STATE COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC POLITICS IN THE DUTCH GOLDEN AGE

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STATE COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC POLITICS IN THE DUTCH GOLDEN AGE

Arthur der Weduwen

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Preface

In January 2014, Andrew Pettegree handed me a piece of notepad paper that read 'Seventeenth-century government publications in the Dutch Republic'. These, he explained, might make an interesting PhD subject, as they had never been studied in any depth before. This present book, a study of the political communication practices of the authorities in the Dutch Republic, is the result of that early conversation with Andrew, which also led to a PhD at the University of St Andrews that I completed between 2015 and 2018 on the same subject.

Although I laid the thesis aside for several years, the subject remained on my mind as I worked on other projects. In the meantime, some of the elements of this book appeared in print elsewhere. Parts of Chapters 3, 4, 5, 6 and 8 were used for one of the chapters of *The Bookshop of the World: Making and Trading Books in the Dutch Golden Age* (London: Yale University Press, 2019, co-authored with Andrew Pettegree), as well as several articles.[1] Chapter 7 is a revised version of 'The Politics of Print in the Dutch Golden Age: The Ommelander Troubles (c. 1630–1680)', published in Nina Lamal, Jamie Cumby and Helmer J. Helmers (eds), *Print and Power in Early Modern Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 2021), pp. 148–77.

It was always my intention to publish my thesis, but when I returned to it with renewed focus in the autumn of 2021, I realised that I wanted to incorporate far more material than what could have been included in the original version. The intervening years had also matured my thinking on the subject considerably and seen the publication of a variety of studies on Dutch history and the broader European history of communication and early modern politics that provided me with much inspiration. The present book is therefore a substantially enlarged and revised version of the thesis as submitted in 2018. With the process of research and writing for this book having taken place over the past eight years, I have amassed many debts.

[1] Andrew Pettegree and Arthur der Weduwen, 'What Was Published in the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic?', *Livre. Revue Historique* (2018), 1–22; Andrew Pettegree and Arthur der Weduwen, 'Forms, Handbills and Affixed Posters: Surveying the Ephemeral Print Production of the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic', *Quaerendo*, 50 (2020), 15–40; Arthur der Weduwen, 'Lost and Found: On the Trail of the Forgotten Literature of the Dutch Golden Age', *Jaarboek voor Nederlandse Boekgeschiedenis*, 27 (2020), 45–65.

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My greatest debt is to Andrew: he proposed the subject, supervised and guided its progress, provided ceaseless support and inspiration, and also urged me to return to it to prepare it for publication. He also sponsored my research and later employment as postdoctoral fellow at St Andrews, first as part of the Universal Short Title Catalogue project and then as a British Academy Postdoctoral Fellow. He has read this work multiple times in different iterations and always provided insightful remarks and helpful corrections. My thoughts and writing have been shaped through conversations with Andrew, and through our collaborative research. We worked together in many archives and libraries, in the Netherlands and further afield, tracing and cataloguing printed ordinances. Our joint publications on the book trade, newspaper advertising and library culture also informed this work substantially. I am extremely grateful to him for providing me with the chance to embark on a career as a historian, and for shaping my path as a researcher and writer.

Much of the thinking and writing for this book was completed in the company of the sizeable contingent of early modernists at the University of St Andrews, especially those involved with the Universal Short Title Catalogue project. It has been an immense pleasure to contribute to this project and to work so closely with its staff, associates and PhD students over the years. For their help I am particularly grateful to Graeme Kemp, Drew Thomas, Forrest Strickland, Hanna de Lange, Sandra Toffolo, Nina Lamal, Shanti Graheli, Marc Jaffré, Jessica Wärnberg, Bridget Heal and Matt McLean. My PhD research also received financial assistance from the School of History of St Andrews, for which I am very grateful. I could not have wished for a more supportive environment in which to conduct my work.

One of the greatest joys of producing this book was the experience of researching in numerous libraries and archives throughout the Netherlands. Touring the municipal archives of the 17th-century Dutch Republic allowed me to learn much more about my own country. I discovered large parts of Friesland, Groningen, Overijssel, Gelderland, Utrecht, North Brabant and even my own native Holland and Zeeland for the first time. I have endeavoured throughout this book to write a story that recognises the diversity of these provinces, exposing the rich varieties, contradictions and peculiarities of Dutch culture. This was only possible thanks to dozens of friendly librarians and archivists around the country, who always obliged when a Dutchman from distant Scotland requested voluminous quantities of boxes of placards and manuscript registers. Many thanks are also due to the staff of Trinity College, Dublin, who provided me with hundreds of volumes of bound pamphlets and broadsheets from the Fagel Collection. Working in the pleasant atmosphere of Trinity on five separate occasions prompted plentiful inspiration.

For their advice, suggestions and help in libraries and archives, I am thankful to Jacqueline Rose, Luc Duerloo, Paul Hoftijzer, Helmer Helmers, Kasper van Ommen, Anton van der Lem, Gerda Huisman, Jacob van Sluis, Joop Koopmans, Michiel van Groesen, Arnoud Visser, Luc Panhuysen, Djoeke van Netten, August

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On many occasions Hans de Witt kindly provided me with accommodation and company in Amsterdam when I was on research. My mother and grandparents always welcomed me home in Noordwijk aan Zee, Rockanje and Schouwen-Duiveland on many similar occasions. My grandfather, Professor Udo Brinkman, repeatedly inspired me with his knowledge and passion for history. My family have constantly supported my work: as always, Timo, Anne-Marie, Dagmar, Victor and Fran are a source of encouragement and guidance whom I could not do without. Fran has also sympathetically tolerated a spiralling habit of rare book collecting, kindly accepting the tenuous excuse that all those 17th-century books and pamphlets were really necessary to complete this project.

The British Academy has generously supported me since 2020 as part of their Postdoctoral Fellowship scheme, which has also enabled me to publish this work in the British Academy Monograph series. I am grateful to Ian Maclean FBA and Andrew Pettegree FBA for supporting my application to publish in the series, to Mike Braddick FBA for his thoughts and suggestions on my draft manuscript, and for the generous remarks from the anonymous reader. I am also much obliged to the members of the Publications Committee for their assessment and approval of my work.

St Andrews, July 2022

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Conventions

I use the term 'Dutch Republic' to refer to the independent Dutch confederation that emerged during the late 16th century in the northern Low Countries, more formally known as the United Provinces. The Dutch Republic was composed of the seven sovereign provinces ('States') of Gelderland, Holland, Zeeland, Utrecht, Friesland, Overijssel and Groningen, which assembled together at the States General. The Republic also included the province of Drenthe and the occupied territories in the south of the country, known as the Generality Lands, which were not represented at the States General. The provinces to the south of the Dutch Republic, under control of the Habsburgs, are referred to throughout as the 'Southern Netherlands'. In the period before the establishment of the Dutch Republic, all the Habsburg territories together are referred to as the 'Low Countries', and their people as 'Netherlanders' or 'Netherlandish'. The word 'Dutch' is used to refer to the inhabitants of the Dutch Republic exclusively.

I use modern Anglicised names for towns and places ('The Hague' rather than 'Den Haag', but 'Vlissingen' rather than 'Flushing') in the text. Unless personal names have a common Anglicisation (Prince William of Orange rather than Prince Willem van Oranje), I have maintained names in the original Dutch.

The currency of the Dutch Republic consisted predominantly of guilders (*gulden*) and stuivers, with twenty stuivers to every guilder. For context on the purchasing power of the guilder and the stuiver, the average household income in the 17th-century Dutch Republic was 500 guilders; the average daily wage of an artisan would be around fifteen to twenty-five stuivers; a dozen eggs would cost five stuivers; a tankard of beer would cost one or two stuivers, around the same price as most political pamphlets, including many state publications.

In the 17th century, two calendars were in use in the Dutch Republic. The provinces of Holland and Zeeland adopted the Gregorian (New Style) calendar in 1582, while the other five provinces maintained the Julian (Old Style) calendar until 1700. By 1700, these two calendars had diverged by ten days. I use the Gregorian calendar throughout this work except when referring to dates of ordinances or proclamations from the provinces using the Julian calendar (for instance, a Groningen placard of 18 December 1683 can be assumed to be in the Julian calendar rather than the Gregorian calendar).

All translations are my own unless otherwise indicated.

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Abbreviations

AGRB	Archives Générales du Royaume, Bruxelles
BHIC	Brabants Historisch Informatie Centrum, Den Bosch
BMGN	*Bijdragen en Mededelingen betreffende de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden*
EDB	Erfgoed 's-Hertogenbosch, Den Bosch
EL	Erfgoed Leiden en Omstreken, Leiden
GAA	Gelders Archief, Arnhem
GAG	Groninger Archieven, Groningen
GAS	Gemeentearchief, Schiedam
GAV	Gemeentearchief, Vlissingen
HCL	Historisch Centrum, Leeuwarden
HCOD	Historisch Centrum Overijssel, Deventer
HCOZ	Historisch Centrum Overijssel, Zwolle
HGDH	Haags Gemeentearchief, The Hague
HUA	Het Utrechts Archief, Utrecht
NADH	Nationaal Archief, The Hague
NHAH	Noord-Hollands Archief, Haarlem
RAA	Regionaal Archief, Alkmaar
RAD	Regionaal Archief, Dordrecht
RAZ	Regionaal Archief, Zutphen
RHCW	Regionaal Historisch Centrum Vecht en Venen, Weesp
SAA	Stadsarchief, Amsterdam
SAK	Stadsarchief, Kampen
SAR	Stadsarchief, Rotterdam
SMHG	Streekarchief Midden-Holland, Gouda
TL	Tresoar, Leeuwarden
USTC	Universal Short Title Catalogue

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WFAH	West-Fries Archief, Hoorn
ZAM	Zeeuws Archief, Middelburg
ZAZ	Zeeuws Archief, Zierikzee

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A prince requires only a voice and a pen.

Baldus de Ubaldis (1327–1400), cited in Franciscus Heerman, *Guldene Annotatien* (Amsterdam: Jan ten Hoorn, 1699), p. 287.

When everyone is spoken to, everyone may respond.

Noodige aenmerckingen op seeckere propositie in junio 1650. gedaen inde Hollantsche steden (Amsterdam: Pieter Rombouts, 1650), f. A2r.

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Selling the Republican Ideal

Between 1594 and 1612, the draughtsman Isaac Claesz van Swanenburg produced a series of paintings to celebrate the wool trade of Leiden. Several decades earlier, Leiden had suffered greatly. The town had joined the rebel cause in the Dutch Revolt early, in 1572, and was punished for its dissent with two lengthy sieges by Spanish troops in 1573 and 1574. A third of Leiden's 15,000 citizens perished during this time, victims of war, disease and exhaustion. But Leiden emerged from the trial victorious. On 3 October 1574, the Spanish besiegers abandoned their entrenchments, never to return. Over the next two decades the citizens of Leiden laboured to rebuild their city, assisted by a stream of Southern Netherlandish Calvinist refugees, exiled by the re-establishment of Habsburg authority in Flanders, Brabant and the Walloon states. By 1622, Leiden's inhabitants numbered 45,000, and by 1650, 67,000, making Leiden the second city of the Dutch Republic and the nineteenth largest in Europe.[1] Thanks to the trade and expertise of southern exiles, Leiden had also become one of Europe's centres of the textile trade.

The extraordinarily rapid revival of Leiden's fortunes could not go without celebration, so the magistrates of the city commissioned Van Swanenburg to produce his series of paintings. The pieces were all to be exhibited in the room of the governors of the textile trade, and they can still be seen today in Leiden's Cloth Hall (Lakenhal), now the city's museum and art gallery.[2] The first four paintings depict the various stages involved in refining wool, washing and sorting, combing, spinning, warping and weaving, fulling and dyeing. The fifth painting is an allegorical scene, in which the wool trade is presented to the maid of Leiden as a suitable replacement for her ageing industry. The final painting depicts the maid of Leiden presenting to the textile industry a book of statutes regulating the trade (Figure 1.1). Behind the two allegorical figures one can see the Leiden

[1] Jan de Vries and Ad van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy: Success, Failure, and Perseverance of the Dutch Economy, 1500–1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 64; Willem Frijhoff and Marijke Spies, *1650: Bevochten Eendracht* (The Hague: Sdu, 2000), p. 166.
[2] Museum Lakenhal, Leiden, inv. S 419–S 424.

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Figure 1.1 Isaac Claesz van Swanenburg, *De Leidse Stedenmaagd verleent de keuren aan de neringhe*, *c*. 1596–1601. Isaac Claesz van Swanenburg's sixth painting, portraying the 'gifting' of the statutes of the wool trade.

magistrates atop the balustrade of Leiden town hall. The municipal secretary, Jan van Hout, stands at the centre, reading out the statutes of the textile trade to the people assembled below. On his right, he is accompanied by the city's sheriff (*schout*), responsible for upholding the law, who is attentively watching the public below. To Van Hout's far left is the painter himself: Van Swanenburg had become a member of the city's council (*vroedschap*) in 1582 and was elected burgomaster on several occasions.[3]

It is this sixth painting of the series which stands at the centre of this study. Van Swanenburg's series is a patriotic, self-congratulatory and allegorical depiction of Leiden's trade. The paintings do not illustrate the tough working conditions of Leiden's woolworkers, nor can they convey the stench emanating from Leiden's polluted canals, especially in summer. In his final painting, Van Swanenburg portrayed a municipal proclamation, a scene which is rarely depicted in 17th-century Dutch art, with remarkable faithfulness (Figure 1.2). Although

[3] Rudolf E. O. Ekkart, *Isaac Claesz. van Swanenburg, 1537–1614: Leids schilder en burgemeester* (Zwolle: Waanders, 1998).

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Figure 1.2 Detail from Isaac Claesz van Swanenburg, *De Leidse Stedenmaagd verleent de keuren aan de neringhe*, *c.* 1596–1601. The detail portrays secretary Jan van Hout proclaiming the statutes of the Leiden textile trade, surrounded by his fellow magistrates.

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the balustrade of the town hall is fictionalised, the portrayal of the proclamation otherwise represents accurately an act of communication which was essential to the political culture of the Dutch Republic.

Every year, the Leiden magistrates read from the balustrade of the town hall the statutes regulating the politics and trade of the city, the municipal *Keurboek*. Around twice a week, the same magistrates would proclaim new laws affecting the commerce or welfare of their citizens; they would also make announcements on behalf of other jurisdictions, most commonly the States of Holland and the States General. After a proclamation was made, town criers would repeat the announcement at fifty-one locations in the city, including marketplaces, busy street corners and numerous bridges spanning Leiden's waterways.[4] From the 1570s onwards, the criers also pasted up at similar busy locations throughout the city printed placards that featured the text of the latest ordinance. The announcements, warnings and pleadings of the regents of Leiden permeated the urban cityscape. Although there is exceptionally good evidence documenting official communication in Leiden, these proclamations, town criers and printed ordinances were ubiquitous in the 17th-century Dutch Republic.

This book describes the public communication practices of the secular authorities in the Dutch Golden Age. It is a study of 'state communication': the manner in which the authorities sought to inform their citizens, publicise their laws and engage publicly in quarrels with their political opponents. These communication strategies underpinned the political stability of the 17th-century Dutch Republic. This was a state in which very few citizens exercised formal political power. In theory, almost all inhabitants of the Dutch Republic had no political voice. The state was dominated by a small and exclusive class of regents, whose prerogative of policy-making was not to be questioned. The regents negotiated with one another behind closed doors in town hall chambers and the rooms of the central government complex in The Hague, the Binnenhof, where secrecy was the assumed norm (though never perfectly practised).[5]

If discretion was paramount in principle, the practicalities of governance demanded that the regents of the Dutch Republic adopt a sophisticated informal system of consultation with the wider populace. Implementing the resolutions agreed upon in the Binnenhof required the active consent of the citizens upon whom they were imposed. The regents were obligated to announce their decisions throughout the country, so people were aware of the law and could assist in its enforcement. While theoretically a separate caste, the regents were more often obliged to address their citizens on an equal footing. Even if they clothed

[4] See Chapter 5.

[5] Guido de Bruin, *Geheimhouding en verraad: De geheimhouding van staatszaken ten tijde van de Republiek (1600–1750)* (The Hague: Sdu, 1991).

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themselves in the dignities of their exquisite robes, or elevated themselves on the town hall balustrade, the regents had to justify their demands for increased taxation, or patiently reiterate the regulations of the local cheese market. These acts of persuasion required constant reinforcement. This is why the authorities employed town criers and bailiffs to speed through town and countryside repeating proclamations; why they instructed ministers to proclaim official prayer days at church; and why everywhere, on walls, doors, pillars and boards, one could find the texts of ordinances, notices and announcements.

The publicity strategies of Dutch authorities have long been obscured; indeed, they have never before been systematically described. There is a good reason why this should be so. Concerned about their decorous appearance, the 17th-century regents who ruled the country always understated the extent to which they relied on the consent of their citizens. It was much more attractive for the burgomasters to commission a painting which praised them as virtuous successors of classical Rome than to portray the busy, noisy and often contentious scenes of municipal proclamations. The regents shared a political ideal which dismissed the agency of popular consent; but this was an ideal, like so many ideals in the Dutch Republic, which existed in art and literature but was not practised in daily life.[6] As David Zaret reminds us, political communication in early modern Europe was 'riddled with contradictions between theory and practice'.[7] This is no less true for the Dutch Republic, where the theory, and the lofty notions of oligarchic government, have passed largely unchallenged into the historiography of the Dutch Golden Age, while the ubiquitous, mundane and sometimes unglamorous strategies of political communication have been ignored. In this study, these strategies of state communication will for the first time be analysed and placed within the political culture of the Dutch Golden Age.

The ruling regents of the 17th-century Dutch Republic, although most possessed no aristocratic titles, persuaded each other of the ideal of their political superiority, and they have sold it to posterity too. The Dutch republican ideal was one in which the virtues of a republic (self-rule of citizens, liberty, justice and consensus) always thrived thanks to the direction of a selfless council of citizens, chosen by their peers. In theory, they did not rule because they wanted to, but because it was for the good of their community.

Yet the authorities also sold a republican ideal in the sense of marketing: making known the laws, orders and regulations passed, and explaining why they acted in the best interests of the citizenry. This was the most literate, urbanised and prosperous citizenry in Europe. It was also in many ways the best informed, and it

[6] Simon Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age* (London: Collins, 1987); D. J. Roorda, *Partij en Factie: De oproeren van 1672 in de steden van Holland en Zeeland, een krachtmeting tussen partijen en facties*, 2nd ed. (Groningen: Wolters, 1978), p. 12.

[7] David Zaret, *Origins of Democratic Culture: Printing, Petitions, and the Public Sphere in Early-Modern England* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), p. 44.

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became more so as the century wore on, as ever larger sections of the population enjoyed greater prosperity. This posed formidable challenges for government, as a literate, curious population, in a country that had been brought into existence by a revolt against legal authority, was unlikely to accept arbitrary or patently self-interested regulation without argument. In a republic with unsettled roots, the task of ruling was made harder by the availability of an alternative model in the princely, hereditary power of the House of Orange. The republican ideal had therefore to be reinforced at all times: through speech, dress, ceremony and architecture, but most of all by 'selling the law'.

This study also confronts the selling of government in the sense that, as in every other part of Europe, governing brought considerable benefits to those in the circles of power. Those who rose to the highest ranks of republican administration were usually rich when they joined the magistracy, and they became richer through the fruits of office. The perquisites of office were seldom challenged, but for those who stressed the high-mindedness of republican government, wealth could be an uncomfortable undertone and became a toxic political issue when crisis threatened the stability of the state. Although the regents of the Dutch Republic were, as a political elite, not as corrupt as those of other countries, charges of corruption were nevertheless easily made.[8] The extraordinary embezzlements of Cornelis Musch, *griffier* (general secretary) of the States General, which forced the authorities to lay down strict instructions for the *griffier*'s office in 1646, remained a raw memory.[9] The extent of these misappropriations led to widespread investigations into corruption, but the regents preferred to keep these out of the public eye (although they were unsuccessful in doing so). In 1652, Michiel Stael, a printer from The Hague, produced a broadsheet that listed the names of all regents from around the country who had been investigated (Figure 1.3).[10] When the Dutch Republic faced existential crises in 1618, 1650 and 1672, popular accusations of corruption blackened the reputation of the state's leading statesmen, regardless of their scrupulousness. In the cases of Johan van Oldenbarnevelt and Johan de Witt, such false allegations cost them their lives.

The dissemination of government ordinances and official announcements was also big business. For many in the publishing industry the printing, selling and distribution of ordinances, edicts, state papers and polemical political

[8] K. W. Swart, *Sale of Offices in the Seventeenth Century* (Utrecht: HES, 1980); Mary Lindemann, *The Merchant Republics: Amsterdam, Antwerp, and Hamburg, 1648–1790* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), pp. 56–66, 116–27, 136, 153; Roorda, *Partij en Factie*, p. 48.

[9] *Instructie voor den griffier van de heeren Staten Generael beraemt ende gearresteert. Op den eersten september des jaers 1646* (The Hague: [widow and heirs of Hillebrant van Wouw], 1646), USTC 1034524. See also Paul Knevel, *Het Haagse Bureau: Zeventiende-eeuwse ambtenaren tussen staatsbelang en eigenbelang* (Amsterdam: Prometheus/Bert Bakker, 2001), pp. 124–45.

[10] *Namen van de heeren schuldigh zijnde aende corruptien, tot merckelijcken ondienst van 't ghemene landt* (Arnhem: Jacob van Biesen [=The Hague: Michiel Stael], 1652), USTC 1520850; Marika Keblusek, *Boeken in de hofstad: Haagse boekcultuur in de Gouden Eeuw* (Hilversum: Verloren, 1997), p. 235.

1652

NAMEN van de Heeren ſchuldigh zijnde aende Corruptien, tot merckelijcken ondienſt van't ghemene Landt.

GELDERLANDT.

Rantwijck.
Aernhem.
Gent.
Verbalt.
Aertsbergh.
Linteloo.
Bronckhorſt.

HOLLANDT.

'tHuys ende Goederen vanden Griffier Muſch.
Den ouden Bockhorſt.
Den jonghen Bockhorſt.
Aſperen.
Herberts.
Vervooren.

ZEELANDT.

Berchem.
Lucas.

UTRECHT.

Ploos.
Reynſwoude.
Bornewal.
Hardenbroeck.

VRIESLANDT.

Andela.
Fildriel.
Loo.
Intiema.

OVERYSEL.

Richard van Haerſolte.
Vrieſen.
Ripperda.
Moulardt.
Haerſolte.

GROENINGEN.

Gruys.
Meyert.

Ontfanghers van des GENERALITEYTS Penninghen.

Gans, inden Boſch.
Lus, tot Hulſt.

Yder in haer Provintie gheroepen te worden voor haer Competente Rechters, en de Ontfanghers voor de Staten Generael.

Tot AERNHEM,
By JACOB van BIESEN, ordinaris Drucker van den Ed. Hove van *Gelderlant*, 1652.

Figure 1.3 *Namen van de heeren schuldigh zijnde aende corruptien* (Arnhem [=The Hague]: Jacob van Biesen [=Michiel Stael], 1652). Michiel Stael printed this list of corrupt regents under the name of a colleague in Arnhem (Jacob van Biesen), but the Court of Holland discovered that Stael was behind its production and banished him from Holland as a result (together with an unfortunate pedlar who had sold the broadsheet).

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literature was extremely profitable. Print played an increasingly varied role in the business of government. In a commercial society in an almost continuous state of political evolution, it also consumed a phenomenal amount of paper. Some of these state publications were sold, many were distributed for free, and some were printed for quasi-private circulation among the delegates of the multiple provinces, towns and state bodies, which themselves had to be persuaded if the necessary consensus was to be achieved for government action. Oiling the wheels of the government regime provided a good living for many publishers: Machteld van Leuningen, printer to the States of Holland and the States General for several decades, became one of the richest citizens of The Hague. The commercialisation of the law played a prominent role in the distribution of ordinances and placards. The widespread availability of government publications also exposed the law to prying, critical eyes; and it paved the way to making the state, and the bewildering wealth of legislation it communicated, more accountable. It is the aim of this book to identify and explain these developments.

The 'little gods' of the Dutch Republic

The 17th-century Dutch Republic was a country held together by seemingly irreconcilable contradictions. It was not a unitary republic, but a state composed of seven provinces, bound together by a promise ratified at the Union of Utrecht (1579) to uphold the ancient privileges and customs of each province, yet to act as a single political body.[11] This was a republican confederacy, in which the assemblies of the seven provinces each claimed their own sovereignty. In practice they were often dominated by the political agenda and financial might of the province of Holland, home to 45 per cent of the Republic's 1.8 million citizens and responsible for almost 60 per cent of its federal budget. The provinces also maintained notably different political constitutions, and within them, smaller jurisdictions regularly contested provincial claims to sovereignty.[12] In Holland, power resided in the eighteen towns that enjoyed a vote in the States of Holland, chief among them the economic powerhouse of Amsterdam. In the more rural provinces of Overijssel and Gelderland, power was shared between the largest towns and the nobility; in Friesland, rural landowners held sway; while in Utrecht, votes in the States were divided equally between the nobility, the church and the towns. The provinces pursued different commercial priorities and were often at loggerheads over foreign

[11] S. Groenveld and H. L. Ph. van Leeuwenberg (eds), *De Unie van Utrecht: Wording en werking van een verbond en een verbondsacte* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1979).
[12] Robert Fruin, *Geschiedenis der staatsinstellingen in Nederland tot den val der Republiek*, ed. H. T. Colenbrander (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1901); S. J. Fockema Andreae, *De Nederlandse Staat onder de Republiek*, 10th ed. (Amsterdam: Noord-Hollandsche Uitgevers Maatschappij, 1985).

