their role of formal organisms of the state, the Admiralties were completely embedded into, and enveloped by, the urban-rural framework of power because grafted «through a complex system of cross-representation, tying the five separate boards to local political elites while at the same time ensuring the involvement of the leading merchant families», Pepijn Brandon, *War, Capital, and the Dutch State*, p. 83.

¹⁸¹ It was the flagship of Dutch economic power. Since the volume of demand, shipbuilding was a truly mass-production sector that brought into the coffers of admiralties and the pocket of privates large amounts of money. According to de Vries and van der Woude, shipbuilding was an industry which developed both in towns and countryside, but that had its roots in the latter. The space of mobilization of materials, products, labor and capital for shipbuilding was, as expected, the urban-rural complex as such. It displayed a proper and flexible division of labor that allowed for spatial and technological specialization, locating in sum repair activities and production respectively in towns and countryside. The most important shipbuilding centers were Dordrecht, Haarlem, Amsterdam, Edam, Hoorn, and Alkmaar. While larger port such as Amsterdam and Rotterdam were specialized in repair, along the river Zaan, during XVII century, the biggest center of ship mass production of the Republic developed. Smaller town ports such as Dordrecht were for the most engaged in both repair and construction. Specialization thus, but also innovation was the hallmark of Dutch shipbuilders in terms of technology, and management of units and stages of production. Estimates about the naval capacity of the Dutch fleet as a whole, for the second and third quarters of the seventeenth century, reckon 450,000 to 550,000 tons for the combined merchant, fishing and navy fleet – it is noteworthy that shipbuilders, mainly located in the rural centers of production had among the highest wages in Holland. See Classic, Richard Unger, 1978, *Dutch shipbuilding before 1800. Ships and guilds*, Assen; concise in Karel Davids, 2008, *The Rise and Decline of Dutch Technological Leadership*, Brill, Leiden: pp. 89-116, esp. 137-141; Pepijn Brandon, *War,*

Capital, and the Dutch State, pp. 164-207; Jan de Vries and Ad van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, pp. 296-300; Jan de Vries, *The labor markets*, p. 60

¹⁸² Frederic Lane, *Profits from Power*,

¹⁸³ Pepijn Brandon, *War, Capital, and the Dutch State*, pp. 83-138; Marjolein 't Hart, *The Dutch Wars of Independence*, pp. 127-130. Marjolein 't Hart, *Freedom and restrictions*, pp. 106-109. 't Hart recalls also that «although import and export duties were decided upon centrally, much of the implementation remained local [because by the same token] Trade and industry were influenced less by the central state than by the urban *keuren*. Indeed, local government was given a boost by the Revolt at the expense of central power. City councils, whose members were predominantly chosen by co-option and only rarely by the guilds, saw their powers increase. The larger cities gained a significant say in the provincial government, and thus had a voice in increasing provincial taxes. The powers of judicial bodies remained largely unchanged, most responsibilities devolving to city sheriff and bailiffs» p. 110, 115

¹⁸⁴ *Aenwysinge datmen van de Oost en West-Indische Compagnien een Compagnie dient te maecken* (Amsterdam 1644) A2 vso-A3, quoted in Pepijn Brandon, *War, Capital, and the Dutch State*, p. 94;

¹⁸⁵ Jan de Vries, *The labor markets*, p. 62, 68-69

¹⁸⁶ Jan Glete, 2000, *Warfare at the sea, 1500-1650. Maritime conflicts and the transformation of Europe*, Routledge, London: 58

¹⁸⁷ Jan L. Van Zanden, *Economic Growth in the Golden Age*, pp. 16-18. In this enormous motion of accumulation, «The most important factor [...] was no doubt domestic savings. [...] Per capita wealth increased considerably throughout the period 1500-1790 – by tenfold in real terms - and this increase was not offset by a similar fall in interest rate levels (they were more or less halved). As a result, per capita income from capital increased significantly; a not insignificant proportion of this increase consisted of income from foreign investments however».

¹⁸⁸ See in this respects, spates of state formation in one of the most relevant volume in Dutch history and historical sociology of the last decades: Marjolein 't Hart, *The Making of a Bourgeois State*, esp. ch. 3-4-5; for military organization see Olaf van Nimwegen, *The Dutch Army and the Military Revolutions*

¹⁸⁹ Olaf van Nimwegen, *The Dutch Army and the Military Revolutions*, pp. 126

¹⁹⁰ Geoffrey Parker, *The Military Revolution*; Michael Duffy (ed), 1980, *The Military Revolution and the State 1500-1800*, University of Essex Press, Great Britain

¹⁹¹ L. Andrè (ed.), 1947, *Le Testament Politique du Cardinal de Richelieu*, Paris : p. 480, quoted in Martin van Creveld, *Supplying War*, p. 17

¹⁹² See, as instance, Henk van Nierop, 2009, *Treason in the Northern Quarter: war, terror, and the rule of law in the Dutch Revolt*, Princeton University Press, Princeton-Oxford: pp. 51-71; cf. Geoffrey Parker, *The Military Revolution*, pp. 58-61

¹⁹³ William McNeill, 1984, *The Pursuit of Power: Technology, Armed Force, and Society since A.D. 1000*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago: pp. 127–39. See an example of state-led attempt of military logistics' rationalization in Olaf van Nimwegen, 2010, *The Dutch Army*, pp, 48-51. See also pp. 85-116 for military changes in Dutch army, and the second revolution, pp. 515-525. Cf. Michael Roberts, 1966, *The Military Revolution*, in Michael Roberts, *Essays in Swedish History*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis: pp. 195-225. see Geoffrey Parker, 1976, "The "Military Revolution," 1560-1660--a Myth?", *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 48, No. 2: pp. 198-202.

¹⁹⁴ Olaf van Nimwegen, *The Dutch Army and the Military Revolutions*, pp. ; Marjolein 't Hart, *The Dutch Wars of Independence*, pp. 37-76

¹⁹⁵ Marjolein 't Hart, *The Dutch Wars of Independence*, p. 42

¹⁹⁶ Olaf van Nimwegen, *The Dutch Army and the Military Revolutions*, pp. 22-33, 37-45, 47-51,

¹⁹⁷ Marjolein 't Hart, *The Dutch Wars of Independence*, pp. 37-48; Steven Gunn, David Grummitt, and Hans Cools, 2007, *War, State, and Society in England and the Netherlands 1477–1559*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: p. 4

¹⁹⁸ The science of military technology thrived in Holland, especially the engineering of fortifications and trenches that joined military personnel to civilian scholars and students in coordinated operations and activities, and this created of course opportunity to develop an economy and an accumulation of capital and thus to profit from military buildings and its development. Science and capital worked together to protect the environment and the economy as a whole

¹⁹⁹ Marjolein 't Hart, *The Dutch Wars of Independence*, p. 52-60, 97; See Olaf van Nimwegen, *The Dutch Army and the Military Revolutions*, pp. 22-51, 100-112; see for figures related to the impressive growth Geoffrey Parker, *The Military Revolution*, p. 20, 206

²⁰⁰ William Aglionby, *The Present State of the United Provinces*, 121-122

²⁰¹ William Aglionby, *The Present State of the United Provinces*, p. 122

²⁰² «A special problem of labour recruitment, already in the early seventeenth century, was formed by the large, but variable, demand for soldiers and sailors to serve in both the Dutch military and the Dutch East India Company [*Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie*, or YOC]. Already in 1645 well over half the soldiers of the Dutch army [*het Staatse Leger*] consisted of foreign regiments while over half of the personnel recruited for service in the YOC had been born beyond the borders of the Republic. These labour recruitment efforts especially filled the Dutch cities with poor, resourceless migrants that pressed on the resources of the charitable institutions and challenged the bodies charged with maintaining peace and order in the cities», Jan de Vries, *The labour markets*, p. 67

²⁰³ Marjolein 't Hart, *The Dutch Wars of Independence*, pp. 85-86, 89-92, 97-98

²⁰⁴ *ivi* pp. 82-89; Martin van Creveld, *Supplying War*, p. 26

²⁰⁵ Geoffrey Parker, *The "Military Revolution," 1560-1660--a Myth?*, p. 206; G. Modelski and W. R. Thompson, 1988, *Seapower in Global Politics, 1494-1993*, McMillan Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire and London: pp. 67-70, pp. 188-193; Population, Jan de Vries, 2013, *European Urbanization, 1500-1800*, Routledge, London: table 3.6.

²⁰⁶ Clé Lesger, 2008, Merchants in Charge: The Self-Perception of Amsterdam Merchants, ca. 1550–1700, in Margaret C. Jacob and Catherine Secretan, *The Self-Perception of Early-Modern Capitalists*, Palgrave, London: p. 76; Philip Gorski, 2004, "The Protestant Reformation and Economic Hegemony: Religion and the Rise of Holland and England", *Theory and Research in Comparative Social Analysis*, Dep. of Sociology, UCLA: p. 3; Philip Gorski, 2003, *The Disciplinary Revolution Calvinism and the Rise of the State in Early Modern Europe*, The University of Chicago Press, London

²⁰⁷ Ad Tervort, 2009, 'To honor of God, for concord and the common good'. Developments in Social Care and Education and Their Institutions in Dutch Towns (1300-1625), in Manon van der Heijden, Elise van Nederveen Meerkerk, Griet Vermeesch, *Serving the Urban Community: The Rise of Public Facilities in the Low Countries*, Aksant, Amsterdam: pp. 89-107; Arie van Steensel, *The Emergence of an Administrative*

²⁰⁸ Herbert Darling Foster, 1923, "Liberal Calvinism; The Remonstrants At the Synod of Dort in 1618", *Harvard Theological Review*, Vol. 16 , N. 1: pp. 11-12