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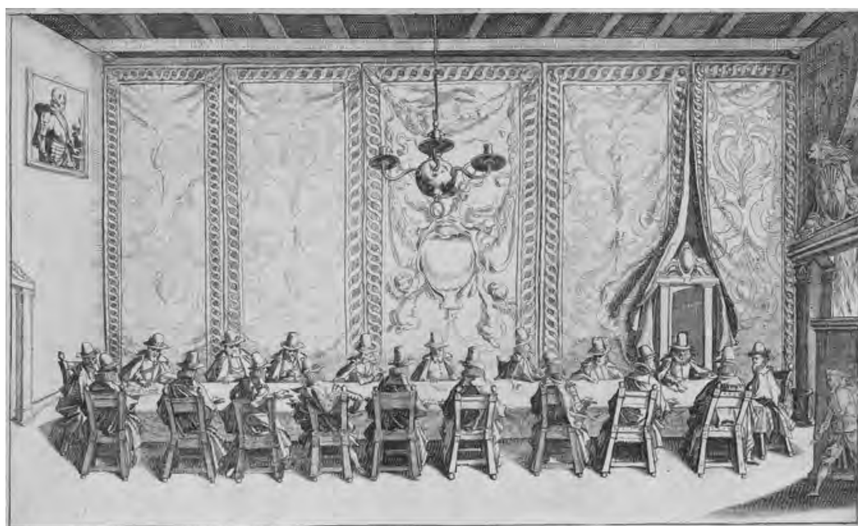

Figure 1.4 Simon Frisius, *Vergadering van de afgevaardigden van de Staten-Generaal*, 1608. Government behind closed doors: the delegates of the States General in session.

or economic policies, exacerbated by rivalries between cities and factions within each province.[13]

In theory, all federal politics, including military and foreign policy, was decided upon at the States General, the representative assembly in The Hague to which the seven provinces (Gelderland, Holland, Zeeland, Utrecht, Friesland, Overijssel and Groningen) sent permanent delegates (Figure 1.4).[14] But this was a republic in which politics was often steered by two branches of the family of Orange-Nassau, who occupied the office of Stadtholder in the provinces for most of the 17th century. The office of Stadtholder was a malleable position: he was a servant of the provincial States but enjoyed powerful rights as arbiter between the provinces when political deadlock threatened the unity of the Republic.[15] The Stadtholders exercised significant influence in the army and accrued national prestige as martial heroes in the Dutch Revolt and subsequent war against Spain.

[13] J. L. Price, *Holland and the Dutch Republic in the Seventeenth Century: The Politics of Particularism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994); Jonathan I. Israel, 'The Holland Towns and the Dutch–Spanish Conflict, 1621–1648', *BMGN*, 94 (1979), 41–69; Wim Blockmans, 'Voracious States and Obstructing Cities: An Aspect of State Formation in Preindustrial Europe', *Theory and Society*, 18 (1989), 733–55; Marjolein 't Hart, 'Cities and Statemaking in the Dutch Republic, 1580–1680', *Theory and Society*, 18 (1989), 663–87.

[14] For the origins of the States General, see H. G. Koenigsberger, *Monarchies, States Generals and Parliaments: The Netherlands in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

[15] Herbert H. Rowen, *The Princes of Orange: The Stadholders in the Dutch Republic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

Thanks to their aristocratic courts, their wealth and their illustrious ancestry, the Stadtholders were a force to be reckoned with. Yet in this unsettled republican state, political decision making was the prerogative of the regents. These were the men who represented their cities and districts at the provincial States and at the federal States General. They were, by and large, drawn from the more affluent layers of urban society and, especially in the eastern parts of the country, from the landed gentry. Entry to the class of regents was generally restricted to a select number of patrician families, and membership of city councils was determined by co-option.

The regents were representatives of their communities, not through principles of popular election, but thanks to their supposedly superior wisdom, dignity and virtue. In the words of Rabod Herman Scheels, a prominent advocate for regent government, the best society was that in which the 'rule of the best' was enforced.[16] This ethos of superiority rested on notions of entrepreneurial spirit, moral diligence, civic duty and wealth: in 1564, the citizens of Amsterdam demanded that their regents should be chosen 'from the wealthiest, most honourable, most notable, most honest, and most peace-loving men'.[17]

Republican regent government was bolstered by ideals of classical republican virtue advocated by Roman writers such as Cicero, whose works permeated humanist education in the 16th and 17th centuries and were required reading at the Latin schools that provided the Dutch elite with their primary education.[18] Classical Rome and Renaissance Italy, especially the Serene Republic of Venice, were sources of inspiration for ideals of republican organisation and political virtue.[19] In Enkhuizen, the magistrates commissioned the artist Romeyn de

[16] Rabod Herman Scheels, *Algemeene vrijheid* (Rotterdam: Joannes Naeranus, 1666), USTC 1803316, p. 17.

[17] Cited in Lindemann, *The Merchant Republics*, p. 46. See also Jan Hartman, Jaap Nieuwstraten and Michel Reinders (eds), *Public Offices, Personal Demands: Capability in Governance in the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2009), especially Jaap Nieuwstraten, 'Why the Wealthy Should Rule: Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn's Defence of Holland's Aristocratic Mercantile Regime', pp. 129–34; A. Th. van Deursen, *Plain Lives in a Golden Age: Popular Culture, Religion and Society in Seventeenth-Century Holland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 159–61; J. L. Price, 'De Regent', in H. M. Belien, A. Th. van Deursen and G. J. van Setten (eds), *Gestalten van de Gouden Eeuw: Een Hollands groepsportret* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 1995), pp. 25–64; Roorda, *Partij en Factie*, pp. 40–1.

[18] Ernst Jan Kuiper, *De Hollandse 'Schoolordre' van 1625* (Groningen: Wolters, 1958); A. Frank-van Westrienen, *Het schoolschrift van Pieter Teding van Berkhout: Vergezicht op het gymnasiaal onderwijs in de zeventiende-eeuwse Nederlanden* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2007).

[19] William J. Bouwsma, *Venice and the Defense of Republican Liberty: Renaissance Values in the Age of the Counter Reformation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968); J. G. A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1975); Eco O. G. Haitsma Mulier, *The Myth of Venice and Dutch Republican Thought in the Seventeenth Century*, trans. Gerard T. Moran (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1980); Jonathan I. Israel, 'The Uses of Myth and History in the Ideological Politics of the Dutch Golden Age', in Jane Fenoulhet and Lesley Gilbert (eds), *Narratives of Low Countries History and Culture: Reframing the Past* (London: UCL Press, 2016), pp. 9–17.

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Hooghe to paint a series of eight allegorical murals in the burgomasters' chamber, all taken from Roman history, to celebrate the virtue of republican government.[20] Yet Dutch republican culture was also strongly grounded in local urban traditions. This was a 'practical republicanism', rarely codified and loosely defined, but one that was nevertheless widely shared and of supreme importance to the civic identity of Dutch inhabitants.[21]

The regents were fiercely protective of their status as free republicans. The delegates of the States General would not open any correspondence sent to them if they were not addressed as 'Their High Mightinesses'.[22] In 1587, the rebel States had declared themselves sovereign, free from their bonds to Habsburg Spain or any other overlord.[23] The unprecedented nature of this republican experiment left the Dutch ruefully aware that their legitimacy was dubious at best.[24] Dukes, counts, bishops or lords had always ruled the provinces of the Low Countries. In the eyes of foreign visitors, their 'High Mightinesses' were pretentious bourgeois traders. In 1586, a member of the retinue of the Earl of Leicester described them contemptuously as 'sovereign lords shit-pepper, street vendor, cheese-man and miller'.[25]

Such derision struck a chord with the patrician regent class. While foreign visitors to the Binnenhof complained of the absence of splendour in its furnishings, sobriety reinforced the authority of the regents at home.[26] They could not and did not want to indulge in the same ostentatious trappings of power (vast palaces, statues, glamorous clothes, banquets, processions) that so appealed to Europe's monarchs and princes, but they were required to participate in a political realm where such display played an important role in legitimising rule.[27] The nagging

[20] Margriet Eikema Hommes and Piet Bakker, 'Hoogachtbaarheid en ontzaglijke grootheid: De burgemeesterskamer van het stadhuis van Enkhuizen', in Henk van Nierop et al. (eds), *Romeyn de Hooghe: de verbeelding van de late Gouden Eeuw* (Zwolle: Waanders, 2008), pp. 222–43. See also Chapter 4.

[21] Maarten Prak, *Citizens without Nations: Urban Citizenship in Europe and the World, c. 1000–1789* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), pp. 44–8; Wyger R. E. Velema, *Republicans: Essays on Eighteenth-Century Dutch Political Thought* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), esp. pp. 6, 9, 24–5, 27; Joris Oddens, Mart Rutjes and Arthur Weststeijn, 'Introduction: Republican Decline in Context', in Joris Oddens, Mart Rutjes and Arthur Weststeijn (eds), *Discourses of Decline: Essays on Republicanism in Honor of Wyger R.E. Velema* (Leiden: Brill, 2021), pp. 1–2. See also Chapter 4. For republican traditions more broadly, see Martin van Gelderen and Quentin Skinner (eds), *Republicanism: A Shared European Heritage*, 2 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

[22] Fockema Andreae, *Nederlandse Staat*, p. 108.

[23] See François Francken, *Corte verthooninge van het recht byden ridderschap van Hollandt ende Westvrieslant tot behoudenisse vande vryheden* (Rotterdam: Matthijs Bastiaensz, 1587), USTC 422581.

[24] Martin van Gelderen, *The Political Thought of the Dutch Revolt, 1555–1590* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

[25] Cited in Anton van der Lem, *De Opstand in de Nederlanden, 1568–1648: De Tachtigjarige Oorlog in woord en beeld* (Nijmegen: Vantilt, 2014), p. 134. See also Pieter Geyl, *The Netherlands in the Seventeenth Century: Part One, 1609–1648*, 2nd ed. (London: Ernest Benn, 1961), pp. 248–9.

[26] Lauren Lauret, *Regentenwerk: Vergaderen in de Staten-Generaal en de Tweede Kamer, 1750–1850* (Amsterdam: Prometheus, 2020), pp. 53–4.

[27] See Frans-Willem Korsten, *A Dutch Republican Baroque* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2017), on the tensions in fostering 'republican baroque' ideology, art and literature in the 17th century.

absence of a distinguished past also weighed heavily on the political elite of the Dutch Republic. It was therefore endlessly emphasised in sermons, university lectures, public ceremonies and festivals that the virtuous administration of the regents was the foundation of the Republic's prosperity.[28] In 1629, one minister pronounced that the regents 'always had their eyes fixed on the sky like good pilots' and could sail their country out of 'the greatest of storms'.[29]

That the regents enjoyed divine benediction was seldom questioned. The Franeker law professor Ulricus Huber considered that 'all magistrates were appointed by God'.[30] If, in practice, one could see that this was blatantly untrue – magistrates were appointed by their peers – it was common to refer to the regents as 'Gods on earth'.[31] In 1644, Johannes Janssonius, a prominent Amsterdam publisher, produced a two-volume compendium of the laws issued by the States General from 1581 onwards (Figure 1.5). In the preface, Janssonius praised the efforts of the regents who had taken diligent care to issue such 'good, wise and observant placards and ordinances'. This was only appropriate, claimed Janssonius, for 'the regents (by the Lord God appointed as little Gods) are to rule over the people as fathers, and the subjects are to obey them and follow their bidding'.[32] In 1671, a poet marking the appointment of four new burgomasters in Rotterdam mused that

> The best and the wisest of people enter the halls of our town hall
> They rise as one head, and temper the many-headed
> Soberly they display dignified authority
> See here rises a sun, the citizen's bountiful day.[33]

These panegyrics bestowed upon the regent class responsibility as much as privilege. The regents ruled not for themselves, but for the common good. It was incontestable, one pamphleteer suggested, that '[t]he rise and fall of republics is generally caused by the good or bad initiatives of its regents'.[34] It was, nevertheless,

[28] Hans W. Blom, 'Citizens and the Ideology of Citizenship in the Dutch Republic: Machiavellianism, Wealth and Nation in the Mid-Seventeenth Century', in Joep Leerssen and Menno Spiering (eds), *Machiavelli: Figure-Reputation* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1996), pp. 131–52, here p. 134.

[29] Fabrice de la Bassecour, *Traité de l'excellence des magistrats* (Amsterdam: Jacob Thomasz Sergeant, 1629), USTC 1029275, p. 3.

[30] Cited in Michel Reinders, *Printed Pandemonium: Popular Print and Politics in the Netherlands, 1650–72* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), p. 221.

[31] *Op de ongehoorsaamheyt ende Goden-laster van den Utrechtschen Teling; die den brief van hare Hoogh-mogende, om Gode een dank-en biddagh te houden, niet en wilde van 't stoel aflesen. Den 19. September 1658* (s.l.: s.n., 1658), USTC 1839131, p. 3.

[32] *Nederlandtsche placcaet-boeck*, 2 vols (Amsterdam: Johannes Janssonius, 1644), USTC 1515183, I, f. 3r.

[33] H. Sluyter, *Mey-sangh op de keurdagh van de Ed: Groot Achtbare Heeren Burger-Vadren der Stadt Rotterdam* (Rotterdam: Gregorius de Joncker, 1671), USTC 1521240.

[34] *Korte deductie om te bewysen, dat het voor de provintie van Zeelandt hoognoodich is, dat alle de magistraets-persoonen met tourbeurten op de vergaderinge der Staten verschynen* (s.l.: s.n., 1673), USTC 1810239, f. A2r.

anathema to suggest that politics should involve the people whom the regents served. The 'just citizen', in the opinion of influential thinkers such as Simon Stevin, listened dutifully to his government without question.[35] The Dutch Republic was home to a wide range of political ideologies, but there were few philosophers who advocated political organisation along democratic principles. Political thinkers who proposed absolute monarchy as the best form of government agreed completely with radical republicans that there was little place for the *gemene man* or the *grauw* ('the common people') in politics. The people were considered slaves to their passions, ignorant of law and easily manipulated.[36] One did not have to be a devout follower of Aristotelian theory, which divided political organisation into monarchies, aristocracies and democracies, to recognise the dangers of the dictatorship of the masses. Marcus Zuerius van Boxhorn, professor at the University of Leiden and a strong opponent of classical political theory, argued that the more secretive policy-making was, the more powerful laws would be when they were enacted.[37]

The few who did credit the faceless mob with a sense of agency were thinkers who were in every respect beyond the pale of political convention. In the 1670s, Benedict de Spinoza, the most infamous political philosopher of the 17th-century Dutch Republic, argued that it would be beneficial to involve ordinary citizens in the affairs of government. Citizens were not, in the eyes of Spinoza, an ignorant multitude:

> Lastly, as for the populace being devoid of truth and judgment, that is nothing wonderful, since the chief business of the dominion is transacted behind its back, and it can but make conjectures from the little, which cannot be hidden. For it is an uncommon virtue to suspend one's judgment. So it is supreme folly to wish to transact everything behind the backs of the citizens, and to expect that they will not judge ill of the same, and will not give everything an unfavourable interpretation.[38]

Spinoza was not the first to suggest that government should make publicity for its cause, rather than uphold principles of strict secrecy. The Venetian statesman and historian Paolo Sarpi had encouraged the city's Council of Ten to adopt an active

[35] Simon Stevin, *Vita Politica. Het Burgherlick leven* (Leiden: Franciscus Raphelengius, 1590), USTC 422851, p. 27.

[36] E. H. Kossmann, *Political Thought in the Dutch Republic: Three Studies* (Amsterdam: Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen, 2000), pp. 44, 77, 137, 182; Velema, *Republicans*, pp. 35–43. See also G. O. van de Klashorst, H. W. Blom and E. O. G. Haitsma Mulier, *Bibliography of Dutch Seventeenth Century Political Thought: An Annotated Inventory, 1581–1713* (Amsterdam: APA – Holland University Press, 1986).

[37] Marcus Zuerius van Boxhorn, *Disquisitiones politicae, of overwegingen van staet en bestiering* (Amsterdam: Jan Rieuwertsz and Pieter Arentsz, 1669), USTC 1806505, pp. 355–6. See also Jaap Nieuwstraten, *Historical and Political Thought in the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic: The Case of Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn (1612–1653)* (PhD thesis: Erasmus University Rotterdam, 2012), pp. 243–328.

[38] Benedict de Spinoza, *A Theologico-Political Treatise and A Political Treatise*, ed. R. H. M. Elwes (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2004), p. 341, and more broadly pp. 257–66.

Figure 1.5 Daniël van den Bremden, *Herault der Zeven Verenigde Provinciën*, 1644. The little Gods: the engraved title page of the 1644 compendium of States General ordinances, published by Johannes Janssonius in Amsterdam. The motto on the scroll in the hand of the central figure, the personification of the States, reads: 'Sic transfert Deus imperia' (Thus God transfers power). Cherubs smash the coat of arms of the King of Spain in the bottom right corner.

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campaign of political publicity in the early 17th century.[39] No Dutch statesman, however, would admit to pursuing a political programme which paid any heed to the will of the citizens. Jacob Cats, Grand Pensionary (*Raadpensionaris*) of Holland in the first half of the 17th century, stated that government must be independent of public opinion; Johan de Witt, the epitome of republican virtue, claimed that the state should pay no heed to public perceptions of authority.[40]

The power of the public

The self-perceptions of early modern regents have passed effortlessly into posterity. As Henk van Nierop has argued, 'historians tend to underscore the fundamentally oligarchic character of Dutch institutions and politics'.[41] P. J. Blok wrote in his magnum opus that

> [t]he character of government in the Northern provinces can on the whole be described as aristocratic, tempered by the authority of the Stadtholders . . . there was no question of popular influence on government. The only manner by which the people could be heard was through revolt, through unrest.[42]

D. J. Roorda saw the Dutch Republic as a 'society under the sway of the aristocracy', in which the authorities rarely addressed their communication strategies to 'people who played no active part in politics'; G. J. Renier conceived this as the 'dictatorship of the upper middle class'.[43] A. Th. van Deursen agreed with the statements of Cats and De Witt when he stated that 'regents were independent of the people's will and did not have to make publicity for themselves'.[44] Michel

[39] Filippo de Vivo, 'Paolo Sarpi and the Uses of Information in Seventeenth-Century Venice', in Joad Raymond (ed.), *News Networks in Seventeenth Century Britain and Europe* (London: Routledge, 2006), pp. 35–49; Filippo de Vivo, *Information and Communication in Venice: Rethinking Early Modern Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 201–48.

[40] Cited in Van Deursen, *Plain Lives*, p. 142. See also Robert von Friedeburg, 'Urban Riots and the Perspective of "Qualification for Office": The Peculiarities of Urban Government and the Case of the 1672 Disturbances in the Netherlands', in Hartman, Nieuwstraten and Reinders (eds), *Public Offices, Personal Demands*, pp. 22–52, here p. 35.

[41] Henk van Nierop, 'Private Interests, Public Policies: Petitions in the Dutch Republic', in Arthur K. Wheelock, Jr and Adele Seeff (eds), *The Public and Private in Dutch Culture of the Golden Age* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2000), pp. 33–40, here p. 35. See also H. W. von der Dunk, 'Pieter Geyl: History as a Form of Self-Expression', in A. C. Duke and C. A. Tamse (eds), *Clio's Mirror: Historiography in Britain and the Netherlands* (Zutphen: De Walburg Pers, 1985), pp. 185–214, here p. 189; P. B. M. Blaas, 'The Touchiness of a Small Nation with a Great Past: The Approach of Fruin and Blok to the Writing of History of the Netherlands', in Duke and Tamse (eds), *Clio's Mirror*, pp. 133–61, here pp. 144–5; Velema, *Republicans*, pp. 20–2; Mary Lindemann, 'Dirty Politics or "Harmonie"? Defining Corruption in Early Modern Amsterdam and Hamburg', *Journal of Social History*, 45 (2012), 582–604, here pp. 582–3; and Lauret, *Regentenwerk*, p. 15.

[42] P. J. Blok, *Geschiedenis van het Nederlandsche volk, Deel 2*, 3rd ed. (Leiden: A.W. Sijthoff, 1924), pp. 425–6.

[43] Roorda, *Partij en Factie*, pp. 7, 37–80; G. J. Renier, *The Dutch Nation: An Historical Study* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1944), p. 16. Also cited in Van Nierop, 'Private Interests', p. 35.

[44] Van Deursen, *Plain Lives*, pp. 161, 188.

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Reinders recently argued that '[f]rom the regents' point of view, communication with citizens was . . . pointless'.[45]

The paradox of early modern politics was that the state claimed boundless authority but was able to exercise only very limited political power. The 'little Gods' of the Dutch Republic possessed, in principle, unchallengeable sovereignty over the lives of their citizens, yet without the active support of those citizens, the regents were helpless. Over the past forty years scholars of early modern Europe have increasingly interested themselves in the political agency of citizens and subjects; in their engagement in the political activities of their rulers; in their role in state building; in their interest in political affairs; and in their role in pamphleteering, petitioning and subverting the formal established relationships between rulers and ruled. Scholarship remains divided over to what extent there emerged a 'public sphere', as characterised by Jürgen Habermas in 1962, in which citizens could exchange political information freely and challenge the political monopoly of the state.[46] Nevertheless, a consensus has emerged which grants the politically excluded, that is, all people without political representation or political office, a serious and significant political role in early modern society.[47] It has become clear that political power in early modern states and communities was always subject to negotiation; that political elites had limited power; and that early modern people, of various socio-economic backgrounds, employed a diverse repertoire of tools to make their opinions heard.[48]

[45] Reinders, *Printed Pandemonium*, p. 5.

[46] Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, trans. Thomas Burger and Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989). For notable criticisms of the Habermasian 'public sphere' see Joad Raymond, 'The Newspaper, Public Opinion, and the Public Sphere in the Seventeenth Century', in Joad Raymond (ed.), *News, Newspapers and Society in Early Modern Britain* (London: Frank Cass, 1999), pp. 109–40; and Peter Lake and Steven Pincus, 'Rethinking the Public Sphere in Early Modern England', *Journal of British Studies*, 45 (2006), 270–92; for more recent criticisms see Helmer J. Helmers, *The Royalist Republic: Literature, Politics, and Religion in the Anglo-Dutch Public Sphere, 1639–1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), pp. 22–4; and Femke Deen, *Publiek debat en propaganda in Amsterdam tijdens de Nederlandse Opstand: Amsterdam 'Moorddam' (1566–1578)* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2015), pp. 12–13. More broadly, see James Van Horn Melton, *The Rise of the Public in Enlightenment Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

[47] See, most comprehensively, Wim Blockmans, *Medezeggenschap: Politieke participatie in Europa vóór 1800* (Amsterdam: Prometheus, 2020); and Prak, *Citizens without Nations*.

[48] This body of scholarship is vast. For a representative overview of works that I have found particularly useful, see Jan Dumolyn et al. (eds), *The Voices of the People in Late Medieval Europe: Communication and Popular Politics* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014); Tim Harris (ed.), *The Politics of the Excluded, c. 1500–1850* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001); Wim Blockmans et al. (eds), *Empowering Interactions: Political Cultures and the Emergence of the State in Europe 1300–1900* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009); Wayne te Brake, *Shaping History: Ordinary People in European Politics, 1500–1700* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998); Beat Kümin, 'Political Culture in the Holy Roman Empire', *German History*, 27 (2009), 131–44; Dagmar Freist, *Governed by Opinion: Politics, Religion, and the Dynamics of Communication in Stuart London, 1637–1645* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1997); Zaret, *Origins of Democratic Culture*; Christian D. Liddy, *Contesting the City: The Politics of Citizenship in English Towns, 1250–1530* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017); Tim Harris, *London Crowds in the Reign of Charles II: Propaganda and Politics from the Restoration until the Exclusion Crisis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987);

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This applies equally to the Dutch Republic, where, while affirming the oligarchical nature of government, historians of the Dutch Golden Age have somewhat paradoxically awarded the citizens of the Dutch Republic high marks for their political engagement. Willem Frijhoff and Marijke Spies characterised the culture of the Dutch Republic as one dominated by a permanent 'discussion-culture', a state in which inhabitants from all social strata enjoyed an expectation of political participation.[49] 17th-century visitors to the Dutch Republic frequently described scenes of unrestrained political conversation. Sir William Temple, English ambassador to the Dutch Republic and one of its most astute observers, commented to his brother in 1667 that

> [t]he chief pleasure I had in my journey [through the Dutch Republic] was to observe the strange freedom that all men took in boats and inns, and all other common places, of talking openly whatever they thought upon all the public affairs, both of their own state, and their neighbours.[50]

Temple returned to this same theme in his *Observations upon the United Provinces*, first published in 1673. Here Temple commended the Dutch that their

> [d]ifferences in opinion make none in affections. . . . They argue without interest or anger; they differ without enmity or scorn. . . . Men live together [here] like citizens of the world, associated by the common ties of humanity, and by the bonds of peace.[51]

The relatively free expression of political and religious nonconformity was, in other accounts, equally cited as a derogatory stereotype of the unbridled vices of Dutch society. Andrew Marvell's *The Character of Holland*, an invective poem

Arlette Farge, *Subversive Words: Public Opinion in Eighteenth-Century France*, trans. Rosemary Morris (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); De Vivo, *Information and Communication*; Massimo Rospocher (ed.), *Beyond the Public Sphere: Opinions, Publics, Spaces in Early Modern Europe* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2012); Jelle Haemers, *For the Common Good: State Power and Urban Revolts in the Reign of Mary of Burgundy (1477–1482)* (Turnhout: lsd, 2009); Peter Blickle (ed.), *Resistance, Representation and Community* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997); William Beik, *Urban Protest in Seventeenth-Century France: The Culture of Retribution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Caroline Boswell, *Disaffection and Everyday Life in Interregnum England* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2017); H. Deceulaer, 'Stadsbestuur en buurtbewoners in Gent: Interactie, participatie, en publieke opinie, 1658–1668', *BMGN*, 110 (1995), 3–26; Barbara Stollberg-Rilinger, *Cultures of Decision-Making* (London: German Historical Institute, 2016); and Daniel Bellingradt, 'The Early Modern City as a Resonating Box: Media, Public Opinion, and the Urban Space of the Holy Roman Empire, Cologne, and Hamburg ca. 1700', *Journal of Early Modern History*, 16 (2012), 201–40.

[49] Frijhoff and Spies, *1650: Bevochten Eendracht*, p. 218. See also J. L. Price, *Dutch Culture in the Golden Age* (London: Reaktion Books, 2011), pp. 69–78; Michel Reinders, 'Capability and the Transformation of Dutch Citizenship', in Hartman, Nieuwstraten and Reinders (eds), *Public Offices, Personal Demands*, pp. 176–98; and De Bruin, *Geheimhouding en verraad*, esp. pp. 427–33. For a criticism of Frijhoff and Spies's characterisation, see Helmer J. Helmers, 'Popular Participation and Public Debate', in Helmer J. Helmers and Geert H. Janssen, *The Cambridge Companion to the Dutch Golden Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), pp. 124–46.

[50] Cited in De Bruin, *Geheimhouding en verraad*, pp. 427–8.

[51] Sir William Temple, *Observations upon the United Provinces of the Netherlands*, ed. Sir George Clark (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), p. 106.

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which circulated in England during the Anglo-Dutch wars of the mid-17th century, rhymed that

> Hence Amsterdam, Turk, Christian, Pagan, Jew,
> Staple of sects and mint of schism grew;
> That bank of conscience, where not one so strange
> Opinion but finds credit and exchange.[52]

The opinionated public of the Dutch Republic, whether it was feared, reviled or admired, was an unavoidable condition of the political structure of the Dutch Republic. Even if the regents were perceived to belong to a superior class of citizenry, they were ultimately still drawn from the same body of citizens. The inhabitants of the Dutch Republic were also physically closer to their rulers than their contemporaries in other nations.[53] Henry Sidney wrote in 1679 that the most powerful burgomaster of Amsterdam, Gillis Valckenier, 'walks about the streets just like an ordinary shopkeeper'.[54] The regents of the Dutch Republic lived among their subjects. The burgomasters of a town were not separated from the lowliest inhabitants by a great entourage; their houses were not fenced off. The ceremonial tabards of the magistrates were easily identifiable, and regents could frequently be found sitting on the doorsteps of their houses.[55] It was important in this context that the particular topography of Dutch cities rendered them unsuitable for private carriages or horses. Those regents who affected such aristocratic luxuries risked public ridicule, and few did so: a regent was expected to walk. Nicolaes Tulp, the regent physician immortalised in Rembrandt's *The Anatomy Lesson*, got away with riding in a carriage because he could always claim to be hurrying to the bedside of a patient, but even he abandoned his carriage years before they were formally banned in 1663.[56]

The accessibility of the regents rendered them vulnerable to popular political pressure. Their vulnerability was exacerbated by the fact that authorities had few means at their disposal to enforce their rule. The presence of overlapping, sometimes contradictory, legal jurisdictions ensured that no central judicial or executive authority could regulate effectively every aspect of a highly urban society. The citizens of a Dutch city had the right to be tried only in a court in their own city, before a tribunal of their peers. Police forces in Dutch towns were limited to several assistants to the local sheriff, who, inevitably, found it difficult

[52] Andrew Marvell, *The Character of Holland* (London: T. Mabb for Robert Horn, 1665), p. 5.
[53] Henk van Nierop, 'Popular Participation in Politics in the Dutch Republic', in Peter Blickle (ed.), *Resistance, Representation and Community* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), pp. 272–90, here p. 272.
[54] Henry Sidney, *Diary of the times of Charles the Second*, ed. R. W. Blencowe, 2 vols (London: Henry Colburn, 1843), I, p. 66.
[55] Fockema Andreae, *Nederlandse Staat*, p. 107; Van Deursen, *Plain Lives*, p. 161.
[56] S. A. C. Dudok van Heel et al., *Nicolaes Tulp: The Life and Work of an Amsterdam Physician and Magistrate in the 17th Century* (Amsterdam: Six Art Promotion, 1998), p. 42.

to exercise control over any large gathering of citizens. When two bailiffs of the States of Holland asked the sheriff of Oudewater to quiet a restless crowd during a proclamation, the sheriff responded indignantly: 'How could I do that? I am only one man with one assistant.'[57] In addition to the sheriff, most towns had a local militia, composed of local male citizens. The militia could be called up by the magistrates in times of public unrest, but magistrates were never guaranteed the protection of the militia; some urban riots were initiated by the militia itself.[58] Certainly the regents did not rule by fear. The Republic believed in the redemptive power of hard work. Conditions in the houses of correction were undoubtedly harsh, but remarkably few criminals were sentenced to death, particularly when compared with the brutal public pageants of execution in contemporary England, France, Spain and many other parts of Europe.[59]

The confederal composition of the state ensured that a regular flow of political information would be maintained between and within the seven provinces. Without the consent of all provinces, federal policy-making could not proceed. Within the provinces, the sentiments of any of the voting cities, nobles or factions would have to be taken into consideration to arrive at a consensus; it was essential that all political participants shared their opinions with one another. The representatives of these provincial assemblies had to confer with their own councils, travelling back and forth to decide upon negotiation strategies and potential concessions. The complex layers of governance in the Dutch Republic meant that strict principles of secrecy were difficult to enforce in practice. Guido de Bruin, in his study of Dutch information management and state secrecy, pointed out that Dutch authorities 'were never able to secure a system of secrecy regarding all affairs of state'.[60]

Beyond the confines of the town hall or the Binnenhof there was a lively trade in political information, in part to satisfy the needs of the administrators involved in the complex political processes of the Dutch state, but also to satiate the curiosity of a literate and inquisitive public. The Dutch Republic was the most bookish, educated and literate culture of early modern Europe.[61] By the middle of the 17th century, literacy rates in the urban centres of the Dutch Republic reached up to 70 per cent for men and 40 per cent for women; the business competence and forthright manner of Dutch women was another feature of its society frequently remarked on by visitors.[62] The Dutch Republic was the centre of the European

[57] Cited in Rudolf Dekker, *Holland in beroering: Oproeren in de 17de en 18de eeuw* (Baarn: Ambo, 1982), p. 106.
[58] See Chapter 4.
[59] Petrus Cornelis Spierenburg, *Judicial Violence in the Dutch Republic: Corporal Punishment, Executions, and Torture in Amsterdam, 1650–1750* (Amsterdam: University of Amsterdam, 1978).
[60] De Bruin, *Geheimhouding en verraad*, p. 15.
[61] Andrew Pettegree and Arthur der Weduwen, *The Bookshop of the World: Making and Trading Books in the Dutch Golden Age* (London: Yale University Press, 2019).
[62] Frijhoff and Spies, *1650: Bevochten Eendracht*, p. 237; Reinders, *Printed Pandemonium*, p. 60.

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book trade, and home to the greatest concentration of booksellers, printers and engravers, catering not only to a large international scholarly audience, but also to an enormous domestic market for religious, recreational and political literature.[63] Many publishers made handsome profits dealing in news pamphlets, political songs, poetry and prints. The widespread availability of political pamphlets not only broadened public political participation but also normalised the discussion of political issues among the broader citizenry.[64]

There was little the authorities could do to stem the publication of political literature.[65] Some of the first edicts issued by the rebel States of Holland and Zeeland in the 1570s and 1580s concerned the publication and dissemination of harmful books, poems, songs and libels. Systematic preventative censorship was in practice abandoned by 1595, replaced instead by the less demanding but erratic approach of post-publication censorship; at least 263 books were banned in the Dutch Republic between 1583 and 1700, many of them political pamphlets.[66] Yet the decentralised political structure of the Republic mitigated against effective censorship. A book might be banned in Utrecht, but not in the rest of the country; a printer could be banished from one province and re-establish himself in the next. Even if a book was prohibited and pursued by the authorities, printers possessed other techniques to evade censorship. A favoured tactic of printers was to use false imprints, hiding their workmanship by using fictitious names or places of publication to throw the authorities off their trail. Gaspar Fagel, Grand Pensionary of Holland between 1672 and his death in 1688, conceded in 1677 that 'in such a free country as we inhabit it is impossible to arrange everything according to one's wishes, so it is best to defeat such books by ignoring them'.[67]

State communication

The existing scholarship of the Dutch Golden Age pits a politically engaged public against an insular class of regents that had little interest in involving its citizens in the affairs of state. It has long been known that the norms of secrecy upheld by the

[63] Pettegree and Der Weduwen, *Bookshop of the World*, esp. chs 5, 9, 11; Lotte Hellinga et al. (eds), *The Bookshop of the World: The Role of the Low Countries in the Book-Trade, 1473–1941* ('t Goy-Houten: Hes & De Graaf, 2001); C. Berkvens-Stevelinck et al. (eds), *Le Magasin de l'Univers: The Dutch Republic as the Centre of the European Book Trade* (Leiden: Brill, 1992).

[64] An argument made effectively for England in Jason Peacey, *Print and Public Politics in the English Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

[65] Ingrid Weekhout, *Boekencensuur in de Noordelijke Nederlanden: de vrijheid van drukpers in de zeventiende eeuw* (The Hague: Sdu, 1998); S. Groenveld, 'The Mecca of Authors? States Assemblies and Censorship in the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic', in A. C. Duke and C. A. Tamse (eds), *Too Mighty to Be Free: Censorship and the Press in Britain and the Netherlands* (Zutphen: De Walburg Pers, 1987), pp. 63–86, here 65–73.

[66] Weekhout, *Boekencensuur*, pp. 371–90.

[67] Cited in W. P. C. Knuttel, *Verboden Boeken in de Republiek der Vereenigde Nederlanden: beredeneerde catalogus* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1914), p. x.

authorities were impossible to sustain in practice, but this is generally perceived as the result of popular pressures and bureaucratic deficiencies rather than any willingness on the part of the government to make publicity for its cause.[68] When scholars do identify government attempts to manipulate public opinion, it is in the crisis years of the Dutch Republic, in 1617–18 (the Remonstrant crisis), 1650 (William II's coup) and 1672 (the Disaster Year). In these exceptional years, well studied by scholars of pamphleteering, the authorities engaged in the publication of anonymous libels, the fabrication or leaking of sensitive political information, and targeted censorship to steer the outpouring of pamphlets and libels.[69] But while these years have attracted much scholarly interest, far less attention has been concentrated on the most common ways in which the authorities sought to communicate with their citizens: chiefly through proclamations, the use of town criers and the dissemination of state publications.[70]

The archives of Dutch municipalities and other jurisdictions reveal that these acts of state communication were everyday practices, pursued by the authorities at every level of government. They played an essential role in maintaining the

[68] De Bruin, *Geheimhouding en verraad*, esp. pp. 402–43.

[69] Reinders, *Printed Pandemonium*, pp. 132, 141–7; Roeland Harms, *Pamfletten en publieke opinie: Massamedia in de zeventiende eeuw* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2011), pp. 81–3, 101–5, 147–55; Simon Groenveld, '"Een enckel valsch ende lasterlijck verdichtsel": Een derde actie van Prins Willem II in juli 1650', in Simon Groenveld, M. E. H. N. Mout and I. Schöffer (eds), *Bestuurders en geleerden* (Amsterdam: De Bataafsche Leeuw, 1985), pp. 113–25. See also Chapters 7, 8, 10 and 11.

[70] For the Low Countries, exceptions include Wim Blockmans, 'Beheersen en overtuigen: Reflecties bij nieuwe visies op staatsvorming', *Tijdschrift voor Sociale Geschiedenis*, 16 (1990), 18–30; Monica Stensland, *Habsburg Communication in the Dutch Revolt* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2012); Donald Haks, *Vaderland en Vrede: Publiciteit over de Nederlandse Republiek in oorlog* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2013), esp. pp. 58–114, 206–9; Vincent van Zuilen, 'Propagande royale: les placards de Philippe II en Flandres et au Brabant (1585–1598)', in Barbara Ertlé and Martin Gosman (eds), *Les écrits courts à vocation polémique* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2006), pp. 113–28; Steven Gunn, David Grummitt and Hans Cools, *War, State and Society in England and the Netherlands 1477–1559* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 257–65; Louise Vermeersch, *Multimedia in de stad. Interacties tussen het geschreven, gedrukte en gesproken woord in de Gentse publieke sfeer (1550–1585)* (PhD thesis, Universiteit Gent, 2018); Guido de Bruin, 'Political Pamphleteering and Public Opinion in the Age of De Witt (1653–1672)', in Femke Deen, David Onnekink and Michel Reinders (eds), *Pamphlets and Politics in the Dutch Republic* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), pp. 63–96, here pp. 73, 78. For France see Michèle Fogel, *Les cérémonies de l'information dans la France du XVIe au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Fayard, 1989). For Venice and Florence see De Vivo, *Information and Communication*; Stephen J. Milner, '"Fanno bandire, notificare, et expressamente comandare": Town Criers and the Information Economy of Renaissance Florence', *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance*, 16 (2013), 107–51. For England see Liddy, *Contesting the City*, pp. 126–64; Jason Peacey, *Politicians and Pamphleteers: Propaganda During the English Civil Wars and Interregnum* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004); James Doig, 'Political Propaganda and Royal Proclamations in Late Medieval England', *Historical Research*, 71 (1998), 253–80; Chris R. Kyle, 'Monarch and Marketplace: Proclamations as News in Early Modern England', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 78 (2015), 771–87. For the Holy Roman Empire see Andreas Gestrich, *Absolutismus und Offentlichkcit: Politische Kommunikation in Deutschland zu Beginn des 18. Jahrhunderts* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1994); Esther-Beate Körber, *Öffentlichkeiten der frühen Neuzeit: Teilnehmer, Formen, Institutionen und Entscheidungen öffentlicher Kommunikation im Herzogtum Preußen von 1525 bis 1618* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1998); Saskia Limbach, *Government Use of Print in the Holy Roman Empire in the Sixteenth Century* (Frankfurt: Vittorio Klostermann, 2021).

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relationship between the regents of the Dutch Republic and their citizens. If ordinary citizens were excluded from the chambers of the town hall where policy was formulated, they were fully involved in the enactment of the law, which demanded public communication and placed the rulers and ruled in a shared communal space. State communication was steeped in ritual meaning, but these were by no means, as Habermas erroneously characterised them, ceremonies in which only the rulers played an active role.[71] The announcement of a new ordinance provided citizens with the occasion to voice their concerns or disapproval. Citizens also petitioned for changes in legislation, or the announcement of new laws. When the authorities announced a new ordinance, or repeated an older proclamation, they went to great pains to justify their decision to do so, in lengthy preliminary remarks which often divulged that the legislation was actively demanded by a group of citizens.

When we study the structures of state communication, it becomes immediately clear that the authorities continually solicited the consent of their citizens. Despite the fact that the average tax burden in the Dutch Republic in the middle of the 17th century was quadruple that of England and France, there were far fewer tax riots in the Dutch Republic than in any other European country.[72] The Dutch accepted being the most heavily taxed nation in early modern Europe, not least because the authorities justified the implementation of these taxes and could demonstrate that tax revenue was well spent. The authorities provided an array of public services, including schooling, the maintenance of orphanages and homes for the elderly, salaries for ministers of the Reformed Church, and numerous infrastructure projects, including the construction of barge canals, dyke maintenance, the paving of roads and, from the 1660s onwards, street lighting.[73]

Many proclamations were not an imposition but offered welcome contributions to the regulation of a community. In a highly commercial society, it was essential that citizens were informed about what they could trade, where they could do so and how much goods and services might be sold for. The financial prosperity of the Dutch Republic depended on mutual trust: the reassurance that one could trade in safety, that private property was protected and that trade took place in a fair and regulated environment. The ordinances of the regents demonstrate that these were repeated and pressing concerns for the authorities. In 1614, the States of Overijssel announced that they had installed a beacon on the island of Ens, near

[71] Habermas, *Structural Transformation*, pp. 7–11, 246–7. Fogel, *Les cérémonies de l'information*, pp. 23–123, 411, 428. See also Chapter 5.
[72] Dekker, *Holland in beroering*, pp. 28–9. See also Chapter 4.
[73] Maarten Prak and Jan Luiten van Zanden, 'Tax Morale and Citizenship in the Dutch Republic', in Oscar Gelderblom (ed.), *The Political Economy of the Dutch Republic* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016), pp. 143–65, especially p. 148; Craig Koslofsky, *Evening's Empire: A History of the Night in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

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34

ARTICULEN,
Ende voet van
RAEDTS-
BESTELLINGE
der Stede FRANEKER.

Met Consent van Burgermeesteren
ende Vroedschap der selver Stede.

S · P · Q · F ·

Gedrukt tot FRANEKER,
By IAN HESSELS Schouwenburg, Boek-
drucker en Wacht-Meester der voorsz. Stede/ 1677.

Figure 1.6 *Articulen, ende voet van raedts-bestellinge der Stede Franeker* (Franeker: Jan Hessels Schouwenburg, 1677). In Franeker (Friesland), the magistrates published the regulations governing the appointment of the magistracy in print, a remarkable contrast to the traditional image of the secrecy surrounding Dutch government.

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the mouth of the river IJssel, to guide shipping in the winter months.[74] In 1630, the same regents issued a broadsheet to communicate that they would shortly publish a new *lantrecht* (constitution) in order to hold all justices, lawyers and officers of the States of Overijssel to account.[75]

Rather than overawe their citizens with pomp and circumstance, the authorities of the Dutch Republic often struggled to communicate effectively. This was certainly not for want of trying. The magistrates of Dutch cities and the regents of the provincial States went to great lengths to reiterate existing regulations, statutes and ordinances; and they spent considerable sums every year on the printing and dissemination of state publications. The difficulties faced by the authorities were manifold. They competed for attention in the same public spaces that they shared with their citizens: the same boards where the magistrates posted their placards were used by citizens to make their own announcements. A proclamation might be contested by a disgruntled audience or disrupted by the farmyard noises of a proximate market; and misinformation, spread deliberately or by misunderstanding, might distort the carefully crafted message communicated by the authorities.

One ubiquitous challenge faced by magistrates throughout the country was the miscommunication of the date of their annual market or festival. For small towns, which relied on the income generated by their annual or bi-annual fairs, it was crucial that traders and visitors showed up on the right days; but in a country in which different provinces used alternative calendars, and feast days moved every year, the scope for misunderstanding was considerable. Every year magistrates of dozens of towns throughout the Dutch Republic would publish posters, flyers and forms to announce their annual markets. By the second half of the 17th century, many would also place advertisements in newspapers, enticing potential traders with commercial privileges or prizes, or announcing that an almanac had misprinted the date of their forthcoming market.[76] On 25 September 1666, the Amsterdam bookseller Otto Barentsz Smient placed an announcement in his newspaper in which he invited magistrates to send him the dates of their annual markets and fairs, so that he could print all dates correctly in his forthcoming almanac; Smient noted that 'numerous complaints have been received these last few years from magistrates from various cities' that such dates were frequently misprinted.[77]

[74] *Ridderschap ende steden van Over-Yssel, doen weten, dat haer ed. eene lanteerne ofte vier-bake opten toorn van het eylant Ens hebben maecken* (s.l.: s.n., [1614]), USTC 1122564.

[75] *Wy ridderschap ende steden van Over-Yssel, doen te weten: dat wy nodich ghevonden hebben, een formulier vande lant-rechten te doen instellen, ende in druck uyt te gheven* (s.l.: s.n., [1630]), USTC 1122565.

[76] See Chapter 9.

[77] *Courante uyt Italien en Duytslant*, no. 39 (Amsterdam: Otto Barentsz Smient, 25 September 1666); Arthur der Weduwen and Andrew Pettegree, *News, Business and Public Information: Advertisements and Announcements in Dutch and Flemish Newspapers, 1620–1675* (Leiden: Brill, 2020), p. 262.

In the 17th century, print played an ever more important role in the communication strategies of the authorities. During the course of that century, at least 114 jurisdictions in the Dutch Republic published ordinances or announcements in print, ranging from some of the smallest towns to great urban centres, as well as state institutions such as the admiralties and the provincial courts.[78] Print came to permeate all levels of government administration. In terms of their quantity and circulation, state publications were one of the most commonly available types of print in the 17th century.[79] Given the fact that many were distributed for free, state publications were also more accessible to a broader public than other printed works. This is a transformation that has rarely been acknowledged. The exhaustive bibliography of scholarly publications on Dutch print culture compiled by Paul Hoftijzer and Otto Lankhorst in 2000 featured a section on 'the book trade and government', which did not include a single entry on government use of print.[80] This was by no means the fault of its authors but an accurate reflection of the lack of research in the Netherlands on the production or dissemination of state publications.

Scholars of the book were traditionally concerned with the intellectual revolutions associated with the invention of the printing press and the dissemination of humanist scholarship and modern science.[81] In this narrative of print revolution, the production of broadsheets or pamphlets, many of them paid for by institutional clients, falls by the wayside as mere 'jobbing print', unworthy of being included in scholarly bibliographies or not worthy of significant attention.[82] Over the last twenty years such perspectives have changed considerably, and historians are increasingly noting the importance of 'cheap print' in ensuring the long-term viability of printing and the book trade.[83] There is also a substantial

[78] See Chapter 6. See also Andrew Pettegree and Arthur der Weduwen, 'What Was Published in the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic?', *Livre. Revue Historique* (2018), 1–22, here 4–7, 21–2.

[79] A point also made for England in the middle of the 17th century by Peacey, *Print and Public Politics*, p. 81.

[80] Paul Hoftijzer and Otto Lankhorst, *Drukkers, boekverkopers en lezers in de Republiek: een historiografische en bibliografische handleiding*, 2nd ed. (The Hague: Sdu, 2000), pp. 156–61.

[81] Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change: Communications and Cultural Transformations in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980); Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, *The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

[82] See, for example, J. F. van Someren, *Bibliotheek der Rijksuniversiteit te Utrecht: Pamfletten niet voorkomende in afzonderlijk gedrukte catalogi der verzamelingen in andere openbare nederlandsche bibliotheken*, 2 vols (Utrecht: A. Oosthoek, 1915–22), I, p. vi.

[83] This literature is substantial. For some representative works, see Andrew Pettegree, *The Book in the Renaissance* (London: Yale University Press, 2010), pp. 43–199; Peter Stallybrass, '"Little Jobs": Broadsides and the Printing Revolution', in Sabrina Alcorn Baron, Eric N. Lindquist and Eleanor F. Shevlin (eds), *Agent of Change: Print Culture Studies after Elizabeth L. Eisenstein* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2007), pp. 315–41; Rosa Salzberg, *Ephemeral City: Cheap Print and Urban Culture in Renaissance Venice* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2014); Joad Raymond (ed.), *Cheap Print in Britain and Ireland to 1660* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Andrew Pettegree (ed.), *Broadsheets: Single-Sheet Publishing in the First Age of Print* (Leiden: Brill, 2017); Andrew

Figure 1.7 Johannes Lingelbach, *De Dam, gezien naar het Noorden, met het Stadhuis in aanbouw*, 1656. The Amsterdam Dam square, depicted by Johannes Lingelbach in 1656. While the new town hall is under construction, municipal posters are pasted on temporary scaffolding (on the left). Lingelbach here depicts two men reading some of the affixed placards.