²⁰⁹ J.B. Stoupe, 1673, *La Religion des Hollandois*, Cologne-Leiden: pp. 32, 79, quoted in Willem Frijhoff, 2003, Religious toleration in the United Provinces: from 'case' to 'model', in R. Po-Chia Hsia

And Henk van Nierop, *Calvinism and Religious Toleration in the Dutch Golden Age*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: p. 44

²¹⁰ Henk van Nierop, *Alva's Throne*, p. 38. See also Geoffrey Parker, *The Dutch Revolt*, Penguin, Harmondsworth: pp. 19-84; Wiebe Bergsma, 1995, Church, state and people, in Karel Davids and Jan Lucassen (eds), *A Miracle Mirrored. The Dutch Republic in European Perspective*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

²¹¹ Johan Huizinga, 1968, *Dutch Civilization in the Seventeenth Century: and other essays*, Harper & Row, London: p. 48

²¹² See Jonathan Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, pp 155-220

²¹³ For a concise recap of Dutch church structure see Gorski, *the Disciplinary revolution*, pp 55-56

²¹⁴ William Temple, 1672, *Observations upon the United Provinces of the Netherlands*, ed. G. Clark, 1972, Oxford: p. 105

²¹⁵ Jo Spaans, 2003, Reform in the Low Countries, in R. Po-chia Hsia (ed.), *A Companion to the Reformation World*, Malden, Oxford and Melbourne: pp. 126-134, italics added

²¹⁶ Herbert Darling Foster, *Liberal Calvinism*, p. 30, Philip Gorski, *The Disciplinary Revolution*

²¹⁷ van Velthuysen quoted in Arthur Weststeijn, 2012, *Commercial republicanism in the Dutch golden age. The political thought of Johan & Pieter De la Court*, Brill, Leiden-Boston: p. 304

²¹⁸ Ernest Troeltsch, 1985, *Il protestantesimo nella formazione del mondo moderno*, Firenze: La Nuova Italia: p. 57, 60; John Coffey, 2013, The Language of Liberty in Calvinist Political Thought, in Quentin Skinner and Martin van Gelderen (eds.), *Freedom and the Construction of Europe: volume I: Religious Freedom and Civil Liberty*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: p. 307

²¹⁹ Alberto Clerici, *Costituzionalismo, contrattualismo*, pp. 46, 57-59

²²⁰ Degrees, shades and variations of tolerance was an outcome of such a process of social construction. See Jonathan Israel, 1997, The Intellectual Debate about Toleration in the Dutch Republic, in C. Berkvens-Stevelinck, J. Israel, and G.H.M. Posthumus Meyjes (eds.), *The Emergence of Tolerance in the Dutch Republic*, Brill, Leiden: pp. 3–36.

²²¹ Jan de Vries and Ad van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, pp; cf. Ernest Troeltsch, *Il protestantesimo*, p. 61; Aberto Tenenti, *Dalle Rivolte alle Rivoluzioni*, p. 43

²²² Albert Hyma, *Calvinism and Capitalism*, p. 341. The historian ends his examination by stating what follow: «During the days of greatest prosperity for the Dutch Republic as a whole, the provinces in which

Calvinism was the strongest shared the least in the process of capitalistic growth. The present writer, who has spent approximately twenty years in Friesland and Groningen, is impelled to conclude that Calvinism in the Netherlands retarded the development of capitalism». Bold statement that should be taken seriously.

²²³ Albert Hyma, *Calvinism and Capitalism*, p. 326-327

²²⁴ Prof. Andreas Rivetus, decision by the theological faculty at Leyden, dated September 27, 1627, quoted in *ivi* p. 331

²²⁵ Herman Diederiks, 1990, *Criminality and its repression in the past; quantitative approaches: a survey*, in *Economic and social history in the Netherlands*, vol. 1: p. 77

²²⁶ *Ivi*, p. 333

²²⁷ Quoted in *ivi*, p. 334

²²⁸ *Ivi*, p. 335

²²⁹ *Ivi*, p. 336

²³⁰ W. van Ravesteyn, 1906, *Onderzoekingen over de economische en sociale ontwikkeling van Amsterdam gedurende de 16de en het eerste kwartaal de 17de eeuw*, Amsterdam: p 196, quoted in *ivi*, p. 339

²³¹ Indeed, it has been put forth that Dutch toleration had partly origin in «foreign ideas and experiences in exile [...]. These former exiles moving back to the Netherlands may well have prepared the soil for Arminianism and other alternatives to orthodox Calvinism in the Netherlands, and provided support for policies supporting religious toleration in the Republic». Mirjam G. K. van Veen and Jesse Spohnholz, 2014, *Calvinists vs. Libertines: A New Look at Religious Exile and the Origins of 'Dutch' Tolerance*, in Gijsbert van den Brink and Harro Höpfl, *Calvinism and the Making of the European Mind*, Brill, Leiden-Boston: p. 99

²³² «In fact, several degrees of toleration can be defined, which cannot easily be distinguished in the modern idiom: toleration in the active sense of the legal freedom to be different hardly involved more than freedom of conscience; toleration in the passive sense of the term was more widespread: in other words, connivance with what was not allowed (*conniventie* or *toelating*), the non-application of legally prescribed practice, and the will to turn a blind eye (literally *oogluiking* in Dutch). It is in this passive sense that toleration usually involved the freedom of public worship». Willem Frijhoff, *Religious toleration*, p. 28

²³³ Joke Spaan, 2003, Religious policies in the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic, in *ivi*: p. 78,

²³⁴ Benjamin Kaplan, 1991, "Dutch Particularism and the Calvinist Quest for "Holy Uniformity" ', *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, vol. 82: p. 246.