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body of work that points to the important role played by printed broadsheets and pamphlets in political conflicts and in fostering the growth of a politically engaged public.[84]

Large publishing projects tied down capital and did not offer a rapid return on investment. Printing for the government, on the other hand, was a useful strategy to maintain a steady cash flow. Printers could complete a consignment of placards in one or two days of work, deliver the entire batch to the secretariat and be paid in cash. This was ideal work, and the privilege of printing for the state was hotly contested. Although official broadsheets and pamphlets may be considered as a form of 'cheap print' or 'ephemera', work of this sort was respected by the professionals of the book trade. State publications were produced with extreme care, and, as we shall see, printers were paid well for their efforts.[85]

That the importance of state publications has rarely been appreciated is also due to the fact that they do not tend to be found in the large institutional libraries that have always been the cornerstone of book historical studies. Instead, state publications are more often held in municipal or provincial archives, where they have been lingering in boxes or folders for hundreds of years. And sometimes, even when they can be found in prominent libraries, they are still ignored: the Koninklijke Bibliotheek in The Hague has a collection of some 1,700 placards issued by Dutch authorities in the 17th century, all of which remain uncatalogued by their host institution.[86] For decades, broadsheets were also excluded from the Dutch national bibliographical project, the Short Title Catalogue Netherlands.[87] One priority of this study, based on fieldwork in thirty-two archives in the Netherlands and multiple archives elsewhere, is to correct this lacuna. By tracing surviving examples of state publications and searching for manuscript sources that tell us about the wide range of communication strategies employed by the authorities, it becomes clear that state communication stood at the heart of Dutch culture in the 17th century. The Dutch public was so political because the authorities ensured that it would be. The regents were scarcely the 'little Gods' of

Pettegree and Arthur der Weduwen, 'Forms, Handbills and Affixed Posters: Surveying the Ephemeral Print Production of the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic', *Quaerendo*, 50 (2020), 15–40; Pettegree and der Weduwen, *Bookshop of the World*, esp. chs 8 and 15.

[84] Thomas Munck, *Conflict and Enlightenment: Print and Political Culture in Europe, 1635–1795* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019); Peacey, *Print and Public Politics*; Nina Lamal, Jamie Cumby and Helmer J. Helmers (eds), *Print and Power in Early Modern Europe (1500–1800)* (Leiden: Brill, 2021). For the Dutch case, see specifically Deen, Onnekink and Reinders, *Pamphlets and Politics in the Dutch Republic*; the editors argue rightly that state publications should be considered as part of a broad category of 'political pamphlets'.

[85] See Chapters 3 and 6.

[86] Koninklijke Bibliotheek, The Hague, collection KW Plakk F. The broadsheets have now all been catalogued individually by the author and other members of the Universal Short Title Catalogue project (www.ustc.ac.uk).

[87] *Short Title Catalogue Netherlands*. See www.kb.nl/en/organisation/research-expertise/for-libraries /short-title-catalogue-netherlands-stcn for a description of the STCN and its parameters. The project only began to incorporate broadsheets from 2019 onwards.

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legend and flattery. Rather, their insistence on the dignities of office and address clothed a shrewd understanding of their fellow citizens and their busy, opinionated curiosity.

Structure

This book charts the nature and development of state communication in the Dutch Republic from its establishment in the 16th century to the early 18th century. It seeks to answer a variety of questions: in what various forms did the authorities communicate in public? How regularly did they do so, using which media? How laboursome and expensive were these practices? Under what constraints did the authorities communicate? What audiences did they try to reach? How effective does their communication seem to have been? Can we identify differences between federal, regional and civic jurisdictions? Did the regents communicate differently from the Stadtholders, the Princes of Orange-Nassau?

This study is predominantly but not only concerned with the perspective of government. The interplay between official communication and popular political expression, whether in oral, handwritten or printed form, is crucial to determine the role played by the authorities in the daily life of the Dutch Republic. For this reason, close attention is paid to political debate and moments of crisis. It is a key argument of this work that one cannot study the great political crises of the Dutch Republic (such as those in 1650 or 1672) without considering how the authorities fuelled conflict. Studying these moments also allows us to consider what role communication played when state authority collapsed.

This book is structured in four parts that allow for a chronological progression from the 16th to the 18th century, but it also considers different aspects of state communication thematically. Part I (Chapters 2 and 3) studies the traditions of political communication in the Low Countries before the emergence of the Dutch Republic, and how the Dutch Revolt radically transformed political society and practices of communication. Chapter 2 focuses on the collapse of Habsburg authority in the 1560s and 1570s, and Chapter 3 on the structures of state communication adopted by the rebel cities and provinces. Chapter 3 also introduces the overarching federal system of state communication managed by the States General that persisted into the 18th century.

Part II (Chapters 4, 5 and 6) focuses mostly on key themes of state communication at the municipal level in the 17th century. Chapter 4 investigates the character of the Dutch regents, what role the making of law played in their lives, and what rituals and ceremonies (including proclamations) were integral to municipal state communication. Chapter 5 details the role played by town criers and official poster-uppers (*stadsaanplakkers*) in disseminating the law among Dutch communities. Chapter 6 explores the importance of print to the circulation of placards and ordinances, the critical role played by printers in the

strategies of communication adopted by Dutch government and the potential profits to be made by printing for the authorities.

Part III (Chapters 7, 8 and 9) broadens the scope by considering more indirect means of state communication. Chapter 7 concentrates on a case study, a long-running and divisive conflict in the province of Groningen, which saw the two constituent parts of the States of Groningen confront one another in public. Here state communication was no longer an exchange between the authorities and their citizens, but one between two competing jurisdictions, which deliberately involved their inhabitants in high political conflict. Chapter 8 expands this analysis by focusing on the broader political conflict generated by the True Freedom regime (1651–72) and the exclusion of the young William III from the Stadtholderate. This chapter also reassesses the role that public politics played in an era often characterised as one in which government made little publicity for itself. Chapter 9 details how the authorities in the Dutch Republic, at different jurisdictional levels, endeavoured to publish, influence and manipulate the supply of news. The chapter presents a thematic overview of the various strategies involved in this process, and highlights the Second Anglo-Dutch War (1665–7) as a case study to demonstrate the challenges and limitations of these strategies.

Part IV (Chapters 10 and 11) brings together all the themes previously discussed to recreate how state communication operated in practice during moments of crisis and heightened political conflict. Chapter 10 analyses what role state communication played during the Disaster Year (1672) and its aftermath, while Chapter 11 concentrates on Prince William III's conflict with Amsterdam in 1683–4 and his invasion of England in 1688. Finally, the coda (Chapter 12) reflects on the emergence of the Second Stadtholderless regime after the death of William III in 1702, the challenges facing the Dutch authorities in the early 18th century and the persistence of their practices of state communication.

Although the Dutch Republic is the principal subject of this book, not all the phenomena described here are exclusively Dutch, or relevant only to the Netherlands. This is the first work that employs the term 'state communication' to describe practices that have also been investigated partially for other European regions.[88] For this reason, I incorporate a variety of comparative examples

[88] Most notably De Vivo, *Information and Communication*; Fogel, *Les cérémonies de l'information*; Limbach, *Government Use of Print*; Kyle, 'Monarch and Marketplace'; Doig, 'Political Propaganda and Royal Proclamations'; Milner, '"Fanno bandire, notificare, et expressamente comandare"'; Toomas Kotkas, *Royal Police Ordinances in Early Modern Sweden: The Emergence of Voluntaristic Understanding of Law* (Leiden: Brill, 2014); Gestrich, *Absolutismus und Offentlichkeit*; Körber, *Öffentlichkeiten der frühen Neuzeit*; Anna Maria Forssberg, *The Story of War: Church and Propaganda in France and Sweden, 1610–1710* (Lund: Nordic Academic Press, 2016); Xavier Nadrigny, *Information et espace public à Toulouse à la fin du Moyen Âge* (Paris: École Nationale des chartes, 2013); Pierangelo Bellettini et al. (eds), *Una città in piazza: comunicazione e vita quotidiana a Bologna tra Cinque e Seicento* (Bologna: Compositori, 2000); Isabel Castro Rojas, *"A noticia de todos": Bandos, pregones y mandatos del poder en el Madrid de los Austrias (siglos XVI–XVII)* (PhD thesis: Universidad de Alcalá, 2019).

throughout the book to place Dutch developments in a broader perspective (especially in Chapters 3, 5 and 6). A more expansive European survey of state communication, although it is in preparation, has not yet materialised. It is appropriate, however, to reflect briefly on which key elements of Dutch state communication fit into broader European developments, and which seem to be distinctive to the Dutch Republic.

In early modern Europe, regardless of the system of government, there was a common understanding that there was a relationship between rulers and ruled. Even in the most autocratic states, the ruler was expected to promote the common good. Law making was critical to the maintenance of this relationship: issuing laws promoted justice and the flourishing of commerce, good order and peace.[89] It presented a vision, not always realised, of a society where all inhabitants lived in a mutually supporting community in which each member had both rights and responsibilities.

That law had to be published to be valid was also a ubiquitous norm. In his 13th-century *Treatise on Law* (part of his *Summa Theologiae*), Thomas Aquinas considered that promulgation of law ('an ordinance of reason for the common good') was inherent to its essence.[90] Everywhere in Europe promulgation of law took place by oral proclamation, a process that was already well established in the mediaeval era, often with the aid of town criers. From the 16th century onwards, ordinances and edicts also appeared more regularly in print, although this was a process that was highly dependent on local political culture and the availability of printing presses. By 1650, however, at least 67,000 editions of ordinances and edicts had been published throughout Europe, a figure that vastly underestimates the likely total production, given the poor survival of state publications as a genre of print.[91]

Nevertheless, even if state communication was an integral part of every political society, in the Dutch Republic it played a distinctive and heightened role. There were seven interlocking factors, unique to the Dutch Republic, which ensured that this was so:

1. a rich variety of political authorities, at municipal, regional and national levels, which could make realistic claims to sovereignty, popular representation and political decision-making;
2. a long legacy of political autonomy, popular revolt and pluralism;

[89] Antonio Padoa-Schioppa (ed.), *Legislation and Justice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997); Anthony Musson (ed.), *Expectations of the Law in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2001).
[90] Gilbert Bailey, 'The Promulgation of Law', *The American Political Science Review*, 35 (1941), 1059–84.
[91] Statistic from the USTC, filter by 'Ordinances and Edicts' , last accessed 17 November 2022. See also Chapter 6.

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3. pressure to justify Dutch authority, generated through the uncertainty of a new republican entity born out of a revolt of dubious legality;
4. the absence of more traditional means of ceremonial communication, such as formal entries, which legitimised the ruler in monarchical states;
5. a high degree of urbanisation, high literacy rates and a thriving print industry;
6. unprecedented demands on the part of government for financial contributions from its inhabitants; and
7. an oligarchical but still extensive political class that necessitated the involvement of formal political participation by a wide variety of citizens.

Together, these factors made Dutch state communication more diverse, more contentious and more competitive than in other European societies, while it also saw Dutch authorities turn more rapidly and extensively to printed communication. How this shaped the history of the Netherlands and of the Dutch Golden Age will emerge in the account that follows.

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I

Political Legacies

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2

The Politics of Placards

> On the night of 25 May [1566], letters were thrown onto the streets of the four capital cities of Brabant, letters which were printed so that all could be warned of the transgressions of the Inquisition, but no one knew who distributed them or had them made.[1]

This was not the first time that the art dealer Godevaert van Haecht noted in his diary how printed broadsheets or pamphlets were strewn around the streets of his native Antwerp. On 17 April 1566, he had also recorded the distribution of handbills that sought to undermine the authority of the Habsburg government in the Netherlands.[2] Such leaflets, thrown along streets and affixed on doors, walls and noticeboards, were part of a public wave of discontent with the policies of the central government in Brussels, especially the strict religious ordinances of King Philip II of Spain, sovereign ruler of the Seventeen Provinces of the Netherlands. On 5 April, 300 Netherlandish nobles had marked the beginning of this movement by the ostentatious delivery of a petition to the governor-general, Margaret of Parma, signalling their dissatisfaction with the government. As the authority of the government collapsed, more printed handbills found their way onto the streets of the great cities of the Low Countries. At the end of 1566, the Antwerp pensionary Jacob van Wesenbeke reflected:

> More and more [were] printed and turned out, not only a great many coloured prints, pictures, engravings, ballads, songs and pasquils, in manuscript and in print, but also many and diverse small books both in French and Dutch, all attacking [the] persecutions, inquisitions and innovations [of the government].[3]

[1] Godevaert van Haecht, *De kroniek van Godevaert van Haecht over de troebelen van 1565 tot 1574 te Antwerpen en elders*, ed. Rob van Roosbroeck, 2 vols (Antwerp: De Sikkel, 1929–30), I, p. 44.

[2] Van Haecht, *De kroniek*, pp. 40–2. On the practices of distributing or 'sowing' rebel broadsheets, see most comprehensively Johan Verberckmoes and Violet Soen, 'Broadsheets Testing Moderation in the Nascent Dutch Revolt', in Pettegree (ed.), *Broadsheets*, pp. 271–94.

[3] Alastair Duke, 'Posters, Pamphlets and Prints: The Ways and Means of Disseminating Dissident Opinions on the Eve of the Dutch Revolt', in Alastair Duke, *Dissident Identities in the Early Modern Low Countries*, ed. Judith Pollmann and Andrew Spicer (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), pp. 157–78, here p. 166.

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Van Wesenbeke marvelled at the outpouring of print because the likes of it had never been seen in the Low Countries. Initially, it also seemed to have been an aberration. After the eruption of iconoclasm in the summer and autumn of 1566 and the arrival of the Duke of Alba as governor in 1567, this flood of print subsided, and an anxious calm descended on the streets of the Netherlands. Yet when the conflict reignited in 1568 with military invasions led by the exiled Prince William of Orange, printed declarations, letters and songs once again sought to rally support for the cause of the prince and his allies. Thereafter, every critical moment in the Dutch Revolt would be accompanied by printed leaflets and broadsheets. Their presence was so ubiquitous that print itself became a representative symbol of the Dutch Revolt and the 'liberation' of the Netherlands from 'Spanish tyranny'. In 1618, one Dutch commentator reflected on the heady days of the 1560s and 1570s, citing the influence of the 'many good and beneficial writings [that] were published anonymously by the best patriots during the days of the first troubles'.[4]

The revolt in the Netherlands has long been recognised as one of the first 'propaganda wars'.[5] The success of the rebellion rested on the creation of a cohesive Netherlandish identity that crossed confessional lines, and on the identification of the legitimate Habsburg rulers as tyrannical usurpers of ancient privileges that supposedly underpinned the natural liberty of the Netherlands. While the Low Countries had enjoyed a long history of participatory politics before the second half of the 16th century, the Dutch Revolt represented the first time that the region as a whole became mobilised by a single political struggle. This conflict had to be fought through public opinion as much as by arms. With the gradual development in the 16th century of a commercial news market and a flourishing print trade, the court of public opinion operated in a true multi-media environment.[6]

Over the last four decades, scholars have repeatedly demonstrated the importance of public communication to the course of the Dutch Revolt.[7] A general

[4] *Provisionele Openinghe van verscheyden saecken, ghestelt in de remonstrantie van den heer advocaet van Hollant en West-Vrieslant* (s.l., s.n., 1618), USTC 1033925, p. 3.
[5] Raingard Esser, '"Concordia Res Parvae Crescunt": Regional Histories and the Dutch Republic in the Seventeenth Century', in Judith Pollmann and Andrew Spicer (eds), *Public Opinion and Changing Identities in the Early Modern Netherlands: Essays in Honour of Alastair Duke* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), pp. 229–48, here p. 229; and Judith Pollmann, 'No Man's Land: Reinventing Netherlandish Identities, 1585–1621', in Robert Stein and Judith Pollmann (eds), *Networks, Regions and Nations: Shaping Identities in the Low Countries, 1300–1650* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), pp. 241–61, here p. 241.
[6] Pettegree, *Book in the Renaissance*, esp. pp. 214–18, 233–44.
[7] There is a wealth of literature in this field, but a representative overview is provided by P. A. M. Geurts, *De Nederlandse Opstand in de Pamfletten 1566–1584* (Utrecht: HES, 1983); Van Gelderen, *Political Thought*; James Tanis and Daniel Horst, *Images of Discord: A Graphic Interpretation of the Opening Decades of the Eighty Years' War* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1983); René van Stipriaan, 'Words at War: The Early Years of William of Orange's Propaganda', *Journal of Early Modern History*, 11 (2007), pp. 331–49; Stensland, *Habsburg Communication*; Peter Arnade, *Beggars, Iconoclasts & Civic Patriots: The Political Culture of the Dutch Revolt* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008); C. M. Klinkert, *Nassau in het nieuws: nieuwsprenten van Maurits van Nassaus militaire ondernemingen uit de periode 1590–1600* (Zutphen: De Walburg Pers, 2005); Deen, *Publiek debat en propaganda*; Jasper van der Steen,

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consensus has emerged which credits the rebels with a successful and innovative manipulation of public opinion.[8] Peter Arnade lauded the rebels for claiming 'the public domain' and seizing 'popular media', thereby 'creating a polyphonic language of rebellion and a vernacular political culture that constitutes the Revolt's most novel feature'.[9] One of the leading attributes of William of Orange, according to his most recent biographer, was being a 'Master of Propaganda'.[10] The ingenuity of rebel statesmen and writers is often emphasised in accounts of the Dutch Revolt. The bold, patriotic declarations of William of Orange, the general appeal to common 'Netherlandishness', the humour of rebel satirical songs and engravings, the concise argumentation of political tracts and forthright confrontation with Habsburg policy all contributed to a convincing argument for rebellion.[11]

Persuasive rebel communication is often contrasted with a lacklustre Habsburg response. Monica Stensland has argued that government communication in the 1560s and 1570s was unconvincing, poorly pitched and badly executed.[12] The Habsburg government did not engage with rebel discourse: 'opposing views were never referred to or discussed, and no attempts were made to prove such views wrong'.[13] The reliance of the authorities on proclamations and ordinances, characterised by Stensland as 'non-argumentative' media, is interpreted by her as a distinct failure of the government.[14]

While the government's message was unpersuasive at times, the formal means of communication that the Habsburgs employed had a major impact on the course of the conflict. The revolt caused a radical political reorganisation that questioned the foundations of sovereignty and authority in the Low Countries. This was a public struggle, followed closely by participants throughout the region and observers further abroad. In this conflict, proclamations and ordinances were active instruments of argumentative politics. They reinforced the implementation of financial and religious reform; they provided platforms for political arguments; and they became symbolic assertions of authority and power. They were eagerly anticipated and debated by the subjects of the Habsburg government. As authorities in the Low Countries committed more of their ordinances to print, they also

Memory Wars in the Low Countries, 1566–1700 (Leiden: Brill, 2015); Duke, *Dissident Identities*, chs 6 and 7; Judith Pollmann and Andrew Spicer (eds), *Public Opinion and Changing Identities* (Leiden: Brill, 2007); Vermeersch, *Multimedia in de stad*; and Rosanne Baars, *Rumours of Revolt: Civil War and the Emergence of a Transnational News Culture in France and the Netherlands, 1561–1598* (Leiden: Brill, 2021).

[8] See for example Judith Pollmann and Andrew Spicer, 'Introduction', in their *Public Opinion and Changing Identities*: 'public opinion played a crucial role in determining the destiny and future shape of the Low Countries' (p. 4).

[9] Arnade, *Beggars, Iconoclasts & Civic Patriots*, p. ix.

[10] René van Stipriaan, *De zwijger: Het leven van Willem van Oranje* (Amsterdam: Querido, 2021).

[11] Especially in Geurts, *Nederlandse Opstand*; and Arnade, *Beggars, Iconoclasts & Civic Patriots*.

[12] Stensland, *Habsburg Communication*, esp. pp. 155–7.

[13] Stensland, *Habsburg Communication*, pp. 20, 156.

[14] Stensland, *Habsburg Communication*, p. 52.

blazed a trail for an expanding commercial print trade, in which publishers were eager to market government publications as newsworthy items to a curious but wary citizenry.

Desperate to strengthen their claims to sovereignty, the rebel provinces appropriated established Habsburg methods of communication, indicating that the 'non-argumentative media' downplayed by Stensland were highly valued by the rebels. To explore how this transformation took place, this chapter will examine Habsburg state communication before the Revolt and offer a re-evaluation of the importance of proclamations and ordinances during the turbulent 1560s and 1570s. The following chapter will then consider how the rebel cities and provinces embraced new standards of state communication, relying to an unprecedented extent on print, in a bid to bolster the shaky foundations of their authority and administration.

Government, legislation and print in the Habsburg Netherlands

On 7 October 1531, Emperor Charles V issued a new ordinance for his Netherlandish subjects, composed of some 7,500 words. The ordinance followed a typical legal structure, common to many European regions, which had changed little since the later mediaeval period. It opened with a lengthy list of Charles's titles, followed by salutations to his inhabitants. Then the Emperor justified the necessity of the new ordinance: having received many complaints from the inhabitants of his dominions, and seeking advice from his Privy Council and 'many other good and notable people of our aforementioned lands', Charles had ordained forty-four articles for the 'honour of God', the 'prosperity of the common weal' and the 'support and relief of his subjects'.[15] The first article touched on the transgressions of Lutherans and the failure to observe existing heresy regulations; the ordinance then discussed a variety of concerns relating to false coinage, drunkenness, marriage customs, beggars and appropriate dress. In addition, Charles demanded the systematic recording of all regional laws in the Low Countries.

The miscellaneous reform ordained by Charles was to apply to all Habsburg dominions in the Low Countries, a sprawling conglomeration of territories. This was a common aspect of Habsburg legislation, inherited from the Burgundian dukes who had first begun the process of attempting to unify their disparate territorial holdings in the region.[16] Charles signed the legislation in Brussels, his seat of government, and handwritten copies, affixed with the Imperial seal, were

[15] *Ordinantien ende statuten om te extirperen ende te verdriven de Lutheraensche ende andere ghereprobeerde secten* (Antwerp: Willem Vorsterman and Michiel van Hoohstraten, 1531), USTC 437594, ff. A2v. See also Van Zuilen, 'Propagande royale', pp. 113–15.
[16] H. de Schepper and J.-M. Cauchies, 'Legal Tools of the Public Power in the Netherlands, 1200–1600', in Padoa-Schioppa (ed.), *Legislation and Justice*, pp. 229–68, esp. p. 260.

sent to all Stadtholders, regional councils, cities and towns under his dominion. Magistrates were instructed to proclaim the ordinance in their jurisdiction on 15 November.

Effective observance of the forty-four new regulations rested on their propagation by various layers of local government: Stadtholders, regional assemblies, courts, magistrates, bailiffs and sheriffs. The Habsburg government did not require its new legislation to be printed. During the first half of the 16th century Habsburg officials had little reason to use the new technology, relying instead on what was, on the whole, a tried and tested method of communication. It was not, of course, perfect: the government in Brussels was faced with a variety of provincial idiosyncrasies and traditional privileges, and officials were concerned by the absence of any methodical registration of laws. This was a persistent issue: thirty-nine years later, on 5 May 1570, the Duke of Alba, then governor-general of the Low Countries, complained to Philip II that ordinances were not being registered systematically.[17]

If anything defined the politics of the Low Countries, it was a strong sense of local law making and regulation. The right to make local law had been extracted from the dukes, counts and lords of the Netherlands throughout the 12th to the 14th centuries, often in exchange for annual rents or demonstrations of political loyalty. A ducal privilege granted to the Brabant town of Den Bosch in 1300 specifically mentioned that '[w]e licence therefore and grant full power to the said burgesses and inhabitants to determine and ordain, by means of our officer who shall act on our behalf at that time in Den Bosch, ordinances and statutes'.[18] On 25 February 1522, Charles V issued a general regulation on the constitution of Zierikzee, in Zeeland. This included the responsibility of the magistrates to revise, renew and change the ordinances of the town, for the 'benefit of our inhabitants', and that these ordinances should be 'registered, preserved and published, and should be exhibited on the town hall in writing, so that all may regulate themselves accordingly'.[19]

Granting a plethora of local and provincial rights was the principal means by which the Burgundians and the Habsburgs were able to preserve power in the Netherlands. It was also a serious impediment to the consolidation of central government, and the implementation of much of the centralising legislation issued by the Habsburgs. A royal ordinance of 31 January 1560, prohibiting the export of Leiden and Delft beer barrels, was sent by the Privy Council to Prince William of Orange, Stadtholder of Holland.[20] The secretaries of the Prince made multiple

[17] Fruin, *Geschiedenis der staatsinstellingen*, p. 145.
[18] De Schepper and Cauchies, 'Legal Tools of the Public Power', p. 244. More broadly, see Jonas Braekevelt, 'Popular Voices within Princely Legislation: Assessing the Discourse of Flemish Petitions and Burgundian *Narrationes*', in Dumolyn et al. (eds), *The Voices of the People in Late Medieval Europe*, pp. 149–65.
[19] ZAZ, Stad en Gemeente Zierikzee 1275–1939 (5022), inv. 125.
[20] EL, Stadsarchief I, 1253–1574, inv. 378 and 1060.

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handwritten copies of the regulation to despatch to bailiffs and magistrates across Holland; after they had had the order proclaimed in their jurisdiction, the magistrates returned the copy annotated with the date of the formal ceremony of proclamation. In Leiden, Alkmaar and Nieuwveen the ordinance was only proclaimed in the spring of 1562, more than two years after the date of issue. On 31 October 1563, a royal ordinance on the equipment of the fleet reached the Stadtholder of Friesland, Jan van Ligne.[21] Just over a month later, on 4 December, Van Ligne wrote to the Court of Friesland to ask them to appoint a commission to see whether there would be any resistance to the publication and observance of the ordinance in the province. The court tasked an official to travel to the maritime towns of Harlingen, Bolsward, Hindeloopen, Stavoren and Molkwerum to discuss the practicality of the law with 'burgomasters, captains and sailors'.[22] On 13 January 1564, the official returned with a positive review of his encounters, after which he travelled once more throughout the province to proclaim the regulation. This episode, described in a manuscript held in the archive of the Court of Friesland, reveals that at its core, the mighty Habsburg Empire could not function without the consent of Frisian sailors.

In the early 16th century, print played a negligible role in the Habsburg process of communication and there were very few legal works that were printed directly on the orders of the authorities.[23] It is therefore striking that Emperor Charles's ordinance of 7 October 1531 rapidly found its way into print and became a popular publication. Published under a provocative title that highlighted the first regulation against heresy (*Ordinantien ende statuten om te extirperen ende te verdriven de Lutheraensche ende andere ghereprobeerde secten*), the ordinance appeared in at least thirteen different editions printed by the Antwerp printers Willem Vorsterman and Michel van Hoochstraten, seven in Dutch and six in French.[24] Three editions also appeared in Ghent (two in Dutch, one in French), published by Pieter de Keysere; and another Dutch edition was published in Amsterdam by Doen Pietersz.[25] All editions were published as pamphlets of thirty-two to forty-eight pages (using four to six sheets of paper).

The large number of editions indicates that there was significant commercial demand for the 1531 *Ordinantien ende statuten*. Because the ordinance applied

[21] TL, Hof van Friesland, inv. 89.
[22] TL, Hof van Friesland, inv. 89.
[23] See Renaud Adam, 'Printing for Central Authorities in the Early Modern Low Countries (15th–17th Centuries)', in Lamal, Cumby and Helmers (eds), *Print and Power*, pp. 64–85, esp. pp. 65–72. For a comparative view on France, see Xavier Prévost, *Les premières lois imprimées: Étude des actes royaux imprimés de Charles VIII à Henri II (1483–1559)* (PhD thesis: École nationale des chartes, 2015); and Xavier Prévost, 'Aux origins de l'impression des lois: les actes royaux incunables', *Histoire et civilisation du livre*, 12 (2016), 397–415.
[24] USTC 437594, 403852, 437591, 410269, 437592, 437593, 407359 (Dutch); USTC 80733, 88372, 65669, 57464, 8429, 80732 (French).
[25] USTC 402971, 437557, 80735 (Ghent); USTC 421044 (Amsterdam).

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to all Habsburg dominions, many regents, lawyers and merchants required a reference copy. Publishers recognised and anticipated such demand. Before the publication of the ordinance, Vorsterman and Van Hoochstraten had appealed to the Privy Council in Brussels for the exclusive right to print the new regulations. This was granted, and on the second page of their publication the publishers issued a stern warning to their colleagues in the book trade in Brabant, Flanders, Holland and Zeeland not to print the ordinance for the next six months.[26] Judging by the surviving editions from Ghent and Amsterdam, this privilege was not closely observed – Pieter de Keysere claimed in his editions to have received permission from the magistrates of Ghent to publish the ordinance, a telling example of how the fractured politics of the region could be exploited by the print trade.[27]

In 1531, the *Ordinantien ende statuten* of 7 October was one of two ordinances which appeared in print throughout the Habsburg Netherlands. The other ordinance was a regulation concerning the court of Holland and Zeeland, which appeared in at least five editions in Antwerp: two printed by Willem Vorsterman, two by Jacob van Liesvelt and one edition by Jan van Ghelen.[28] This ordinance was a lengthy piece of legislation of 124 pages, but this too was a profitable commercial publication: the Antwerp printers would expect to sell a legal ordinance of this kind to lawyers and notaries throughout the provinces concerned.

The two 1531 ordinances were emblematic of Habsburg state publications before the Dutch Revolt. They were relatively long texts, published as booklets to be consulted in offices, courthouses and town halls, rather than as broadsheets to be posted up on walls or doors. These printed ordinances touched on substantial recurring topics: false coinage, legal reform and Lutheran and Anabaptist excesses. The Habsburg–Valois wars of the 1540s and 1550s and the campaigns of Charles V in the Low Countries against the Duke of Gelderland prompted additional financial and military legislation. The Emperor's demands for extraordinary subsidies from his provinces frequently found their way into print, as did his political justifications for critical policy decisions. In 1541, the Antwerp printer Marten Vermeere published a 128-page pamphlet detailing Charles's claim to the sovereignty of the Duchy of Gelderland; in 1543 the Emperor formally acceded as Duke, adding Gelderland as the final province to the Habsburg dominions in the Low Countries.[29]

[26] *Ordinantien ende statuten*, f. A1v; Adam, 'Printing for Central Authorities', p. 70. Similar exhortations, often printed on the verso of the title page, were very common on French ordinances of the 16th century. See Lauren Jee-Su Kim, *French Royal Acts Printed before 1601: A Bibliographical Study* (PhD thesis: University of St Andrews, 2007).

[27] *De keyserlyke ordonnancien, edicten: statuten gheboden: oocmede verboden deffencies ende inhibitien* (Ghent: Pieter de Keysere, 1531), USTC 402971, f. C3v.

[28] USTC 400496, 400497, 407355, 437551 and 437552.

[29] *Het bescheet vanden Keyser Kaerle de Vijfde uutghegheven inden rycxdach van Reynsborch int jaer M.D. ende XLI vanden goeden rechte dat hij heeft tot ten hertochdom van Geldre ende Graeffschap van Zutphen* (Antwerp: Marten Vermeere, 1541), USTC 410414.

The production of Habsburg state publications was heavily influenced by the realities of the Netherlandish print industry. Some ordinances issued by Charles V only touched upon affairs in a particular province; regulations affecting the province of Gelderland appeared in print in Nijmegen, at this point the largest Geldrian town. In Leeuwarden, the printer Johannes Petreius also produced at least a dozen government publications in the 1550s and 1560s relevant to the province of Friesland.[30] But the Habsburg government had a centralising agenda: most ordinances it issued applied to all Habsburg provinces. It was not a coincidence, then, that the publication of ordinances became centred on Antwerp. In Antwerp one could find the best typographers, the shrewdest publishers and the wealthiest clients. Between 1501 and 1560, 60 per cent of all books published in the Low Countries were printed on Antwerp presses.[31]

By the middle of the 16th century the centre of gravity of the book trade lay securely in three cities in Brabant and Flanders: Antwerp led the pack, followed at some distance by Louvain and Ghent.[32] Louvain, the only university town in the Low Countries, was a bastion of academic and Catholic devotional print, whereas Ghent publishers favoured vernacular works. The commercial prominence of these three cities is also reflected in the publication of ordinances: between 1501 and 1560, 61 per cent of all recorded state publications appeared in Antwerp, Louvain and Ghent.[33] Elsewhere in the Low Countries, devotional and pedagogical literature dominated the production of smaller presses in Kampen, Leiden, Amsterdam, Den Bosch, Deventer, Zwolle and Utrecht.

This concentration of printing activity discouraged authorities elsewhere in the Low Countries from adopting print for their municipal ordinances. There was little incentive to use a press regularly if the nearest printer was a province away. Printed ordinances were reserved for extraordinary publications or occasions. Many magistrates took pride in issuing compilations of the city's constitutional rights: lengthy *costumen* or *keuren* detailing ancient privileges and municipal by-laws.[34] The magistrates of Dordrecht frequently commissioned reprints of the Emperor's confirmation of their valuable staple on all goods passing along the river Waal, a lower tributary of the Rhine. There was no active press in Dordrecht, but at least six editions affirming the Dordrecht staple appeared between 1541 and 1554, printed in nearby Delft and Leiden (Figure 2.1).[35]

[30] Paul Valkema Blouw, 'The First Printer in Leeuwarden: Johannes Petreius', in Paul Valkema Blouw, *Dutch Typography in the Sixteenth Century*, ed. Ton Croiset van Uchelen and Paul Dijstelberge (Leiden: Brill, 2013), pp. 809–19.

[31] USTC: 6,460 titles out of 10,784.

[32] USTC. For the period 1540–1560, the USTC documents 3,459 books published in Antwerp, 863 in Louvain and 213 in Ghent. See also Hubert Meeus, 'Printing in the Shadows of a Metropolis', in Benito Rial Costas (ed.), *Print Culture and Peripheries in Early Modern Europe: A Contribution to the History of Printing and the Book Trade in Small European and Spanish Cities* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), pp. 147–70.

[33] USTC: 285 out of 463 ordinances.

[34] See Chapter 4.

[35] See USTC 421140, 426000, 421139, 427485, 426019 and 426001.

Lotteries and annual markets provided other occasions for which magistracies also called upon printers in other cities. In 1505 the burgomasters of Louvain had an announcement for their municipal lottery printed in Antwerp; a year later the magistrates of Den Bosch ordered 300 similar posters in Antwerp.[36] The magistrates of Gouda asked the Leiden printer Andries Verschout to print 300 broadsheets publicising their cattle market in 1583.[37] The magistrates of Haarlem asked Albrecht Hendricksz in Delft to print similar announcements for the city from 1574 onwards; and in 1578 they asked Verschout to print 1,000 posters for their ox market.[38] In Alkmaar the magistrates turned to Amsterdam printer Harmen Jansz Muller for promotion of their horse and cattle market in 1570. They invited all merchants 'from Hainaut, Flanders, Brabant, Zeeland, Friesland and Denmark' to attend their market just before St Bartholomew's Day.[39] The widespread publicity required for a successful market justified the use of a printed handbill or poster.[40] Within their own city walls most magistrates were content to regulate the affairs of their citizens as they had done for centuries: through oral proclamations, communal or guild gatherings and the distribution of handwritten copies of municipal or royal ordinances. While the art of printing had been present in the Low Countries since the 1470s, almost a century before the Dutch Revolt, it had done little to change the fabric of state communication.

Ritual and the collapse of Habsburg authority

On 5 November 1539, Charles V wrote a letter to his son, the future Philip II, that the Low Countries were a troublesome place of 'divisions and factions, riots and uprisings', populated with 'unappreciative and unruly people'.[41] The Emperor was in a foul mood. While on campaign in Italy, Charles had learned that the city of Ghent, his native town, had risen up in revolt. The guilds of Ghent had refused to pay for what they saw as another one of their count's foreign wars, a refusal fuelled by long-standing tensions concerning the ancient privileges of the guilds, deliberately stamped out by their sovereign. Some of the local magistrates were arrested by the guildsmen, and one retired alderman was tortured to death for alleging tampering

[36] *Wij Burgemeesteren* (Antwerp: s.n., 1505), USTC 436719; *Loterijkaart voor de stad 's-Hertogenbosch* (Antwerp: s.n., 1506), USTC 442054. See C. J. A. van den Oord, *Twee Eeuwen Bosch' Boekbedrijf, 1450–1650* (Tilburg: Stichting Zuidelijk Historisch Contact, 1984), pp. 74–5.
[37] J. G. C. A. Briels, *Zuidnederlandse boekdrukkers en boekverkopers in de Republiek der Verenigde Nederlanden omstreeks 1570–1630* (Nieuwkoop: De Graaf, 1974), p. 64.
[38] Briels, *Zuidnederlandse boekdrukkers*, p. 73.
[39] *Allen den gheenen die dese onseopenen [sic] letteren sullen sien* ([Amsterdam: Harmen Jansz Muller, 1570]), USTC 427290.
[40] In Alkmaar, as in cities such as Zwolle and Harderwijk, the earliest surviving municipal publication is an advertisement of this sort. For Zwolle see HCOZ, Stadsbestuur Zwolle, inv. 803; for Harderwijk see D. A. Wittop Koning, *Harderwijker Boekdrukkers* (Nieuwkoop: De Graaf, 1985), pp. 14–15. See also Chapters 5, 6 and 9.
[41] Cited in Arnade, *Beggars, Iconoclasts & Civic Patriots*, p. 2.

Die sententie vandē Keyser
roerende Tstapelrecht der
stede van Dordrecht/met die verclaringhe daer op
(.:.) gheuolcht. (.:.)
Cum gratia et Preuilegio.

PLVS OVLTRE

Gheprent tot Leydē in Hol,
landt by mij Claes adriaenszoon Mast Ghezworen
boecprenter der.K.M.woonende op den
Oosterlijncx plaets.

¶ Ende men salse te cope vinden tot Dordrecht ten huyse van
Frans bon Inden gulden Bybel

Figure 2.1 *Die sententie vande[n] Keyser roernde tstapelrecht der stede van Dordrecht* (Leiden: Claesz Adriaensz Mast, [1554]). The Emperor's confirmation of the Dordrecht staple, printed in Leiden for a Dordrecht bookseller in the 1550s. The ordinance was ordained with a woodcut with Charles's motto, 'Plus Oultre'. Including woodcuts of the coat of arms of the issuing authority became an established feature of ordinance publishing throughout Europe.

with documentary evidence of the ancient rights of the city. Finely attuned to the importance of legislative ceremony, the guildsmen had also torn up an edict issued by Charles in 1515 that limited the rights of their corporations. Some paraded afterwards through the streets with torn scraps of the parchment in their hats.[42]

The Emperor returned to the Low Countries in late January 1540, and he took no chances. Several thousand German soldiers were sent ahead to Ghent to secure the town, and a month later, Charles entered an anxious city unopposed. He had the ringleaders of the revolt arrested and executed and forced the remainder of the guild elite and the town leadership to undergo a humiliating submission. Some four hundred men were marched through the streets of Ghent in black robes and bare feet, while others were dressed in white shirts with nooses placed around their necks. At the end of their procession, the citizens were made to beg Charles publicly for mercy.[43]

This was an unmistakable act of humiliation that marked the restoration of Charles's authority. It also indicates the extent to which the bond between the authorities and their citizens relied on ritual communication. In shaming the burghers of Ghent, Charles relied on a ritual performance that had been frequently employed by his Burgundian predecessors. This was not the first time that Ghent had revolted against their sovereign, nor the first time that the citizenry of a defeated Netherlandish town had to kneel barefoot before their prince, renounce their hard-won privileges and see a monumental civic building demolished as a stark warning against future disobedience.[44]

Another important element of ritual state communication was the personal presence of the ruler. This was underscored by a Netherlandish tradition, known as the Joyous Entry (*Blijde Intrede* or *Blijde Inkomst*), which served as a means to establish or reaffirm the political bond between a prince and his subjects in a specific town. Typically, when a new duke or count wished to be recognised by an urban community, he entered the town with great ceremony, accompanied by his courtiers, while the magistrates and the citizens organised elaborate displays of welcome. The occasion was dominated by a figurative and literal exchange of rights and responsibilities between the two parties. This exchange was subject to significant negotiation, but it also allowed citizens to come into close contact with their sovereign, who, by the era of Habsburg rule, might rarely be in the vicinity.[45]

[42] Peter J. Arnade, *Realms of Ritual: Burgundian Ceremony and Civic Life in Late Medieval Ghent* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996), pp. 201–4.
[43] Arnade, *Realms of Ritual*, pp. 204–9.
[44] For some good examples, see Richard Vaughan, *Philip the Good: The Apogee of Burgundy*, 2nd ed. (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2002), pp. 58, 91.
[45] Hugo Soly, 'Plechtige intochten in de steden van de Zuidelijke Nederlanden tijdens de overgang van Middeleeuwen naar Nieuwe Tijd: communicatie, propaganda, spektakel', *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis*, 97 (1984), 341–61; Mario Damen and Kim Overlaet, 'Weg van de staat: Blijde Intredes in de laatmiddeleeuwse Nederlanden op het snijvlak van sociale, culturele en politieke geschiedenis', *BMGN*, 134 (2019), 3–44.

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Philip II first visited the Low Countries in 1549, as part of a tour instigated by Charles V in order to introduce his son to his future subjects in one of the most important realms of his global empire. Between 1 April and 25 October, Philip enjoyed (or endured) more than forty Joyous Entries throughout the region.[46] He received a rapturous welcome in Antwerp, where 5,300 people accompanied the procession, and magnificent *tableaux vivants* were organised by the burghers. In other major towns, including Louvain, Ghent, Dordrecht and Nijmegen, the mood was rather different, with significant delays before Philip's entry, as the magistrates and the government squabbled over concessions of privileges. Philip spent much more time in the southern provinces than in the north: he never made it to Friesland and Groningen, the northernmost provinces, because their provincial States obstinately refused to organise entries after their demands were rejected. Amsterdam and Utrecht were the only two northern towns where triumphal arches were erected. The final province on Philip's tour, Gelderland, offered an extremely chilly reception. Gelderland had been the most recent addition to the Habsburg Low Countries, and it showed. After witnessing Philip's entry into Venlo on 21 October, the Spanish courtier Juan Cristobal Calvete de Estrella wrote plaintively that 'not every Joyous Entry is a happy occasion'.[47]

The soft-spoken and rather stiff Prince Philip did not make the best impression. The fact that he could not communicate with his subjects (he did not speak French, let alone Dutch), placed further stress on his relationship with them. However, even his sheer presence was enough to inspire a sense of duty and loyalty on the part of many Netherlandish inhabitants. It was therefore a devastating blow to his authority that, after he formally became ruler of the Netherlands in 1556, Philip left in 1559, never to return.

Philip's series of Joyous Entries in 1549 demonstrated clearly that ritual state communication required its spectators to be active participants.[48] This was perfectly obvious with a Joyous Entry, for which a community was meant to invest serious expenditure and time in preparation. Yet other political ceremonies, including proclamations and executions, required the consensual involvement of citizens too. During the regency of Margaret of Parma (1559–67), appointed as governor-general of the Netherlands in Philip's absence, it became clear that Habsburg authority was tenuous, and that its system of communication was under severe stress.

[46] Jac Geurts, 'Een jaar vol intochten, feesten, propaganda en spektakel: De rondreis van Kroonprins Filips door de Nederlanden in 1549', in Joop W. Koopmans and Werner Thomas (eds), *Propaganda en spektakel: vroegmoderne intochten en festiviteiten in de Nederlanden* (Maastricht: Shaker, 2010), pp. 31–77; Geoffrey Parker, *Imprudent King: A New Life of Philip II* (London: Yale University Press, 2014), pp. 34–40.

[47] Geurts, 'Een jaar vol intochten', p. 31.

[48] A point also emphasised for England by William Leahy, *Elizabethan Triumphal Processions* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005).

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Effective communication was especially dependent on urban magistrates to promulgate and implement the latest ordinances. It was here that Habsburg communication was disrupted, as the unpopularity of the government's policies left magistrates unwilling or unable to do what was required of them. The early 1560s unleashed a perfect storm of economic and religious crises. Bad harvests and harsh winters caused widespread despondency. On 3 October 1562, the government in Brussels prohibited the export of grain from the Low Countries, but the measure proved inadequate to ameliorate the desperate situation.[49] Refugees from the countryside flocked to the cities, already filled with many hungry mouths; others turned to banditry, roving the countryside, terrorising farmers, convents and villages.[50] The lawlessness was worsened by great numbers of disbanded soldiers, unemployed after the end of war with France in 1559, many of whom now formed criminal gangs. On 24 March 1563, Margaret of Parma issued a royal ordinance which targeted 'arsonists, murderers, traitors, church robbers, thieves, vagabonds, beggars and other similar culprits'.[51] The ordinance urged all officers to proclaim the legislation within three days of receiving it, as well as to republish an ordinance from 1531 on begging.[52] Further ordinances in the same year touched on the excesses of 'church robbers', 'vagabonds' and 'soldiers'.[53]

While bandits terrified regents and citizens alike, Calvinist and Anabaptist preachers gained an ever greater following in the Low Countries. Charles V had endeavoured to expel all Protestant sympathisers from his ancestral lands in the Netherlands. Since the proclamation of the Edict of Worms in 1521, the Habsburg authorities had suppressed any hint of nonconformity: the heresy laws in the Low Countries were some of the most rigid in Europe. After the accession of Philip II as ruler of the Low Countries in 1555, the number of heretics prosecuted increased drastically, with close to one hundred executions in 1562 in Flanders alone.[54]

Although Margaret's government issued numerous ordinances and edicts to enforce the heresy laws, she was obstructed by nobles and regents across the Low Countries, especially in Brabant, Flanders, Holland and Friesland. Margaret's edicts were 'ignored in many places and unenforceable in all'.[55] Remonstrances made by

[49] *Copie by den coninck. Onsen lieven ende getrouwen die stadthalder in Gelderlandt* ([Deventer: Simon I Steenberch], 1562), USTC 426103.

[50] Charlie R. Steen, *Margaret of Parma: A Life* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), p. 109.

[51] *Placcaet ende ordinantie opt stuck vande brandtstichters, moordenaers, verraders, kerckroovers, dieven, vagabonden, bedelaers ende andere dierghelijcke quaetdoenders* (Antwerp: Willem Silvius, 1563), USTC 409405.

[52] *Placcaet ende ordinantie opt stuck vande brandtstichters*, ff. B2v, B3r.

[53] See ordinances issued on 8 March, 17 March and 31 October. USTC 409472 and 409473, 425958, and 409452 and 409456.

[54] Godfrey Parker, *The Dutch Revolt*, 2nd ed. (London: Penguin, 1985), p. 63. More broadly, see Johan Decavele, *De dageraad van de Reformatie in Vlaanderen, 1520–65*, 2 vols (Brussels: Paleis der Academiën, 1975).

[55] Steen, *Margaret of Parma*, p. 186; Parker, *Dutch Revolt*, p. 62; James D. Tracy, *Holland under Habsburg Rule, 1506–1566: The Formation of a Body Politic* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990),

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the urban patriciate reinforced long-standing civic traditions: magistrates wished to reserve the right to prosecute their own citizens and resented the centralising measures introduced by the Habsburg state which infringed upon ancient civic privileges and offended the moderate leanings of urban elites who held Protestant sympathies.[56] Emboldened by Margaret's fading authority, magistrates delayed proclamations or refused to proclaim edicts altogether. According to the chronicler Godevaert van Haecht, the Antwerp secretary Jacob van Wesenbeke travelled to Brussels to plead for the relaxation of the heresy ordinances in July 1566. Margaret of Parma refused and handed over to Van Wesenbeke the latest order so that he could ensure that it was published in Antwerp. Defiantly, he put the text down, stating 'your placards do not apply there'.[57]

The recalcitrance of previously loyal city regents was fuelled also by popular reactions to the implementation of the heresy laws. The promulgation and enforcement of the laws was seriously detrimental to the authority of magistrates in their own community. Two years before his defiant mission to Margaret, Van Wesenbeke had to flee the execution of a condemned Calvinist in November 1564, along with his fellow magistrates and the executioner, after the crowd stormed the scaffold.[58] Proclamations sent by Margaret of Parma in the 1560s reaffirming the Catholic religion as the only tolerable faith were not proclaimed in Amsterdam out of fear of local repercussions from the sizeable community of Protestants.[59]

The chronicle of the Ghent regent Marcus van Vaernewijck demonstrates the tense mood at proclamations held in the city. Citizens were not passive listeners but participants in a public ritual. In August 1566, the Ghent magistrates ordered that Reformed sermons held outside the city walls were to be condoned, upon condition that no weapons were to be worn by those attending and that all churches would be left untouched.[60] The magistrates warned citizens that an ordinance from the court in Brussels was forthcoming, which might include new conditions. After the proclamation was made, the audience, described by Van Vaernewijck as composed of 'apprentices and children', booed loudly, shouting '*Jau*, *jau*', and let the magistrates know that they were inclined otherwise; they would do at the sermons what they wished.[61] Days later, on 22 August, a wave of iconoclastic fury gripped Ghent after a grain riot the previous day.[62] This was

pp. 176–207; Juliaan Woltjer, 'Public Opinion and the Persecution of Heretics in the Netherlands, 1550–59', in Pollmann and Spicer (eds), *Public Opinion and Changing Identities*, pp. 87–106.

[56] See for example Guy Edward Wells, *Antwerp and the Government of Philip II: 1555–1567* (PhD thesis: Cornell University, 1982), pp. 396–8.

[57] Van Haecht, *De kroniek*, I, p. 74.

[58] Cited in Steen, *Margaret of Parma*, pp. 112–13.

[59] Deen, *Publiek debat*, pp. 60–1.

[60] Marcus van Vaernewyck, *Van die beroerlicke tijden in die Nederlanden en voornamelick in Ghendt, 1566–1568*, ed. Ferdinand Vanderhaeghen, 5 vols (Ghent: C. Annoot-Braeckman, 1872–81), I, p. 204.

[61] Van Vaernewyck, *Van die beroerlicke tijden*, I, p. 204.