²³⁵ The classic account in Johan Huizinga, *Dutch Civilization*, p.15; Wiebe Bergsma, *Church, state and people*, pp. 213-217, 218

²³⁶ Willem Frijhoff, *Religious toleration*, p. 37, 45

²³⁷ Quoted in Andrew Pettegree, 1996, The politics of toleration in the Free Netherlands, 1572-1620, in Ole Peter Grell and Bob Scribner, *Tolerance and intolerance in the European Reformation*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: p. 189

²³⁸ As an expert remarks: «Despite the obvious limits of his perception, William Temple saw exactly where the remarkable nature of the United Provinces was: in the autonomy of public order and of political reason. The sacred principle of personal and individual liberty, effectively defended by a state that knowingly occupied a purely secular position as regards religion, was violently opposed to any hint of theocracy. It was civic society and more particularly civic peace, Libertine, and republican order that appeared as the yardstick of toleration, not just a religious principle of whatever tendency or order. More than principles, it is what I have elsewhere called the ecumenicity of everyday life (*omgangsoecumene*), this basic civic harmony, on the borderline between public and private, which decided what the measure of religious toleration should be» Willem Frijhoff, *Religious toleration*, p. 35

²³⁹ Historical researches bear out that relevant portions of society did not belong to any church for a long time. Until the first decades of the seventeenth century, about half of the Haarlem, Delft, Friesland, Groningen, and Drenthe population did not belong to a Church. This can be found in Joke Spaans, 1989, *Haarlem na de Reformatie. Stedelijke cultuur en kerkelijk leven*, The Hague: p. 104; A.P.F. Wouters, 1994, *Nieuw en ongezien. Kerk en samenleving in de classis Delft en Delfland, 1572–1621*, 2 vols, Delft: vol. I, pp. 234, 242–3; Benjamin J. Kaplan, 1995, *Calvinists and Libertines. Confession and Community in Utrecht, 1578–1620*, Oxford: pp. 117, 255, 277–8. Wiebe Bergsma, 1999, *Tussen Gideonsbende en publieke kerk. Een studie naar het gereformeerd protestantisme in Friesland, 1580–1650*, Hilversum: pp. 96–150. This bibliographical information have been extracted from Judith Pollmann, 2003, The bond of Christian piety: the individual practice of tolerance and intolerance in the Dutch Republic, in R. Po-Chia Hsia And Henk van Nierop, *Calvinism and Religious Toleration in the Dutch Golden Age*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: p 53, note 4

²⁴⁰ Jo Spaan, 2003, “Violent dream, peaceful coexistence and the Absence of religious violence in the Dutch Republic” , *De Zeventiende Eeuw*, vol. 18: p. 158-159

²⁴¹ Maarten Prak, *The politics of intolerance*, esp. pp. 171-174

²⁴² Jo Spaan, *Violent dream*, pp. 158-159

²⁴³ Ronnie Po-Chia Hsia, 2002, Introduction, in R. Po-Chia Hsia And Henk van Nierop, *Calvinism and Religious Toleration in the Dutch Golden Age*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: «The central paradox of the Dutch Republic is this: the existence of a confessionally pluralistic society with an official intolerant Calvinist Church that discriminated against Catholics, but whose pragmatic religious toleration elicited admiration and bewilderment in *ancien regime* Europe», p. 2

²⁴⁴ Ibid; cf. Peter van Rooden, 2003, Jews and religious toleration in the Dutch Republic, in R. Po-Chia Hsia And Henk van Nierop, *Calvinism and Religious Toleration in the Dutch Golden Age*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: pp. 141-142

²⁴⁵ Jonathan Israel, *The economic contribution*

²⁴⁶ See Jo Spaan, *Religious policies*, p. 74, 81; cf. Peter van Rooden, *Jews and religious toleration*, pp. 144-146

²⁴⁷ Christine Kooi, 2003, Paying off the sheriff: strategies of Catholic toleration in Golden Age Holland, in R. Po-Chia Hsia And Henk van Nierop, *Calvinism and Religious Toleration in the Dutch Golden Age*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: pp. 90, 95; Henk van Nierop, 2003, Sewing the bailiff in a blanket: Catholics and the law in Holland, in *ivi*, p. 108-109

²⁴⁸ William Temple, *Observations*, pp. 103-104

²⁴⁹ Wiebe Bergsma, *Church, state and people*, pp. 218-222; Jo Spaan, *Violent dream*, pp. 161-162; Willem Frijhoff, *Religious toleration*, p. 31; Jo Spaan, *Religious policies*, p. 74, 79-85. See example of tolerance, connivance and concord in Jo Spaan, *Violent dream*, pp. 163-164: «locally people of different religions lived side by side in mixed neighbourhoods. Faith was irrelevant for participation in neighbourhood-organizations. There was on the whole no marked difference in dress or jewelry [...]. We know of a Catholic *devote* who lived with Protestant relatives and was mildly teased about her observance, as if her behaviour was seen as merely eccentric [...]. Also Catholics had more official holidays. Only incidentally do we glimpse conflicts between employers and employees about days of work and days of enforced (and unpaid) leisure»

²⁵⁰ Andrew Pettegree, *The politics of toleration*, p. 183

²⁵¹ Arthur Weststeijn, *Commercial republicanism*, p. 328

²⁵² Willem Frijhoff, *Religious toleration*, p.32

²⁵³ William Aglionby, *Present State*, p. 61

²⁵⁴ Ad Tervoort, *To the honor*, p. 95-96, 100; Marco H. D. van Leeuwen, 2002, 'Histories of risk and welfare in Europe during the 18th and 19th centuries', in O. P. Grell, A. Cunningham and R. Jutte (eds.), *Health care and poor relief in 18th and 19th century Northern Europe*, Aldershot: 32–66. Ad Tervoort, *To the honor*

²⁵⁵ Philip Gorski, *The Disciplinary Revolution*, pp. 66

²⁵⁶ Eric A. Johnson and Eric H. Monkkonen (eds.), 1996, *The Civilization of Crime*, University of Illinois Press, Urbana

²⁵⁷ Herman Diederiks, 1990, "Quality and Quantity in Historical Research in Criminality and Criminal Justice: The Case of Leiden in the 17th and 18th Centuries", *Historical Social Research / Historische Sozialforschung*, Vol. 15, N. 4: pp. 57-76; Herman Diederiks, *Criminality and its repression*, pp. 67-86, esp. 68-70. 74

²⁵⁸ Pieter Spierenburg, 1996, 'Long-term Trends in Homicide: Theoretical Reflections and Dutch Evidence, Fifteenth to Twentieth Centuries', in Eric A. Johnson and Eric H. Monkkonen (eds.), *The Civilization of Crime*, University of Illinois Press, Urbana: pp 77-86, esp. 80-81 and table 3.1 and 3.2.

²⁵⁹ Jan Kok, 1990, 'The moral nation. Illegitimacy and bridal pregnancy in the Netherlands from 1600 to the present', *Economic and social history in the Netherlands*, vol. 2: pp. 7-35, esp. pp. 7-17. Cf. Herman Diederiks, *Criminality and its repression*, pp. 79

²⁶⁰ Peter H. Lindert, 1998, "Poor relief before the Welfare State: Britain versus the Continent, 1780-1880", *European Review of Economic History*, Vol. 2, N. 2: p. 106; Jonathan Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, p. 355. « few aspects of the Dutch seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were more striking than the elaborate system of civic poor relief and charitable institutions. So exceptional, in European terms, were the conditions which gave rise to this system of civic charity that there was probably never much likelihood of its being emulated elsewhere.»

²⁶¹ Philip Gorski, *The Disciplinary Revolution*, pp. 59-60. Cf.

²⁶² Daniëlle Teeuwe, 2016, *Financing poor relief through charitable collections in Dutch towns, c. 1600-1800*, Amsterdam University Press, Amsterdam: p. 27.

²⁶³ Elise van Nerderveen Meerkerk and Danielle Teeuwen, 2013, *Keeping Up the Good Works: Voluntary Giving and the Financial Maintenance of Charitable institutions in Dutch towns, 1600-1800*, in Istituto internazionale di storia economica F. Datini. Settimana di studio, Francesco Ammannati, *Assistenza e solidarietà in Europa, secc. XIII-XVIII*, Firenze University Press, Firenze: pp. 181-183

²⁶⁴ Peter H. Lindert, *Poor relief before the Welfare State*

²⁶⁵ Jan de Vries, *The labor markets*

²⁶⁶ Ad Tervoort, *To the honor*, p. 98

²⁶⁷ Philip Gorski, *The Disciplinary Revolution*, pp.61-67

²⁶⁸ See for hospices Henk Looijesteijn and Marco van Leeuwen, 2013, *Ospizi e corporazioni: assistenza alla classe media nella Repubblica olandese*, in Istituto internazionale di storia economica F. Datini. Settimana di studio, Francesco Ammannati, *Assistenza e solidarietà in Europa, secc. XIII-XVIII*, Firenze University Press, Firenze: pp. 367-371

²⁶⁹ Henk Looijesteijn and Marco van Leeuwen, *Ospizi e corporazioni*, p. 368; Jonathan Israel, 1997, *Dutch influence on urban planning, health care and poor relief: the North Sea and Baltic regions of Europe, 1567–1720*, in Ole Peter Grell and Andrew Cunningham, *Health Care and Poor Relief in Protestant Europe 1500–1700*, Routledge, London-NY: pp. 69-70; Philip Gorski, *The Disciplinary Revolution*, pp. 63