[62] Parker, *Dutch Revolt*, pp. 76–8.

not the only time when the Ghent population displayed their recalcitrance after a proclamation: in 1582, one of the local criers ended a proclamation by reminding the audience that it was prohibited by law to jeer after the proclamation had ended.[63]

On other occasions, Van Vaernewijck depicted a very different atmosphere at urban proclamations. On 25 May 1568, the audience of a Ghent proclamation demanded that an ordinance on vagabonds and Protestant preachers be read out a second time. An Anabaptist preacher was due to be executed, and the crowd would not permit the execution to be held unless they heard the relevant provisions once more.[64] There was genuine political interest in the regulations disseminated by the state. On 7 July 1566, an ordinance issued by Margaret of Parma was read out in Ghent. The ordinance contained a prohibition of Reformed conventicles and gatherings, but it also included a plea by Margaret to King Philip II to return to the Low Countries. Van Vaernewijck commented that

> [a]fter the placard was proclaimed, many people were most pleased. But as they pondered its meaning, and read it after receiving a copy, they became again sullen and anxious, as they thought that it was all rather intricate, dark and obscure, that it was difficult to grasp the true meaning.[65]

Citizens were not content just to hear the latest regulation proclaimed from the balustrade of their town hall: they wished to ponder the text. They read and discussed ordinances published in Brussels and elsewhere throughout the Low Countries. In these turbulent times, government publications played an important role in the verification of rumours.[66] Ordinances, letters and extracts from official papers circulated widely during the opening stages of the Dutch Revolt, and they were eagerly collected.[67] In the 1580s, Daniel van der Meulen, an exiled merchant from Antwerp who was living in Bremen, was sent at least fifty-nine printed Antwerp broadsheet ordinances, which he kept among his papers.[68] They were clearly considered to be newsworthy items, and possibly of commercial value also. As is clear from the diaries and chronicles kept during the Revolt, the ordinances were also news in themselves. In Ghent, Van Vaernewijck copied into his chronicle lengthy sections from Brussels ordinances; the Antwerp art dealer Godevaert van Haecht dedicated much of his diary to proclamations in Antwerp and other cities;

[63] Vermeersch, *Multimedia in de stad*, pp. 109–10.
[64] Van Vaernewyck, *Van die beroerlicke tijden*, IV, pp. 98–9.
[65] Van Vaernewyck, *Van die beroerlicke tijden*, II, pp. 296–7.
[66] Henk van Nierop, '"And Ye Shall Hear of Wars and Rumours of Wars": Rumour and the Revolt in the Netherlands', in Pollmann and Spicer (eds), *Public Opinion and Changing Identities*, pp. 69–96, especially, p. 76. See also Baars, *Rumours of Revolt*, esp. pp. 194–8, on the critical eye with which news, including edicts, were read.
[67] Deen, *Publiek debat*, pp. 62–3.
[68] Nina Lamal, 'Commerce and Good Governance: The Broadsheet Ordinances in the Van der Meulen Archive', in Pettegree (ed.), *Broadsheets*, pp. 207–39.

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and in Haarlem, Willem Jansz Verwer noted regularly when a royal placard was proclaimed or a local ordinance was issued.[69]

On 5 April 1566, Van Haecht copied into his diary the text of the Compromise of the Nobility, the petition of the Netherlandish nobility which forced Margaret of Parma to relax temporarily the heresy laws. After this he noted that 'the following letters have been published in various cities and quarters' and printed because the nobles wished that 'each could have their opinion' on the matter.[70] The items cited by Van Vaernewijck in his chronicle in July 1566 were most likely printed versions of the ordinance published in Ghent by Ghileyn Manilius and Jan van den Steene.[71] The two Ghent booksellers frequently printed ordinances published in Brussels in the 1560s and 1570s. On a separate occasion, Van Vaernewijck noted specifically that two ordinances published in the name of King Philip and proclaimed in Ghent on 22 and 23 September 1567 were 'printed in Ghent by Gelijn Manilius, son of Cornelis, and sold by Jan van den Steene, the elder, bookseller on St Pharahilde's place, so that everyone who wishes [to do so] could get a copy for only a little money'.[72] In all likelihood the two publishers were encouraged to disseminate the ordinances by the local magistrates: the printed edition of the ordinance contained an approbation by the Council of Flanders.[73]

By the 1570s, the publication of ordinances represented a significant part of the business of Manilius and Van den Steene. This had become a competitive trade, and one in which substantial profits were to be made. In 1578, Christophe Plantin sold 256 copies of a States General ordinance on new excise rates to Jan (II) Scheffer, a bookseller in Den Bosch, charging a stuiver for each copy.[74] Plantin printed at least four editions, two in French and two in Dutch.[75] The print run of these editions is unknown, but it was certainly large. Plantin delivered 6,000 copies of the ordinance to the States General; he is likely to have sold many more copies to other booksellers besides Scheffer.[76] Even with his 256 copies Jan Scheffer did not have enough to satisfy local demand, and he reprinted his own edition within

[69] Van Vaernewyck, *Van die beroerlicke tijden*, II, pp. 28–36; Willem Janszoon Verwer, *Memoriaelbouck: Dagboek van gebeurtenissen te Haarlem van 1572–1581*, ed. J. J. Temminck (Haarlem: Schuyt & Co., 1973), pp. 3, 106, 173–5.

[70] Van Haecht, *De kroniek*, I, p. 31.

[71] *Ordinantie daerby verboden ende gheinterdiceert werden alle conventiclen, ende ongheoirloofde vergaderinghe secrete oft openbare* (Ghent: Ghileyn Manilius and Jan van den Steene, 1566), USTC 409749.

[72] Van Vaernewyck, *Van die beroerlicke tijden*, III, pp. 48–56. These two ordinances were *Ordinantie waer by verboden wert, allen afghedanckte knechten of soldaten, ende ander crijchsvolck, voirtaen eenighe wapenen ten platten lande, oft achter velde te draghen* (Ghent: Ghileyn Manilius and Jan van den Steene, 1567), USTC 409871; and *Ordinantie nopende de personele vlucht ende uutvoeren van de goedijnghen* (Ghent: Ghileyn Manilius and Jan van den Steene, 1567), USTC 409874.

[73] *Ordinantie nopende de personele vlucht*, ff. A4r.

[74] Van den Oord, *Twee Eeuwen Bosch' Boekbedrijf*, p. 423.

[75] USTC 4156, 441698, 411118 and 401753.

[76] Leon Voet, *The Plantin Press (1555–1589): A Bibliography of the Works Printed and Published by Christopher Plantin at Antwerp and Leiden*, 6 vols (Amsterdam: Van Hoeve, 1980–3), pp. 2111–12.

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the year.[77] A royal ordinance on the mint printed in Antwerp by Guillaume van Parijs in 1577 contained a note that it was also sold by booksellers in Brussels, Ghent, Bruges, Ypres and Courtrai.[78]

During the early stages of the Revolt, the Brussels printer Michel van Hamont also began to specialise in the publication of Habsburg ordinances. During the late 1560s he petitioned for privileges to print government ordinances, which granted him the exclusive right to sell and distribute them.[79] The reprinting of ordinances in Antwerp, Ghent and elsewhere suggests that the enforcement of these privileges was far from complete, but Van Hamont was certainly profiting from his privilege of first access to the latest government publications. At this point he was not required to print all ordinances issued by the governor-general and the Privy Council, but it seems that the government did value his commercial initiative. On at least one occasion, Van Hamont was tasked to print an ordinance because Margaret of Parma wished for it to be printed accurately and carefully.[80] It is possible that repeated frustrations with the misinterpretations (deliberate or not) of royal ordinances influenced such decisions. The archive of the Court of Gelderland, now in Arnhem, reveals that the Habsburg court in Brussels began to make more frequent use of Van Hamont's services as printer in the 1560s and 1570s.[81] The archive contains several dozen printed government broadsheets despatched to Gelderland for proclamation. On 5 April 1570, Van Hamont's position was strengthened when he received a six-year privilege to print 'all placards and ordinances of the King', with the exclusive right to sell and distribute the ordinances throughout the Low Countries.[82]

The widespread availability of printed state publications during the early stages of the Dutch Revolt was a notable development, and an indication of the changing nature of the political crisis. Judging from surviving ordinances only, three times as many printed ordinances were produced in the Low Countries in the 1560s and 1570s than in the first sixty years of the 16th century.[83] Printers and

[77] *Listen vande ghenerale middelen gheresolveert by den prince van Orangnien ende den raet van state, ende de generale staten*, ([Den Bosch: Jan II Scheffer], na Christophe Plantin, 1578), USTC 415147.
[78] *De Figueren vande nieuwe Goude en Zelvere Munte* (Antwerp: Guillaume van Parijs, 1577), USTC 401726.
[79] See for example USTC 402953, 409709 and 91410. See also Adam, 'Printing for Central Authorities', pp. 73–6.
[80] *Copie des lettres patentes en forme d'asseurance que la ducesse de Parme, regente etc a donné aux gentilzhommes confederez* (Brussels: Michel de Hamont, 1566), USTC 4044. See also Gustaaf Janssens, 'De ordonnanties van Filips II: ontwikkelingsstadia, afkondiging, bewaring in archieven, publicatie en editie (periode 1566–1570)', in G. Martyn (ed.), *Recht en wet tijdens het ancien régime* (Brussels: Algemeen Rijksarchief, 2014), pp. 33–51, here pp. 41–2. Stensland, *Habsburg Communication*, does not discuss whether Van Hamont's printed ordinances appeared at the behest of the court or on the printer's own initiative.
[81] GAA, Hof van Gelderland en Zutphen, inv. 1367, 1368 and 1374.
[82] *Placcart contenant defence de transporter hors du pays, aucunes denrees, marchandises ou manufactures sans en payer le Xme denier* (Brussels: Michel van Hamont, 1571), USTC 30015.
[83] Statistics gathered from the USTC.

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booksellers eagerly responded to commercial demand for the government's edicts and ordinances. In doing so they provided additional publicity for Habsburg policies at a time when many of those policies were deeply unpopular and resented. The destruction perpetrated by bands of Calvinist iconoclasts during the summer of 1566 shocked many magistracies back into the government's fold, and the rebels melted away in 1567. But the reactionary and oppressive policies of the new governor-general, the Duke of Alba, alienated many Netherlanders and gradually fostered the emergence of a cross-confessional rebel ideology.

Habsburg authority crumbled after Alba imposed a series of taxation measures in March 1569. Alba announced the introduction of three new taxes: a one-off wealth tax of 1 per cent (one hundredth penny), a permanent sales tax on real estate transactions of 5 per cent (twentieth penny) and a permanent excise duty of 10 per cent (tenth penny).[84] While the assembled provincial assemblies quickly consented to the one hundredth penny, they protested passionately against the permanent taxes, especially the tenth penny. The States bought off the implementation of the permanent taxes in 1569, but in 1571, Alba circumvented the States, demanding the taxes without their consent. In the words of Maximilien Morillon, Bishop of Tournai, 'since the magistrates were appointed to put the Tenth Penny into effect, their authority has entirely collapsed'.[85] On 11 March 1572, the Haarlem brewer Willem Jansz Verwer noted in his diary that

> [t]he tenth penny was proclaimed around 12:30 pm today . . . but the city's bell was only rung five times [because] . . . the bailiff [charged with proclaiming the tax measure] was very much afraid of the restless reactions of the citizens.[86]

In Amsterdam, the magistrates first withheld publication of the tenth penny, but when they eventually did so, they accompanied the proclamation with a lengthy remonstrance, stating that they did not agree with the contents.[87] In Gouda, the magistrates also added verbal protests of their own when they finally plucked up the courage to proclaim the taxes.[88] Once they had proclaimed the placards, the municipal governments were supposed to appoint tax collectors. Here too they obstructed the authorities in creative ways: the collector appointed for the countryside of Walcheren in Zeeland was unable to proceed because he was illiterate and therefore could not read the placard.[89] Although the saga lasted the

[84] Parker, *Dutch Revolt*, pp. 114–15; and G. Janssens, 'Brabant in verzet tegen Alva's tiende en twintigste penning', *BMGN*, 89 (1974), 16–31.
[85] Cited in Parker, *Dutch Revolt*, p. 130.
[86] Verwer, *Memoriaelbouck*, p. 3.
[87] Deen, *Publiek debat*, p. 97.
[88] C. C. Hibben, *Gouda in Revolt: Particularism and Pacifism in the Revolt of the Netherlands, 1572–1588* (Utrecht: HES, 1983), p. 41.
[89] Ferdinand H. M. Grapperhaus, *Belasting, vrijheid en eigendom* (Zutphen: De Walburg Pers, 1989), p. 176.

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better part of three years, it is unlikely that any tax from the tenth penny ever found its way to Brussels.

The survival of government broadsheets in the archive of the Court of Gelderland indicates that the local authorities were also hesitant to publicise other placards sent to them from the court in Brussels. Three Brussels ordinances on the confiscation of rebel estates, dated 10 February 1570, 31 October 1570 and 30 August 1571, are present in that archive in dozens of spotless and untouched copies, carefully folded and stacked on top of each other. They are clearly the unused remainder of a consignment of broadsheets despatched to Gelderland. The placard of 31 October 1570 is present in 132 copies, in all likelihood representing the bulk of the consignment from Brussels (Figure 2.2). This, it must be said, is a superbly elegant piece of printing, beautifully centred on a full sheet of rich, creamy paper, topped with an exquisite royal coat of arms. As a piece of typography, it would have been hard to improve upon: it resonates power. It says a great deal about the limited reach of royal authority that the Court of Gelderland would simply forebear to distribute it. While the Habsburg government may have taken to printing more of its edicts in the immediate aftermath of the uprising in 1566, this particular case illustrates that printing alone could not make amends for unpopular policies.

Appropriation

During the late 1560s and early 1570s, the Habsburg state was steadily losing its grip on state communication. At the same time, official channels of communication were appropriated by the rebels.[90] Broadsheets mimicking government publications were thrown onto the streets of various cities of Brabant, urging citizens to reject the existing heresy laws. Seditious pamphlets and broadsheets were also attached to church doors, the town hall and other prominent locations where it was common for the local government to post copies of its ordinances. Such acts demonstrate that rebels recognised the power of state communication: official rituals were not mocked but contested and appropriated.

The familiar structure and style of government ordinances lent rebel polemicists a recognisable form to adopt for their assault on Habsburg authority.[91] They employed their own interpretation of official print, appealing to their audience through an established stylistic genre. William of Orange's *Waerschouwinge* (Warning) of 1 September 1568, in which the prince appealed to the citizens of the Low Countries to throw off the yoke of the Duke of Alba, mimics closely the structure and phrasing of official government publications: it features a general

[90] Verberckmoes and Soen, 'Broadsheets Testing Moderation in the Nascent Dutch Revolt', pp. 271–94. See also Doig, 'Political Propaganda', pp. 269–70, on the appropriation of proclamations by rebels.

[91] A good example is the *Ordonantie ende rechte middelen aen allen liefhebbers des Vaderlants* (s.l.: s.n., 1579), USTC 428665, which presents itself as an 'ordinance' for all rebels who wish to fight for their fatherland and drive out the Spanish 'pigs and cocks'.

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Copie.

Philips byder gratie Gods/Coninck van Castil-

By den Coninc in zijnen Rade. Onderteeckent.
D'ouerloepe.

Ghecollationneert teghens het Originale besegelde Placcaet. Ende is daer mede bevonden te accorderen, By my

Figure 2.2 *Copie, Philips byder gratie Gods, al eest zoe dat wy by andere placcate bevolen hebben allen vasallen heure eeden souden vernieuwen* (s.l.: s.n., [1570]). One of the 132 copies of a Habsburg placard of 31 October 1570, held in the archive of the Court of Gelderland.

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salutation listing the authority of the issuing individual, a lengthy justification detailing the necessity of the announcement and an instruction to implement a series of political actions.[92] The title page of Orange's *Waerschouwinge* was adorned with a woodcut emblem of the States General, a lion armed with bunched arrows and a sword. The use of such woodcuts was limited to a formal issuing authority; its appropriation by Orange reinforced his claim to represent a legitimate Netherlandish cause against the oppressive regime of the Duke of Alba. Another Orangist tract from 1568, Adrianus Savaria's *Hertgrondighe begheerte vanden Prince van Oraengien*, used the woodcut emblem of the late Emperor Charles V on its title page, followed on the verso by Orange's coat of arms.[93] At this stage in the conflict, the rebel cause insisted on its loyalty to King Philip II of Spain: the revolt was a defence of ancient privileges abused by the Duke of Alba and the King's malicious advisors. The identification of Orange's cause with that of the late Emperor was a pointed alignment of the rebel cause with established authority.

State publications played an important role in early rebel rhetoric. If the subjects of the Habsburg crown did not agree with or were not persuaded by Habsburg ordinances, they certainly paid close attention to the placards that emanated from the court in Brussels. It is also clear that rebel propagandists recognised the value of ordinances and edicts and indeed wished to use them themselves. When the Prince of Orange established his headquarters in Delft in 1572 to coordinate the liberation and defence of Holland, one of his first acts was to issue his own official ordinances, printed on his orders by Agniesgen Bruynen (the widow of Harman Schinckel) and Albrecht Hendricksz.[94] Ordinances came to play an increasingly prominent role in the Dutch Revolt at the same time as the authority of Brussels was first undermined and then renounced by the rebels. As the next chapter will demonstrate, the irony did not end there. While the rebels had identified the religious placards of Philip II, and then the edicts of the Duke of Alba, as the source of the conflict in the Low Countries, they themselves turned into far more assiduous lawmakers. Placards, edicts and ordinances were at the heart of the political culture and administration of the young Dutch Republic, as the rebels completed a swift and unlikely transformation into statesmen. In the process, the authorities were forced to abandon other established means of communication: there was no space in a republic for a ducal entry. Processions

[92] *Waerschouwinge des prince van Oraengien, aende inghesetenen ende ondersaten van den Nederlanden* (s.l.: s.n., 1568), USTC 411057. Other examples include USTC 421573 and 410000.

[93] Adrianus Savaria, *Een hertgrondighe begheerte vanden Prince van Oraengien, mitsgaders alle syne christelijke bontghenooten, op alle menschen begheert de welvaert onsen Nederlanden welcke landen nu soeckt te ruineeren eenen ghenaemt Duca de Alba* (s.l.: s.n., 1568), USTC 404561.

[94] *Placate vander munte* ([Delft: Schinckel/Hendricksz], 1573), USTC 426194; and *Wilhelm by der gratien Gods, prince van Oraingien* ([Delft: Schinckel/Hendricksz], 1573), USTC 426196. It is noteworthy that Harman Schinckel was a key figure in the publication of Reformed devotional print in the 1560s and was executed in 1568 for heresy: see Herman de la Fontaine Verwey, 'Meester Harman Schinckel, een Delftse boekdrukker van de 16e eeuw', *Oud Delft*, 3 (1964), 5–78.

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and parades remained a part of Dutch political culture. They were used most prominently to honour the visits of foreign dignitaries and royals, or the arrival of the Prince of Orange. The deaths of leading admirals also saw the organisation of massive public funeral processions. Yet after the Dutch Republic became a sovereign state, its primary political ritual would be legislative. This attached even more weight to the communication of law as a duty of government and as a site for political contention.

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3

From Rebellion to Republic

The collapse of Habsburg authority in the 1570s tested the civic communities of the Low Countries like never before. Whether loyalist or rebel, all cities and towns in the Low Countries experienced their share of crisis, destruction and change. Some suffered more than others: the sacking of Mechelen, Naarden, Aalst and Antwerp by Spanish troops devastated urban communities. Exhausting sieges challenged the social and economic capacities of the cities, compounded by an influx of refugees and garrisoned troops. Magistrates everywhere were required to reassert their authority as leaders of the civic community.

At the beginning of the conflict in the 1560s, urban magistrates were mostly concerned with the restoration of general order and peace. But as the revolt dragged on, and as the rebel cause gained a foothold in different provinces, magistrates were increasingly forced to declare their loyalties, sometimes antagonising large bodies of their fellow citizens. Political crises threw the very foundations of civil administration into question: whole magistracies were defied, ejected and replaced. Some were deposed after surrendering to besieging forces (as in Mons, Valenciennes and Haarlem); others were ousted by their own citizens (as in Enkhuizen, Hoorn and Vlissingen) or became the victims of Calvinist coups (in Brussels, Ghent and Bruges). At the same time the trials of war allowed some magistrates to strengthen their traditional positions as foremost defenders of the city's privileges and rights. The heroics of the commanders and councillors of Haarlem and Leiden exemplified the stoic resilience of the regent class and later became prominent legends of Dutch history.[1]

The crisis in the cities prompted an expansion of municipal regulation. Urban communities were disrupted by thousands of refugees, most of whom would not have been familiar with established by-laws, regulations and privileges. Reformed

[1] Judith Pollmann, *Memory in Early Modern Europe, 1500–1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 63–5, 106–7; Peter Arnade, 'The City Defeated and Defended: Civism as Political Identity in the Habsburg-Burgundian Netherlands', in Robert Stein and Judith Pollmann (eds), *Networks, Regions and Nations: Shaping Identities in the Low Countries, 1300–1650* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), pp. 195–216, here pp. 213–14.

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exile communities in Germany and England counted over 20,000 Netherlanders by the early 1570s, many of whom returned to bolster the defences of the rebel cities in Holland and Zeeland from 1572 onwards.[2] Destruction caused by iconoclasm or military assault required repair and reconstruction.[3] Plague, poverty and famine further undermined the traditional structure of many communities.[4] As the Sea Beggars made the North Sea and Zuiderzee unsafe, the coastal towns of the northern provinces were particularly badly hit. Bishop Morillon wrote to Cardinal Granvelle on 24 March 1572 that

> there used to be several towns and villages [in Holland] where no beggars were to be found. Now they have multiplied in some places to 600 or 700, most of them sailors and fishermen. The magistrates have had to give them a little bread and money over the past few days, otherwise there would have been disorders.[5]

The pressures of war, poverty and political crisis forced magistrates to expand their presence in the civic community. The archive of the city of Leiden contains a remarkable resource which allows us to reconstruct the involvement of the magistrates in the regulation of their city: the *Aflezingboeken* (proclamation books). In the *Aflezingboeken*, the city's secretary entered the text of all regulations and ordinances proclaimed by the magistrates; the series begins in 1505 and ends in 1794 (Figure 3.1).[6] The 16th-century *Aflezingboeken* reveal that between 1505 and 1560, the magistrates issued around twenty to twenty-five proclamations a year, an average of two per month. These invariably included an occasional ordinance sent by the Habsburg court and municipal warnings on recurring annual concerns, including instructions to break up ice in the city's canals, calls for debtors to settle their accounts, prohibitions on taking stones or clay from the fortifications, the cleaning of the city's streets, preparations for fire safety and the regulation of New Year festivities.

From the beginning of the Dutch Revolt the Leiden magistrates were forced to intensify their activities. From 1566 there was a rapid increase in the total number of annual proclamations (see Table 3.1). In 1573 and 1574, when Leiden was subjected to two sieges (October–April and May–October), the magistrates made 375 proclamations: more than one every other day. These were extraordinary times, and they called for intensive cooperation and civic activism. The entire city

[2] Parker, *Dutch Revolt*, p. 119. See also Andrew Pettegree, *Emden and the Dutch Revolt: Exile and the Development of Reformed Protestantism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992); and Andrew Pettegree, *Foreign Protestant Communities in Sixteenth-Century London* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986).

[3] Michal Bouwens, 'Under Construction? The Catholic Community in Ghent after the Beeldenstorm', *BMGN*, 131 (2016), 81–98.

[4] Parker, *Dutch Revolt*, pp. 127–9.

[5] Cited in Parker, *Dutch Revolt*, p. 127.

[6] EL, Stadsbestuur I, 1290–1575, inv. 387–9 and Stadsbestuur II, 1576–1816, inv. 14–41. See also W. C. S. van Benthem Jutting, 'Iets over de zogenoemde aflezingboeken in het Leidse gemeentearchief', *Leids Jaarboekje*, 61 (1969), 99–113. See also Chapter 4.

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Figure 3.1 *Gezicht op het stadhuis te Leiden*, 1712. Leiden town hall, pictured here in the early 18th century, with the low balustrade of the building overlooking the commercial Breestraat. The magistrates of Leiden performed all their proclamations from this balustrade, including those made during the testing times of the 1570s.

was mobilised for its defence while hunger and disease wreaked havoc. Around a third of Leiden's 15,000 inhabitants would perish in the two sieges.

Most proclamations of these years were not repressive measures: they sought to improve fire safety, regulate the distribution of bread, control market prices, organise the city watch and, above all, reassure citizens so as to ease tensions within the city walls.[7] The proclamation books depict a frightened, divided community, constantly in danger of tearing itself apart and surrendering to the

[7] See, for some examples, EL, Stadsbestuur I, 1290–1575, inv. 389, ff. 53, 56v, 60, 61v, 65v–69v, 71, 73–5, 78, 81–2, 156–9.