²⁷⁰ Ad Tervoort, *To the honor*, p. 93-96

²⁷¹ Ivi, 101-107

²⁷² Daniëlle Teeuwe, 2012, “Collections for the Poor, Monetary charitable donations in Dutch towns 1600-1800, *Continuity and Change*, Vol. 27, N. 2: , See Daniëlle Teeuwe, 2016, *Financing poor relief*, Unfortunately I found out this research at the end of my study, hence I could have not delved into it. Nonetheless, it seems plausible to the present writer that its premises may well interlock the present perspective on the Dutch regime and its overall functioning.

²⁷³ Elise van Nerderveen Meerkerk and Danielle Teeuwen, *Keeping Up the Good*, p. 204

²⁷⁴ Clé Lesger, *Merchants in Charge*, p. 87-ff

²⁷⁵ «Sometimes social pressure was increased further, when open plates rather than closed boxes or bags were used. This allowed the almoner or deacon not only to see if one gave, but also how much was donated, which led to higher levels of generosity. In Delft, the open plate or ‘schael’ was used for the annual collection on 26 December. In ’s-Hertogenbosch, the Blocks collected with open plates at Easter

and Christmas. This tactic was also used in churches, especially at the Lord's Supper, or Communion, and on days of prayer the offertory bags were exchanged for plates», Daniëlle Teeuwe, *Collections for the Poor*, p. 280

²⁷⁶ Elise van Nerderveen Meerkerk and Danielle Teeuwen, *Keeping Up the Good*, p. 190

²⁷⁷ Daniëlle Teeuwe, *Collections for the Poor*, pp. 275-276

²⁷⁸ Marco H. D. van Leeuwen, 2012, "Giving in early modern history: philanthropy in Amsterdam in the Golden Age", *Continuity and Change*, Vol. 27, Special Issue 02: p. 307

²⁷⁹ Oscar Gelderblom and Joost Jonker, 2007, *With a view to hold. The emergence of institutional investors on the Amsterdam securities market during the 17th and 18th centuries*, working paper, version, 24 September 2007: p. 11

²⁸⁰ «The charitable institutions of the Dutch Republic are justifiably famous for their number, their wealth, and their efficiency. None the less, it would come as a surprise to most people to learn that they could have had the sort of effect on the labour market that has generally been thought to be achievable only by the twentieth-century welfare State [...]. One feature of the Dutch Republic's economy lends it credence [...] the massive accumulation of capital. The Republic remained rich long after it had ceased being prosperous. That is, when the economy lost its dynamism and the demand for labour declined, there continued to exist a large capital stock and the passive income that flowed from it. Thanks to the bourgeois fashion of founding and endowing charitable institutions, a large portion of the Dutch capital stock came to be administered by these institutions». Jan de Vries, 1978, *An Inquiry into the Behaviour of Wages in the Dutch Republic and the Southern Netherlands, 1580-1800*, in *Acta Historiae Neerlandicae. Studies on the History of the Netherlands*, Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, Netherland: p. 92

²⁸¹ Elise van Nerderveen Meerkerk and Danielle Teeuwen, *Keeping Up the Good*, p. 192-194; Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade*, pp. 292-359; cf. Jan L. Van Zanden, *Economic Growth in the Golden Age*. cf. Daniëlle Teeuwe, *Collections for the Poor*, p. 289

²⁸² Daniëlle Teeuwe, *Collections for the Poor*, pp. 277-279

²⁸³ Marco H. D. van Leeuwen, *Giving in early modern history*, p. 305

²⁸⁴ *ivi*, p. 329-331

²⁸⁵ *ivi*, p. 319; Daniëlle Teeuwe, *Collections for the Poor*, p. 279

²⁸⁶ Daniëlle Teeuwe, *Collections for the Poor*, pp. 280-282

²⁸⁷ Ivi, p. 278

²⁸⁸ Daniëlle Teeuwe, *Collections for the Poor*, p. 276; Marco H. D. van Leeuwen, *Giving in early modern history*, p. 321