1566	33
1567	62
1568	38
1569	31
1570	52
1571	46
1572	78
1573	164
1574	211
1575	138
1576	103
Total	**956**

Table 3.1 Proclamations in Leiden, 1566–76.
Sources: EL, Stadsbestuur I, 1290–1575, inv. 389 and Stadsbestuur II, 1576–1816, inv. 14.

besieging forces. The magistrates warned citizens of the false promises of pardon communicated by the besieging forces, but on several occasions they relented to allow citizens to leave the city with passports.[8] It was essential to inspire hope: in February 1574, the magistrates spread the news of the rebel naval victory at the Scheldt and the surrender of Dunkirk; a few days later they dispelled rumours that Middelburg and Arnemuiden were still in Spanish hands.[9] They proclaimed letters from the Prince of Orange and from Admiral Louis Boisot urging the citizens to be steadfast, accompanying the letters with a prohibition against shooting down any pigeons used by the magistrates to communicate with the relieving forces.[10] When relief was in sight, the magistrates announced a prayer day and additional distribution of food to the poor.[11]

After the relief of Leiden, the number of proclamations decreased, but they still remained well above pre-war levels. Although Leiden had been saved, the crisis was not over. Instead of twenty or thirty proclamations the magistrates would continue to issue seventy, eighty or ninety proclamations each year.[12] A similar transformation can be observed in the proclamation books of the city of Utrecht. There too the number of proclamations increased rapidly during the 1570s and 1580s, to reach a norm in the 1590s and early 1600s of between seventy and ninety

[8] EL, Stadsbestuur I, 1290–1575, inv. 389, f. 164v; ff. 114v, 126, 151v–152.
[9] EL, Stadsbestuur I, 1290–1575, inv. 389, ff. 124v, 127.
[10] EL, Stadsbestuur I, 1290–1575, inv. 389, ff. 164, 173v.
[11] EL, Stadsbestuur I, 1290–1575, inv. 389, f. 166.
[12] EL, Stadsbestuur II, 1576–1816, inv. 14–22.

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proclamations a year.[13] The strains of conflict had established new standards of civic engagement and regulation.

The coming of the *stadsdrukker*

It was not a coincidence that in the 1570s the Leiden magistrates decided, for the first time, to issue their ordinances in print. The earliest extant printed Leiden ordinance dates from December 1574, shortly after the end of the second siege. This was a large broadsheet, dealing with the regulation of the city's bakeries, printed by Jan Moyt Jacobszoon, one of two printers then active in Leiden.[14] Around the same time Jacobszoon also printed in the name of Louis Boisot a letter to the magistrates of loyalist Amsterdam and Utrecht, urging them to join the rebel side. Both letters were printed in 400 copies and circulated widely.[15] The rebels were determined to exploit the miraculous victory at Leiden and carry the struggle forward.

Before the siege of Leiden, the magistrates had never printed ordinances or other municipal announcements. But between December 1574 and the end of the 16th century they would issue at least 313 state publications.[16] In all likelihood these surviving ordinances represent only a portion of the publications issued in the name of the magistrates during this period. Jan Moyt Jacobszoon would not remain the city's designated printer for long. By 1576, the city council was also placing orders for ordinances with Andries Verschout. One of his extant publications is a magnificent broadsheet announcing the establishment of an annual market in Leiden from 3 October 1577 onwards, a commemoration of the courage of the people of Leiden and a means to regenerate the battered economy.[17] The care taken by Verschout in the production of this broadsheet makes clear that the magistrates of Leiden expected to have their publications produced to the highest standards (Figure 3.2). The elegance of this beautifully composed piece of typography also certified wherever it was exhibited that Leiden was ready to resume its role as one of Holland's leading cultural centres.

Given that Verschout was able to perform such high-quality work, it is striking that the magistrates decided to set up their own printing press. In November 1577, town secretary Jan van Hout purchased a press for 1,200 guilders, for which he

[13] HUA, Archief van de Raad, 1577–1795, inv. 153 (1–16).

[14] *Also voortijden verscheyden ordinantien sijn ghemaecht over ende op tstuck vande backerijen* ([Leiden: Jan Moyt Jacobszoon, 1574]), USTC 426216. See also Paul Valkema Blouw, 'The First Printers of the City of Leiden: Jan Moyt Jacobsz and Andries Verschout (1574 to 1578)', in Paul Valkema Blouw, *Dutch Typography in the Sixteenth Century*, ed. Ton Croiset van Uchelen and Paul Dijstelberge (Leiden: Brill, 2013), pp. 349–59.

[15] Valkema Blouw, 'The First Printers', p. 351.

[16] Statistics gathered from the USTC.

[17] *Also den dach vander wunderbaerlike verlossinge ende t'untset der stadt Leyden* ([Leiden: Andries Verschout, 1577]), USTC 426272.

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God zynde gram,
Gaf zwaert, en vlam,
En t'eten al te sober;
Zijn volc alhier,
Dat elc een was verwundert,
Mer zijn hant quam,
En dat benam,
Den derden in Oktober,
Tzeventich-vier;
Meerder dan vijftien-hondert.

ALso den dach vander wunderbaerlike verlossinge ende T'untset der Stad Leyden in Hollant/ van tbeleg der Spaniaerden/ deur de crachtige hant vro Alderhoochsten/ opten derden Octobris vijftienhondert tzeventich vier geschiet/ tot grootmakinge zijns Godlikē naems wijtruchtich gemaect/ in eewiger gedachtenisse gehouden/ ende voornemelijken binnen der voorschreven Stad Leyden/ met danczegginge ende alle behoorlike vreuchden ende geoorloofde genuechten overgebracht behoort te werdē: So ist datmen eenen yegeliken mitsdezen/ verwittigt en laet werē dat binnē der voors. Stede naer behoorlike voorgaende toelatinge ende bewilliginge/ opgerecht ende gestelt es/ een vrije Jaermarct/ van zuvel/ boter/ kaes/ koeyen/ paerden/ linnen/ wollen/ leer/ ende van alrehande gueden/ coopmanschapen/ waren ende hantwercken/ geduerende eenen tijt van thien dagen/ te weten/ vanden eersten tot den thienden der voors. maent Octobris. Welke marct een yegeliken van wat state/ qualite of wezen die zijn/ van nu ende ten eewigen dagen geduerende/ zullen mogen gebruyken/ ende binnen der voors. Stadt Leyden en de vrijheyt van dien/ in aller zekerheyt comen/ [illegible] keren/ zonder dat yemant middeler tijt/ gaende/ comende/ blijvende of wederkeerende/ aen lijve of gueden/ om eenige civile zaken/ schulden of achterwezen/ bekommert/ bezettet of aengesproken zal mogē werden. Ende ten eynde dat elc een die tot vermeerderinge vande Marct/ hem voor de iegenwoordige eerste reyze binnen der voors. Stede gelieven zullen te vinden/ zullen meugen weten het underschept der dagen. Sal de gemene marct beginnen ende gehouden werden den voorschreven eersten/ tweeden ende andere vervolgende dagen. Den derdē (naer de behoorlike Predicatien ende danczeggingen/ inde Christelike vergaderinge der kerken als naer behooren zullen zijn gepredicht) zal de generale wapenschouwinge ende munsteringe vande Schutterie ende Burgerie/ aldaer werden vertoont/ ende met een haerluyden oeffeninge int schermutzeren/ zo wel te watere als te lande. Den vierden zullen de Spelen ende vertoningen tot verheuginge van een yegelic ter voorschreven Marct gecomen zijnde/ gedaen werden. Saterdage den vijfden zal gehouden werden de Beestemarct/ van paerden/ ossen/ koeyen/ schapen/ verkenen/ zulx de zelve van nu voorto alle Jare gehouden zullen werden/ Vrijdage ende zaterdage naer den voors. derden. Maendage ende Dijnsdage/ den zevenden en achtsten zullen gehouden werden de leermarcten van allen huyden/ vellen ende leeren gerout ende ongerout/ ruyge ende anders/ zeme leer/ bezaen/ corduaen/ franchijn/ parchemijn ende alle andere sorten van vellen en leeren/ ende dat inde plaetze van gelijke leermarct/ die anders gehouden zoude werden maendage na S. Lambrecht toecomende/ die ten voors. dage is verleyt/ ende van nu voortsaen Jaerlijc gehouden zal werden/ telken smaendaechs naer den derden Octobris. Ende zal de coemste van alle eerlike ende vrome personen/ Edel of onedel/ coopluyden/ burgeren ende andere den Schout/ Burgemeesteren ende Gerechte der voors. Stad Leyden zeer lief ende aengenaem wezen/ die binnen der voors. Stad Leyden/ alle goet gerief van logysen/ marcten ende andersins zullen vinden/ zulx de voorschreven van Leyden gedencken den genen die vande verste wegen/ ende mette meeste ende costelicste waren aldaer ter marct zullen comen/ elc inden zijnen te beschencken ende vereeren. Twelc zulx d'een den anderen tot vorderinisse ende behulp der voors. Stad Leyden/ (die zulx alle de werelt genouch bekent is/ in hare twee zware belegeringen/ zo vele geleden heeft/ ende tot het alder uyterste gecomen zijnde ten dage voorzeyt wunderbaerliken es verlost) op dat die te meerder mocht zijn vermaert/ ende bezocht/ zal gelieven voorts te zeggen ende verwittigen.

IAERMARCT TOT LEIDEN
IN HOLLAND IEGENS DEN DERDEN OCTOBER, CIƆ. IƆ. LXXVII.

Figure 3.2 *Also den dach vander wunderbaerlike verlossinge ende t'untset der stad Leyden* ([Leiden: Andries Verschout], 1577). The broadsheet announcing the establishment of an annual market in Leiden in memory of the relief of the city, printed by Andries Verschout in 1577. Note the delicate woodcut border and the exquisite woodcut initial and double coat of arms.

was reimbursed by the council on 5 November 1578.[18] The press was installed in the town hall and became known as the *Raadhuispers* (town hall press). Van Hout was a leading advocate of the initiative; he became in effect the publisher running the *Raadhuispers*, responsible for the acquisition of typefaces and the replacement of worn-out materials. In 1597 he bought the press from the council, after which he oversaw the press until his death in 1609.[19]

The *Raadhuispers* was a remarkable enterprise. It was an unprecedented fusion of municipal governance and the printing press. Jan van Hout estimated that the press saved nine-tenths of the expense of having forms and ordinances copied by hand.[20] The press saved money, that much was clear; but now that the magistrates owned their own press they were determined to use it. While it is unclear exactly how many publications were produced on the *Raadhuispers*, evidence from surviving ordinances in the early 1590s suggests that the Leiden magistrates were publishing at least thirty-six ordinances a year destined for distribution among the citizens of Leiden.[21] From the early 1580s the magistrates printed around a dozen different ordinances each year regulating various municipal excise duties. The magistrates issued numerous forms requesting (or demanding) loans from citizens for the relief of the siege of Antwerp in 1585 and the blockade of the Spanish Armada in 1588 (Figure 3.3).[22] The exquisite civilité typefaces bought by Jan van Hout for the *Raadhuispers* as a demonstration of Leiden's humanist erudition adorned much humbler publications: instructions for the city watch; the supervision of the wool trade; ordinances regulating the activities of the city's bakers, brokers, brewers and other guilds; posters announcing municipal sales or the construction of new bridges; and forms for toll rates, payments of interest on municipal loans and oaths taken by members of the militia. The magistrates had become accustomed to regulating the minutiae of civic society, and their publications permeated the daily fabric of the city's economic and political life.

The *Raadhuispers* was the only town hall press in the Low Countries. But the general developments taking place in Leiden in the 1560s and 1570s were not exceptional. During the Dutch Revolt the magistrates of Antwerp began to publish printed proclamations and tax forms far more regularly. Like their colleagues in Leiden, the magistrates of Antwerp had rarely done so before the 1560s, but by the

[18] W. J. C. Rammelman Elsevier, 'De voormalige drukkerye op het Raadhuis der stad Leyden, Ao. 1577–1610', *Werken van de Maatschappij der Nederlandsche Letterkunde*, 10 (1857), 273–93, here 280–2. On Jan van Hout see Karel Bostoen, *Hart voor Leiden: Jan van Hout (1542–1609), stadssecretaris, dichter en vernieuwer* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2009); and Valkema Blouw, 'The First Printers', pp. 349–50.
[19] Paul Hoftijzer, 'Veilig achter Minerva's schild: Het Leidse boek in de zeventiende en achttiende eeuw', in A. Bouwman et al. (eds), *Stad van Boeken: Handschrift en druk in Leiden 1260–2000* (Leiden: Uitgeverij Ginkgo, 2008), pp. 153–287, here p. 158.
[20] Valkema Blouw, 'The First Printers', p. 349.
[21] For the years 1591 and 1592, thirty-six ordinances and forms published on the *Raadhuispers* have survived (see the USTC).
[22] *1588. Leeninge tot equippage* ([Leiden: Raadhuispers, 1588]), USTC 426741.

M. D. LXXXVIII.

Leeninge tot equippage.

Niclaes graft

Figure 3.3 *MD. LXXXVIII. Leeninge tot equippage* ([Leiden: Raadhuispers, 1588]). A certificate recognising financial contributions to the war effort, issued in 1588 by the magistrates of Leiden. The lender listed on this form, Nicolaes Graft, pledged fifteen guilders for the equipment of the Dutch navy.

mid-1580s they issued around seventy-five printed ordinances each year, often distributed throughout the city in 300 copies.[23] We only know of this remarkable output thanks to the preservation of the archive of Christophe Plantin, the most celebrated typographer of his age, responsible from the late 1570s for the publication of municipal ordinances.[24] Plantin usually kept a reference copy of his publications, including examples of jobbing printing for the town council.

The Leiden and Antwerp archives reveal a wealth of information on the relationship between the town councils and the printing press. They offer us insights into the emergence of municipal publications thanks to numerous surviving copies and archival references. Sadly, there are no other municipalities in the Low Countries for which such extensive sources can be consulted. But we can be sure that the changes taking place in Leiden and Antwerp were not unique. The Dutch Revolt drastically altered the geography of the book trade in the Low Countries, and with it the established features of state communication. During the final decades of the 16th century, we can trace the emergence of municipal publications for the first time in around twenty Dutch towns, together with the appointment of dedicated *stadsdrukkers* (city printers) who were responsible for the printing of ordinances, forms and other municipal orders. Before the Dutch Revolt there were almost no *stadsdrukkers* in the Northern Netherlands. Zwolle had appointed a *stadsdrukker* as early as 1544, but the practice was not common elsewhere.[25] By the end of the 16th century, however, virtually every Dutch town with a printer had an appointed *stadsdrukker*.

In the decade prior to the outbreak of the Dutch Revolt (1556–65), twelve towns in the Northern Netherlands had at least one printing press. Most were in Holland (Amsterdam, Delft, Haarlem and Leiden) and the eastern provinces of Overijssel and Gelderland (Deventer, Kampen, Zwolle and Nijmegen). Print shops were also to be found in the Frisian cities of Franeker and Leeuwarden; in Utrecht, the largest ecclesiastical centre of the Northern Netherlands; and, from 1563, in Vianen, an autonomous fiefdom of the Lord of Brederode, where the press published chiefly Protestant devotional works. Printing presses would disappear from Haarlem and Zwolle around 1565, but from the 1570s there was a rapid expansion of the press in the north. By 1609, at the start of the Twelve Years' Truce, there were twenty-nine towns in the Northern Netherlands with a printing press (see Tables 3.2 and 3.3), more than double the number half a century earlier.

[23] Andrew Pettegree and Malcolm Walsby, *Netherlandish Books: Books Published in the Low Countries and Dutch Books Printed Abroad before 1601*, 2 vols (Leiden: Brill, 2011), I, pp. 50–108; and Voet, *The Plantin Press*, I, pp. 108–50. See for some examples Museum Plantin-Moretus, Antwerp, Arch. 67, f. 57r and Arch. 21, f. 34v.

[24] The archive is preserved in the Museum Plantin-Moretus in Antwerp. See Voet, *Plantin Press*; and Dirk Imhof, *Jan Moretus and the Continuation of the Plantin Press: A Bibliography of the Works Published and Printed by Jan Moretus I in Antwerp (1589–1610)*, 2 vols (Leiden: Brill, 2014).

[25] HCOZ, Stadsbestuur Zwolle (0700), inv. 66, p. 451.

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Period	Town	Establishment of the first printing press	Province
1565–80	Steenwijk	1565–84	Overijssel
	Dordrecht	1571	Holland
	Rotterdam	1573	Holland
	Middelburg	1575	Zeeland
	Vlissingen	1576?; 1606	Zeeland
1581–90	Arnhem	1581–7; 1597	Gelderland
	Haarlem	1581	Holland
	Harlingen	1581	Friesland
	Gouda	1585	Holland
	Alkmaar	1587	Holland
	Woerden	1587	Holland
	Hoorn	1589	Holland
	Gorinchem	1590	Holland
1591–1600	The Hague	1591	Holland
	Groningen	1594	Groningen
	Amersfoort	1598	Utrecht
1601–9	Bergen op Zoom	1603	Generality Lands
	Enkhuizen	1603	Holland
	Zwolle	1605	Overijssel
	Schiedam	1606	Holland
	Zutphen	1606	Gelderland

Table 3.2 The diffusion of the printing press in the Northern Netherlands, 1565–1609.

Note: Some of the towns in this table had printing presses earlier in the 15th and 16th centuries (such as Gouda and Zwolle), but these had disappeared before the Dutch Revolt. The 'first' printing press here is therefore the first to appear after the often lengthy cessation of printing in the locality.

Source: USTC and Briels, *Zuidnederlandse boekdrukkers*.

The development of the publishing industry was especially pronounced in Holland, the most urbanised province of the north and (crucially) free from the scourge of warfare from 1576 onwards. Print shops were opened in six Holland towns in the 1580s, a decade when Habsburg forces recovered most of their dominions in the southern provinces of Flanders and Brabant. Amsterdam and Leiden developed into two of the European capitals of the book trade: Leiden had fourteen print shops by 1600, and Amsterdam had twenty. By 1650 Amsterdam had close to one hundred print shops. The total number of booksellers, printers and publishers active in the Northern Netherlands increased from around thirty in

Number of towns with at least one printing press			Number of active printers and publishers	
Province	**1565**	**1609**	**1565**	**1609**
Holland	4	14	10	86
Overijssel	3	3	6	4
Friesland	2	3	2	7
Utrecht	1	2	1	4
Gelderland	1	3	1	3
Groningen	0	1	0	2
Zeeland	0	2	0	7
Other	1	1	1	1
Total	**12**	**29**	**21**	**114**

Table 3.3 Development of the Dutch publishing industry, 1565–1609.

Source: USTC, Briels, *Zuidnederlandse boekdrukkers* and J. A. Gruys and C. de Wolf, *Thesaurus, 1473–1800: Nederlandse boekdrukkers en boekverkopers, met plaatsen en jaren van werkzaamheid* (Nieuwkoop: De Graaf, 1989).

the 1550s to at least 800 in the 1660s.[26] The importance of Southern Netherlandish immigrants should not be understated in this extraordinary transformation. Between 1570 and 1630, at least 168 southern booksellers and printers moved to the Dutch Republic, with most settling in Amsterdam, Leiden, Delft, Dordrecht, Haarlem and Rotterdam.[27] Although the Southern Netherlandish book trade recovered during the reign of Albert and Isabella (1598–1621), the centre of the Netherlandish book industry had permanently shifted from Antwerp, Louvain and Ghent to Amsterdam, Leiden and the other great cities of Holland.

The movement of book trade personnel and capital from the south to the north was critical to the publication of municipal ordinances in the Dutch Republic. *Stadsdrukkers* appointed in Leiden, Haarlem, Gouda, Enkhuizen, Franeker, Middelburg, Zwolle, Rotterdam, Alkmaar, Dordrecht and Woerden all came from printing centres in the Southern Netherlands.[28] In Haarlem, Arnhem, Enkhuizen and Gouda, the first printers to settle there from the south were immediately appointed as *stadsdrukkers* by the magistrates. Most were handsomely rewarded with pensions and privileges, a practice that was known elsewhere in Europe to attract skilled artisans who would be tied in an official

[26] De Vries and Van der Woude, *First Modern Economy*, pp. 315–16. See, more broadly, Pettegree and Der Weduwen, *Bookshop of the World*, ch. 1.
[27] Briels, *Zuidnederlandse boekdrukkers*, p. 17.
[28] Briels, *Zuidnederlandse boekdrukkers*, pp. 133–5; and Gustaaf Asaert, *1585. De val van Antwerpen en de uittocht van Vlamingen en Brabanders* (Tielt: Lannoo Uitgeverij, 2004), pp. 194–204.

function to the municipality.[29] Abraham van den Rade, appointed *stadsdrukker* by the magistrates of Leeuwarden, received an annual salary of fifty guilders, in addition to freedom from excise and militia duties.[30] The first Haarlem and Alkmaar *stadsdrukkers* received similar salaries and freedoms.[31] While an annual salary of forty or fifty guilders was certainly not enough to eke out a living, the freedom from excise was a very welcome privilege in an era when consumption duties represented a heavy burden on an urban household. At the same time, the *stadsdrukker* received payment for printing municipal orders alongside his salary, and he was also likely to receive commissions to supply the town council with paper, ink and books.

The appointment of *stadsdrukkers* quickly spread throughout the Dutch Republic, and the provision of an annual salary and freedom from excise or militia duty became the new norm. In 1591, as soon as Nijmegen had been conquered by the rebels, the new magistrates appointed a *stadsdrukker*, Aernt Cornelisz, to whom they granted free rent and full citizens' rights (which usually required payment of a substantial fee).[32] Jasper Tournay, appointed *stadsdrukker* of Gouda in 1608, did not initially receive an annual pension: in 1613 he complained to the magistrates that in his previous capacity as *stadsdrukker* of Enkhuizen he had received a pension of fifty guilders and freedom from militia duty.[33] He also noted that the *stadsdrukker* of nearby Schiedam received at least thirty guilders annually. By the start of the 17th century the presence of a local printer, tied to the municipal regents, was an essential accoutrement of political society. In more than twenty-five towns magistrates could rely on a local printer to produce broadsheets, forms and other ordinances. The *stadsdrukker* had become a ubiquitous feature of the urban landscape.[34]

It is worth reflecting upon the extent to which the early Dutch Republic was distinctive in the transformations of municipal state communication that took place in the late 16th century. In large cities such as Milan, Bologna, Lyon and Cologne, the municipal authorities made use of print much earlier in the 16th century than many Dutch magistrates, but they all did so irregularly, and only when exceptional circumstances demanded it.[35] These interventions often concerned fluctuations in

[29] In 1544, the first *stadsdrukker* of Zwolle had received an annual fee of twenty-five guilders and exemption from all excise duties in the city (HCOZ, Stadsbestuur Zwolle, inv. 66, p. 451). For 17th-century Scandinavia, see Arthur der Weduwen and Barnaby Cullen, 'A Nordic Press: The Development of Printing in Scandinavia and the Baltic States before 1700 in a European Perspective', *Mémoires du livre / Studies in Book Culture*, 13 (2022), 1–30.

[30] Briels, *Zuidnederlandse boekdrukkers*, p. 400.

[31] Briels, *Zuidnederlandse boekdrukkers*, p. 426; Alice van Diepen, 'Jacob de Meester (?–1612): een opmerkelijk drukker', *De zeventiende eeuw*, 6 (1990), 117–20.

[32] Paul Begheyn and Els Peters, *Gheprint te Nymeghen: Nijmeegse drukkers, uitgevers en boekverkopers, 1479–1794* (Nijmegen: Nijmeegs Museum, 1990), p. 32.

[33] Briels, *Zuidnederlandse boekdrukkers*, p. 469.

[34] See also Chapter 6.

[35] Rachel Midura, 'Policing in Print: Social Control in Spanish and Borromean Milan (1535–1584)',

bread prices, outbreaks of plague or announcements concerning markets. Many of the broadsheets issued by the city fathers of Cologne were directed at immigrants, or to audiences outside the city walls.[36] Other proclamations and announcements were directed to specific guilds, a practice that seems to have been distinctive to Cologne. During the 1560s and 1570s, the magistrates of Lyon and Cologne both began to make more regular use of printed broadsheets and pamphlets, a direct result of the uncertainty unleashed by war, economic upheaval and religious tension.[37] The same can be observed for Bologna, for which an impressively large corpus of printed ordinances survives: while several dozen printed ordinances are known for the city in the first half of the 16th century, close to three thousand appeared in the second half.[38]

Nicolas Simon and Sébastien Afonso have demonstrated that a process of increasing codification and publication of law also took place in the Southern Netherlands after the Dutch Revolt.[39] The towns of Arras, Ath, Cambrai, Lille, Namur, Saint-Omer, Tournai and Valenciennes all attracted their first printers in the period 1591–1610, with many offered enticements by the local authorities.[40] The Douai printer Charles Boscart ended up moving to Saint-Omer because the authorities there offered him one hundred guilders a year, in addition to an exemption from guard duty, free premises and no excise duty on wine and beer – but on the condition that he did not move on from the town for at least three years.[41]

in Lamal, Cumby and Helmers (eds), *Print and Power*, pp. 21–46; Jamie Cumby, 'Bread and Fairs: Broadsheet Printing for the Municipality of Lyon, 1497–1570', in Pettegree (ed.), *Broadsheets*, pp. 162–87; Gautier Mingous, 'Une diplomatie sanitaire: Information et communication municipale à Lyon en temps de peste à la fin du XVIe siècle', in Gautier Mingous and Aurélien Roulet (eds), *Gouverner les villes en temps de crise: Urgences militaires et sanitaires aux XVIe et XVIIe siècles* (Louvain-la-Neuve: Presses Universitaires de Louvain, 2019), pp. 141–55; Limbach, *Government Use of Print*, pp. 118–55.