²⁸⁹ Clé Lesger, *Merchants in Charge*, p. 80-81

²⁹⁰ Ivi, p. 89

²⁹¹ Ivi, pp. 87-90

²⁹² Marco H. D. van Leeuwen, *Giving in early modern history*, p. 322

²⁹³ Cf. Marco H. D. van Leeuwen, *Giving in early modern history*, pp. 326-328

²⁹⁴ Clé Lesger, *Merchants in Charge*, 90-92

²⁹⁵ Philip Gorski, *The Disciplinary Revolution*, p. XVI and p. 34

²⁹⁶ Ivi. P. 38

²⁹⁷ Philip Gorski, *The Disciplinary Revolution*, pp. XV

Chapter 5

¹ Oliver Cromwell Cox, 1959, *The Foundations of Capitalism*, Philosophical Library, New York: ch. 1-4; Max Weber, 1950, *Economy and Society. An outline of interpretative sociology*, University of California Press, Berkeley-Los Angeles-London: pp. 63-85, p. 336; Fernand Braudel, 1979, *Afterthoughts on Material Civilization and Capitalism*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore; Fernand Braudel, 1984, *The Perspective of the World*, Collins, London; Immanuel Wallerstein, 2011 [1974], *The Modern World-system, vol. I. Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century*, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles; Giovanni Arrighi, 2010 [1994], *The Long Twentieth Century Money, Power, and the Origins of Our Times*, Verso, London-NY: ch. 2; Kenneth Pomeranz, 2000, *The Great Divergence: China, Europe, and the Making of the Modern World Economy*, Princeton University Press. See also Janet Abu-Lughod, 1989, *Before European Hegemony. The World System, AD. 1250-1350*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

² Jonathan Israel, 1989, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade, 1585-1740*, Clarendon Press, Oxford. But the downswing started before. See for an overview of the different findings put forward by several Dutch

scholars related to the issue in J. Thomas Lindbland, 1993, Foreign Trade of the Dutch Republic in the Seventeenth Century, in Karel Davids and Leo Noordegraaf (eds.), *The Dutch Economy in the Golden Age*, NEHA, Amsterdam: pp. 219-223

³ Perry Anderson, 1974, *Lineages of the Absolutist State*, NLB, London; Giovanni Arrighi, *The Long Twentieth*; Robert Brenner, 1976, The Agrarian Roots of European Capitalism, in T. H. Aston and C. H. E. Philpin (ed.), *The Brenner Debate Agrarian. Class Structure and Economic Development in Pre-Industrial Europe*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: pp. 236-242; and Robert Brenner, 1976, Agrarian Class Structure and Economic Development in Pre-Industrial Europe, in *ibid.*: p. 55-56. See ch. 7

⁴ See references below; in brief Giovanni Arrighi, *The Long Twentieth*, pp. 163-218

⁵ Immanuel Wallerstein, 1991, *Unthinking Social Sciences. The Limits of Nineteenth-Century Paradigms*, Polity Press, Cambridge: p. 264, 242; cf. Jason W. Moore, 2017, “The Capitalocene Part II: accumulation by appropriation and the centrality of unpaid work/energy”, *The Journal of Peasant Studies*: pp. 1-43

⁶ In short: Jonathan Israel, 1979, “The Holland Towns and the Dutch-Spanish Conflict, 1621-1648”, *BMGN - Low Countries Historical Review*, vol 94, n 1: pp.41-69

⁷ See in this respect, Henk van Nierop, 1993, *The Nobility of Holland: From Knights to Regents, 1500-1650*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge; Jonathan Israel, 1979, “The Holland Towns and the Dutch-Spanish Conflict, 1621-1648”, *BMGN - Low Countries Historical Review*, Vol. 94, n 1: pp.41-69. See also Andrea Lo Bianco, 2016, “Consociativismo e capitalismo nelle Province Unite del XVII secolo”, *Storia e politica*, Vol. 8, N.3: pp. 439-475

⁸ Geoffrey Parker, 1977, *The Dutch Revolt*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, NY: p. 69

⁹ Jonathan Israel, *Dutch Primacy*, 29

¹⁰ Miachel Mann, *The Sources of Social Power*, p. 24

¹¹ Geoffrey Parker, *The Dutch Revolt*

¹² Miachel Mann, *The Sources of Social Power*, p. 26

¹³ Giovanni Arrighi, *The Long Twentieth*, p. 135

¹⁴ Geoffrey Parker, *The Dutch Revolt*, p. 167

¹⁵ Fernand Braudel, 1984, *Perspective of the World*, Collin, London: p. 202

¹⁶ In brief, James D. Tracy, 2004, *For Holland's Garden, The war aims of the States of Holland, 1572-1588*, Third Golden Age Lecture delivered on 21 October 2004, Universiteit van Amsterdam

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- ¹⁷ Jonathan Israel, *Dutch Primacy*; Giovanni Arrighi, *The Long Twentieth*
- ¹⁸ H.H. Rowen, 1988. *The Princes of Orange. The Stadholders in the Dutch Republic*, Cambridge University Press Cambridge: p. 1
- ¹⁹ Joseph Schumpeter, 1947, "The creative response in economic history", *The Journal of Economic History*, vol.7, N.2
- ²⁰ J.C Boogman, 1979, "The Union of Utrecht. Its genesis and consequences", *BMGN - Low Countries Historical Review*, Vol. 94, N. 3: p. 389; Ivo Schoffer, 1996, "Did Holland's Golden Age Coincide with a Period of Crisis?", in G. Parker and L.M. Smith (eds.), *The General Crisis of the Seventeenth Century*, edited, Routledge London: p. 103
- ²¹ Along with me, in essence, Pepijn Brandon, *War, Capital*
- ²² *ivi*, p. 83.
- ²³ See overview Marjolein 'T Hart, 1989, in *Cities and Statemaking in the Dutch Republic, 1580-1680*", *Theory and Society*, Vol. 18, N. 5, Special Issue on Cities and States in Europe, 1000-1800: pp. 666-670
- ²⁴ H.H. Rowen, 1978, *John de Witt, Grand Pensionary of Holland, 1625-1672*, Princeton University Pres, Princeton: p. 76
- ²⁵ Jonathan Israel, *Dutch Primacy*; Giovanni Arrighi, *The Long Twentieth*
- ²⁶ Miachel Mann, *The Sources of Social Power*, p. 25
- ²⁷ Cf. Robert Brenner, 1978, "The Origins of Capitalist Development: A Critique of Neo- Smithian", *New Left Review*, vol. 104: p. 67.
- ²⁸ See Jonathan Israel, 1980, "The States General and the strategic regulation of the Dutch river trade, 1621-1636", *BMGN - Low Countries Historical Review*, Vol. 95, N.3: pp.461-491
- ²⁹ Maria Bogucka, 1973, "Amsterdam and the Baltic in the First Half of the Seventeenth Century", *The economic History Review*, Vol. 26, N. 3: pp. 433-447; Richard W. Unger, 1983, Integration of Baltic and Low Countries gram markets, 1400-1800, in J.M. van Winter (ed.), *The Interactions of Amsterdam and Antwerp with the Baltic Region, 1400- 1800*, Martinus Nijhoff, Leiden: pp. 1-11; Violet Barbour, 1963, *Capitalism in Amsterdam in the Seventeenth Century*. Ann Arbor, Michigan; pp. 85-142
- ³⁰ Jonathan Israel, *Dutch Primacy*, pp. 28-36; and Jonathan Israel, 1995, *The Dutch Republic : Its Rise, Greatness and Fall, 1477- 1806*, Oxford University press, New York: pp. 307-315

³¹ Christopher Hill, *Reformation to Industrial Revolution The Making of Modern English Society, Vol. I 1530-1780*, Pantheon Book, NY: p. 55 : Pepijn Brandon, *War, Capital*, p. 83-138; Jonathan Israel, *Dutch Primacy*, pp 70-71, 435

³² Pepijn Brandon, *War, Capital*,

³³ Quoted in Marjolein 't Hart, *Cities and Statemaking*, p. 679

³⁴ Giovanni Arrighi, *The Long Twentieth Century*, pp. 10

³⁵ Hegemony in Cox-Arrighi-Wallerstein's terms is the only hegemony deserving to be taken into consideration for the present writer

³⁶ Pepijn Brandon, *War, Capital*, 264-309

³⁷ See as instance, Robert Brenner, 1993, *Merchants and Revolution: Commercial Change, Political Conflict and the London Overseas Traders, 1550-1663*, Princeton University Press, Princeton; in general Marjolein 't Hart, 2000, "Warfare and Capitalism: The Impact of the Economy on State Making in Northwestern Europe, Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries", *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)*, Vol. 23, N. 2: pp. 209-228

³⁸ The studies are numerous. We recall a classic, Charles Wilson, 1984, *England's Apprenticeship 1603-1763*, Longman, London. Also, David Ormrod, 2003, *The Rise of Commercial Empires: England and the Netherlands, 1650-1770*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge. Very interesting, Marjolein 't Hart, 1991, "The devil or the Dutch': Holland's impact on the financial revolution in England, 1643-1694", *Parliaments, Estates and Representation*, vol. 11, N.1: pp. 39-52. 't Hart rounds off her article as follow: «direct Dutch influence was limited. Indirectly, the Dutch did stand as a model. But the actual implementation of Dutch practices was moulded into English structures», p. 52. *This is exactly my point*. See also Giovanni Arrighi, *The Long Twentieth* and Giovanni Arrighi and Beverly J. Silver, 1999, *Chaos and Governance in the Modern World System*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis-London

³⁹ Henri Lefebvre, 2009, *State, Space, World*, Minnesota University Press, Minnesota: pp. 196-209, 223-253, 274-289. In short, Neil Brenner and Stuart Elde, 2009 *Introduction. State, Space, World Lefebvre and the Survival of Capitalism*, in *ivi*: pp. 22-23. As the two scholars sum up: «Lefebvre is suggesting that the global is a level, while the worldwide is a scale. The global (level) refers to a mode of analysis that is focused on the general or the whole; it is linked to understandings of totality and stands in contrast to more specific levels of analysis. By contrast, Lefebvre conceives the worldwide (scale) as a basis for recognizing the simultaneous extension, differentiation, and fragmentation of social relations across the

entire earth». Whereas British hegemony was almost on world scale but absolutely not global in level, the US hegemony was both on world scale and global in level – that is, involved at the same time the whole and the articulation (extension, differentiation, and fragmentation) of different sociospatial relations. See Giovanni Arrighi, *The Long Twentieth century*, in short pp. 28-75 and Giovanni Arrighi and Beverly J. Silver, *Chaos and Governance*

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