[36] Limbach, *Government Use of Print*, p. 212.

[37] Gautier Mingous, 'On Printing and Decision-Making: The Management of Information by the City Powers of Lyon (ca. 1550–ca.1580)', in Lamal, Cumby and Helmers (eds), *Print and Power*, pp. 47–63, esp. pp. 58–60.

[38] Zita Zanardi, *Bononia manifesta: catalogo dei bandi, editti, costituzioni e provvedimenti diversi, stampati nel XVI secolo per Bologna e il suo territorio* (Florence: Olschki, 1996); Alberto Guenzi, 'La vita economica e sociale a Bologna attraverso le disposizioni delle autorità', in Pierangelo Bellettini et al. (eds), *Una città in piazza: comunicazione e vita quotidiana a Bologna tra Cinque e Seicento* (Bologna: Compositori, 2000), pp. 15–25.

[39] Nicolas Simon, 'Une culture d'État? Législation et prise de décision dans les Pays-Bas espagnols (1580–1610)', in Eric Bousmar, Philippe Desmette and Nicolas Simon (eds), *Légiférer, gouverner et juger: Mélanges d'histoire du droit et des institutions (9e–21e siècles) offerts à Jean-Marie Cauchies* (Brussels: Presses de l'Université Saint-Louis, 2016), pp. 299–313; Sébastien Afonso, 'L'imprimé official: enjeu et objet de rivalités entre imprimeurs dans les villes du sud des Pays-Bas mériodonaux aux XVIIe siècle', in Renaud Adam, Ann Kelders, Claude Sorgeloos and David J. Shaw (eds), *Urban Networks and the Printing Trade in Early Modern Europe* (London: CERL and Royal Library of Belgium, 2010), pp. 53–76; Sébastien Afonso, *Imprimeurs, société et réseaux dans les villes de langue romane des Pays-Bas méridionaux (1580–ca1677)* (PhD Thesis: Free University Brussels, 2015).

[40] Afonso, *Imprimeurs, société et réseaux*, pp. 13, 29–33.

[41] Afonso, 'L'imprimé official', p. 57.

It seems clear that in the final decades of the 16th century, municipal government throughout the Low Countries, France, Germany and Italy was becoming more communicative, especially in times of crises. Yet the authorities in the Dutch Republic were, in the quantity of their proclamations and their embrace of print, pushing developments to new heights. This can be ascribed to the strong civic culture at the heart of the Dutch Republic, the rapid rise of the Northern Netherlands as the leading print centre of Europe, as well as the sheer uncertainty (some might say illegitimacy) of the new republican political regime that emerged from the Revolt. By the end of the 17th century, eighty-one Dutch municipalities had used print to communicate with their citizens: these included towns as small as one or two thousand inhabitants. The range of municipal authorities issuing ordinances and forms in print was highly unusual when compared with cognate regions elsewhere in Europe.[42]

What is noteworthy in a European perspective is that the development of the book trade, increasing literacy and the widespread availability of print did not of their own accord induce a transformation in the culture of political information: it was conflict, especially political tension and unrest, which was the greatest stimulant of this development. This is a process that we can observe throughout Europe during the 16th and 17th centuries, with the emergence of Luther's Reformation, the eruption of the French Religious Wars, the Thirty Years' War and the English Civil Wars.[43] Each of these conflicts gave rise to new standards and modes of communication, while the printed output – pamphlets, broadsheets, newspapers, petitions – in turn played a role in shaping political developments. While the Dutch Revolt did not mark the first time that the authorities in the Low Countries had used print in their rituals of state communication, the conflict did revolutionise the way it was used, and in what quantities. It had profound implications for the manner in which Dutch state communication took place for the better part of two centuries.

The turning of Willem Silvius

The year 1576 represented a turning point for the Dutch Revolt. After mutinying Spanish troops ransacked several Netherlandish towns for want of pay, the provinces of the Low Countries came together at the States General to resolve the crisis. The States General decided to make peace with the two provinces in open revolt, Holland and Zeeland. Their accord led to the Pacification of Ghent, a peace

[42] See Chapter 6.

[43] Andrew Pettegree, *Brand Luther: 1517, Printing and the Making of the Reformation* (New York: Penguin, 2015); Andrew Pettegree, *The Invention of News: How the World Came to Know about Itself* (London: Yale University Press, 2014), pp. 139–63, 208–29; Peacey, *Print and Public Politics*. More broadly, see Munck, *Conflict and Enlightenment*, esp. ch. 2.

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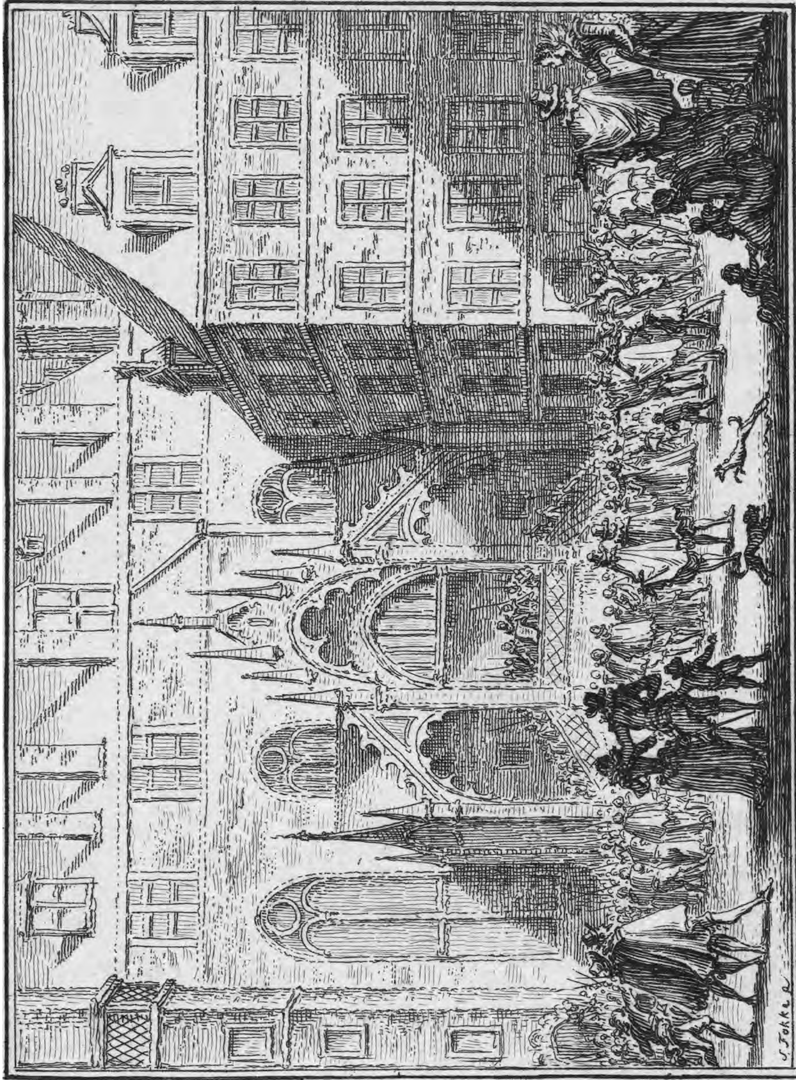

Figure 3.4 Simon Fokke, *Afkondiging van de Pacificatie van Gent, 1576*, *c.* 1782–4. A late 18th-century depiction of the proclamation of the Pacification of Ghent, which does not do justice to the raucous crowds present in Ghent on 8 November 1576.

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treaty and alliance between the provinces that united them in resolve to eject all Spanish troops from the Low Countries.

Studying the proclamation of the Pacification of Ghent makes clear how fraught this process was, and the important role that print had come to play in the communication of the peace treaty.[44] In some towns, such as Enkhuizen, the magistrates announced the ratification days before it actually took place. Formally, the Pacification was to be proclaimed simultaneously in Ghent and Brussels on 8 November 1576, and then throughout the rest of the Low Countries (Figure 3.4). Yet on 8 November, the treaty was read out in full only in Brussels, because the Calvinist crowd present at the proclamation in Ghent so intimidated the dignitaries that they did not dare read out the entire text, which specified that outside Holland and Zeeland, no measures against Catholic worship could be taken. Instead, the dignitaries only read out brief summaries of two of the twenty-five articles and ended their oration with the short announcement: 'and the rest will shortly be presented to everyone in print'.[45]

The Council of State in Brussels only decided to issue the Pacification in print on 13 November, when a two-year privilege was granted to Michel van Hamont to publish the text in Dutch and French. Before copies were ready, handwritten versions of the Pacification were already circulating throughout the Low Countries, with an alternative and decisively pro-Calvinist version emanating from Ghent. Proclamations took place haphazardly throughout the Netherlands in November, December and January: some towns decided to wait for the printed version before they proclaimed the news, while in Mons, the authorities announced the treaty twice (and on both occasions treated themselves to a festive meal in the town hall afterwards).[46] Georges de Lalaing, the Stadtholder of Groningen, carried thirty copies of the printed treaty to the city on 27 December, after which the text was proclaimed in church on 30 December.[47]

Michel van Hamont would ultimately produce seven editions of the treaty, while sixteen other editions were produced by printers elsewhere in the Low Countries in 1576, 1577 and 1578 (in clear contravention of his exclusive privilege).[48] The controversy surrounding the Pacification, and the difficulties that the States General encountered in controlling the narrative of the treaty, helps explain why, over the course of the later 1570s and 1580s, state communication was transformed at the regional and federal level in the rebel provinces. It was not

[44] P. van Peteghem and J. Machiels, 'De Pacificatie van Gent: triomf van de herwonnen eenheid? Kanttekeningen naar aanleiding van de publikatie en de verspreiding van de pacificatietekst', in *Opstand en pacificatie in de Lage* Landen (Ghent: V.Z.W. De Pacifikatie van Gent, 1976), pp. 99–135.

[45] Van Peteghem and Machiels, 'De Pacificatie van Gent', p. 101.

[46] Van Peteghem and Machiels, 'De Pacificatie van Gent', pp. 107–8.

[47] Van Peteghem and Machiels, 'De Pacificatie van Gent', p. 115.

[48] USTC 452750, 443631, 411067, 411065, 452521, 411066, 13132 (Van Hamont); 415265 (Den Bosch), 421900 (Kampen), 428591 (Leeuwarden), 5293 (Douai), 421722, 1527764, 421720, 428552, 421719, 421718 (Delft), 421724 (Dordrecht), 407797 (Leiden), 403265, 407802, 13584, 13585 (Antwerp).

surprising that several months after the Pacification of Ghent, in the early spring of 1577, the States of Holland were actively looking for a printer who could fulfil a new responsibility in the province. This individual was to serve contractually as an employee of the States, and he was to guarantee to 'print and publish' all 'histories, books, placards, ordinances and other material, in whatever language as the aforementioned States desire', whenever he was instructed to do so.[49]

While the revolt in the Netherlands began in the 1560s as a series of uprisings motivated by the preservation of traditional civic privileges and religious freedoms, the ferocity of the conflict steered the rebels onto a radical political trajectory.[50] During the 1570s the States of Holland developed a pronounced sense of their own authority.[51] The administration and political framework of the States was hurriedly reformed. Twelve new towns gained the right to have a seat in the States, transforming a body that had previously represented the interests of only six principal cities. The States began to meet regularly and appointed committees for the daily business of the province; a provincial admiralty was established; a university was founded; and an elaborate system of finance was introduced to fund the defences of the province and assist the rebel cause elsewhere.[52] When the leader of the rebellion and Stadtholder of Holland, Prince William of Orange, departed for Brussels in 1577, the States became in practice the undisputed sovereign authority in the province. This explains further why the States desired a printer: they were motivated by the uncertainty of their own legitimacy. Before the Revolt, the States functioned as an advisory body, called upon when the crown requested funding for its campaigns. Now that the States found themselves in new political waters, there emerged an acute concern to realise their claims to power. By employing their own printer, the States made a determined step to place themselves at the centre of the governmental process.

By May 1577, the eye of the regents had fallen on an experienced and respected businessman. They opened official negotiations with Willem Silvius, one of the most prominent publishers in Antwerp, the greatest centre of Northern European typography.[53] Silvius responded eagerly to the interest of the States, as his business

[49] Maarten Schneider, *De Voorgeschiedenis van de 'Algemeene Langsdrukkerij'* (The Hague: Algemeene Landsdrukkerij, 1939), p. 2; and Paul Hoftijzer, 'Het Leidse wonder: Boekhandel en uitgeverij in Leiden rond 1600', *Werkwinkel*, 4 (2009), 7–20, here 12–13.

[50] Van Gelderen, *The Political Thought of the Dutch Revolt*.

[51] James D. Tracy, *The Founding of the Dutch Republic: War, Finance, and Politics in Holland, 1572–1588* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Joop Koopmans, *De Staten van Holland en de Opstand: De ontwikkeling van hun functies en organisatie in de periode 1544–1588* (The Hague: Stichting Hollandse Historische Reeks, 1990); Fockema Andreae, *Nederlandse Staat*, pp. 42–50; K. W. Swart, *William of Orange and the Revolt of the Netherlands, 1572–1584* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), especially pp. 48–9.

[52] Tracy, *Founding of the Dutch Republic*, pp. 101–27. See also Parker, *Dutch Revolt*, pp. 144–6.

[53] See Paul Valkema Blouw, 'The Leiden "Afdrucksel": A Type Specimen of the Press of Willem Silvius in Its Last Days (1582)', in Valkema Blouw, *Dutch Typography*, pp. 33–52.

had suffered from the conflict. He had run into trouble during the iconoclastic storm in 1566, and he was briefly detained on suspicion of participating in the image-breaking and fined 2,000 guilders.[54] In November 1576, Antwerp had been subjected to the 'Spanish Fury', when thousands of Habsburg mutineers looted the city; Silvius had to pay off the assailants to prevent them ransacking his home.

On 8 June 1577, Silvius was officially appointed as the first printer of the States of Holland and of its newly founded University of Leiden.[55] He was granted an annual pension of 300 guilders (roughly equivalent in this period to the salary of a schoolmaster and marginally less than that of a Reformed minister), as well as 2,400 guilders for the transportation of his business and the purchase of new typographical material. These were extremely lavish conditions, which Silvius gratefully accepted; he would be bringing with him from Antwerp a large establishment including six children and six apprentices, a considerable strain on his diminished resources.[56] The generous contract provided a means to start anew.

To the States of Holland, the appointment was a symbolic success. Since 1560, Silvius had printed in Antwerp ordinances issued by King Philip II and his government in Brussels.[57] Silvius had displayed on his works the title 'Imprimeur du Roy'. This did not imply a contractual agreement, but it was a public recognition of his favour with the court: Silvius was to serve as a role model for other publishers in the book trade and could be relied on to print the most notable laws of the government in the Low Countries.[58] The States of Holland had rejected the authority of the government in Brussels, and now they had poached its printer too. At first, Silvius hedged his bets: on some of his publications of 1579 he continued to print the title 'Imprimeur du Roy' alongside his title as States printer. In 1580, still a year before the States formally renounced the authority of Philip II, the States of Holland demanded that he never use the royal title again.[59]

Other provinces would follow Holland's lead in appointing a *Statendrukker* (printer to the States) (see Table 3.4). The individuals appointed by the provincial States were offered carefully measured inducements, often more than the *stadsdrukkers*, because the States wished to appoint reliable and experienced printers. Gillis van den Rade was appointed *Statendrukker* of Friesland and the

[54] Paul Valkema Blouw, 'Willem Silvius' Remarkable Start, 1559–1562', in Valkema Blouw, *Dutch Typography*, pp. 415–54, here p. 417.
[55] Schneider, *Voorgeschiedenis*, p. 3.
[56] Schneider, *Voorgeschiedenis*, p. 9.
[57] See for example *Ordonnances, statuts, stil et maniere de proceder pour le grand conseil a Malines* (Antwerp: Willem Silvius, 1562), USTC 54197. From 1560 onwards, Silvius printed at least seventy-one ordinances issued by the King of Spain or for the magistrates of Antwerp. See also Herman de la Fontaine Verwey, 'Silvius en Plantijn', *Het Boek*, 26 (1940–42), 111–25; and Herman de la Fontaine Verwey, 'Hoe werd Silvius Koninklijk Drukker?', *Het Boek*, 26 (1940–42), 222.
[58] Schneider, *Voorgeschiedenis*, p. 7.
[59] Fontaine Verwey, 'Silvius en Plantijn', 121.

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Authority	**Appointed printer**	**Year of appointment**[1]	**Location**
States of Holland	Willem Silvius	1577	Leiden
States of Gelderland	Willem Jansz van Campen	1581	Arnhem
States General	Christophe Plantin	1582[2]	Leiden/Antwerp
States of Zeeland	Richard Schilders	1583	Middelburg
States of Friesland	Gilles van den Rade	1585	Franeker
States of Utrecht	Hendrick van Borculo	1586	Utrecht
States of Overijssel[3]	Hendrick Thomas, Jan Evertsz Cloppenburgh, Zacharias Heyns	1592, 1596, 1605	Kampen, Deventer, Zwolle
States of Groningen	Alle Peters	1596	Groningen
Lordship of Drenthe	Martin Hubelink	1603	Groningen

Table 3.4 The appointment of the first *Statendrukkers* in the Dutch Republic, 1577–1605.

Notes:

1. The Overijssel and Drenthe printers were not officially appointed – or, if they were, then records of their appointment have disappeared. One can still treat them as *Statendrukkers* given that from the date listed in the table they were permanently engaged in the publication of ordinances and other publications for the States listed.
2. Although he was formally appointed in 1582, the States General had already commissioned Plantin to print ordinances and forms for them since 1578. Between 1578 and 1582 they also frequently asked Willem and Charles Silvius to do the same.
3. The States of Overijssel had three printers, one in each of the three main cities of the province, because the States assembly rotated between the three cities. Their appointments took place in different years – hence the three separate years in the appointment column.

Sources: Schneider, *Voorgeschiedenis*; Evers, 'Gegevens betreffende Utrechtsche Staten-, Stads- en Akademiedrukkers'; Briels, *Zuidnederlandse boekdrukkers*; P. Brood, *Drentse Plakkatenlijst, 1593–1840* (Bussum: Kemink, 1975); G. T. Hartong, 'Overijsselse boekdrukkers en boekverkopers in de zeventiende eeuw', *Overijsselse historische bijdragen*, 103 (1988), 60–83; and Harry van der Laan, *Het Groninger Boekbedrijf: Drukkers, uitgevers en boekhandelaren in Groningen tot het eind van de negentiende eeuw* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 2005).

newly established University of Franeker (1585), for which he received an annual salary of 200 guilders, on condition that he would print anything ordered by the States or the university, and that he would donate a copy of every book he printed to both institutions.[60] The States of Zeeland handsomely rewarded the Flemish printer Richard Schilders for moving to Middelburg from London (where he had settled in exile).[61]

[60] Briels, *Zuidnederlandse boekdrukkers*, pp. 396–7.
[61] Briels, *Zuidnederlandse boekdrukkers*, p. 436.

The States of Utrecht, who wished to appoint Salomon de Roy after the death of Hendrick van Borculo in 1586, had to bargain hard.[62] The States of Gelderland had recently lost their printer, Willem Jansz van Campen, and wished to entice De Roy to move to Arnhem from Utrecht, offering him free rent and freedom from excise. The States of Utrecht had to promise De Roy a one-off payment of 150 guilders, to be paid in two instalments, to stay in Utrecht. By 1597 the States of Gelderland had found a different printer, Jan Jansz, who received a stipend of 125 guilders a year.[63]

The authorities were generous, but not gullible. In 1593, an official from the Court of Gelderland approached the Nijmegen *stadsdrukker* Aernt Cornelisz to ask how much he would charge to print 200 copies of a broadsheet ordinance. Cornelisz asked for fourteen guilders and promised to deliver the consignment within the week.[64] The official responded that a Deventer printer, in nearby Overijssel, would charge only six guilders. He then explained that because of the court's wish to support local industry (and presumably the convenience of employing a local printer), they would still have their ordinances printed by Cornelisz, but at a price no higher than nine or ten guilders per 200 copies.

Cornelisz had committed a grave error: he had risked alienating his best employer. Most printers cultivated close and mutually beneficial relationships with their local authorities. They had little incentive to cheat them with high rates because over time the authorities could make them rich with a constant stream of orders.[65] Albrecht Hendricksz, printer of the States of Holland from 1582 and of the States General from 1590 onwards, was valued so greatly by the local regents that he was appointed an alderman of The Hague in 1598, a post usually reserved for the upper echelons of the urban elite.[66] Two years later Hendricksz became a burgomaster, the first printer in the Dutch Republic to reach this distinguished position, arguably the highest one could attain in an urban community.

Sovereignty and its price

When Willem Silvius died in 1580, only a few years after his appointment as printer of the States of Holland, his son Charles succeeded him. Charles's prominent position as States printer quickly attracted an extraordinary responsibility. In 1581, he was tasked by the States General, in open revolt against the Habsburg

[62] G. A. Evers, 'Gegevens betreffende Utrechtsche Staten-, Stads- en Akademiedrukkers', *Het grafisch museum*, 1 (1930), 30–7, here 32–3.

[63] Willem J. op 't Hof, 'Unique Information on a Seventeenth-Century Printing House in Arnhem: The Dedication by the Arnhem Printer Jacob van Biesen (d. 1677) in the 1669 Edition of *Fonteyne des levens* by Arthur Hildersham (1563–1632) and Its Implications for the History of Books', *Quaerendo*, 43 (2013), 214–37, here 232–4.

[64] Begheyn and Peters, *Gheprint te Nymeghen*, p. 33.

[65] See Chapter 6.

[66] Schneider, *Voorgeschiedenis*, p. 36.

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state since 1577, to publish the *Plakkaat van Verlatinghe* (also known as the Act of Abjuration), the resolution which rejected King Philip II of Spain as sovereign ruler of the Low Countries.[67] Revolts were nothing new in the political framework of early modern Europe, but the legal rejection of a sovereign ruler was a remarkable development and an unprecedented political decision. The arguments listed in the Act of Abjuration for the rejection of Philip II had been honed for several decades by Calvinist and rebel pamphleteers, inspired by a volatile mix of classical republican condemnations of tyranny, evocations of mediaeval Netherlandish privileges and Calvinist rhetoric on obedience and revolt. The Act of Abjuration presented a reiteration of political views 'which had become commonplace in the political literature of the Revolt'.[68] The King of Spain had neglected his duties as sovereign ruler, imposed a tyrannical constitution that trampled upon ancient liberties and privileges, and repeatedly ignored the just and considered demands of his subjects.

The intellectual formation and defence of Dutch independence was a gradual development, crafted by polemicists and statesmen during the 1560s and 1570s.[69] The provincial assemblies of the region granted themselves increasing measures of political autonomy, and by the 1580s, the rejection of the sovereign ruler of the Low Countries became the natural conclusion of this incremental progression. But this was an organic process fashioned in the council chambers of the political elite: for many Netherlanders and foreign observers, the Act of Abjuration remained a ground-breaking turning point. The arguments of the States rested on dubious foundations, as they abandoned their sovereign in defence of historical liberties which were his to bestow. The radical resolution required immediate and widespread public communication on the part of the rebellious States. Charles Silvius played a prominent role in this media campaign. He printed at least three editions of the *Plakkaat van verlatinghe*, in addition to twelve editions of William of Orange's *Apologie*, a passionate response to the ban issued against him by Philip II, published in the same year (Figure 3.5).[70] The successor of Silvius, the Delft printer Albrecht Hendricksz, likewise played a crucial part in the defence of the Act of Abjuration and the contentions with the Earl of Leicester, leader of the

[67] *Placcaert byden welcken men verclaert den coninck van Spaegnien vervallen vande overheyt ende heerschappije van dese voors. Nederlanden* (Leiden: Charles Silvius, 1581), USTC 421963. See also USTC 426412 and 422000.
[68] Van Gelderen, *Political Thought*, p. 150.
[69] Van Gelderen, *Political Thought*, esp. pp. 110–60.
[70] For Silvius's editions of the *Apologie* see USTC 4122, 4123, 4301–3, 73894, 74265, 92517, 422003–5 and 430544. Both texts went through multiple reprints published by other printers in the Low Countries. See Liesbeth Geevers, 'The King Strikes Back: The Spanish Diplomatic Campaign to Undermine the International Status of the Dutch Republic, 1581–1609', in Raymond Kubben and Paul Brood (eds), *The Act of Abjuration: Inspired and Inspirational* (Nijmegen: Wolf Legal, 2011), pp. 81–95, who argues that the Act of Abjuration had little contemporary impact abroad because it was deliberately ignored by the Spanish crown.

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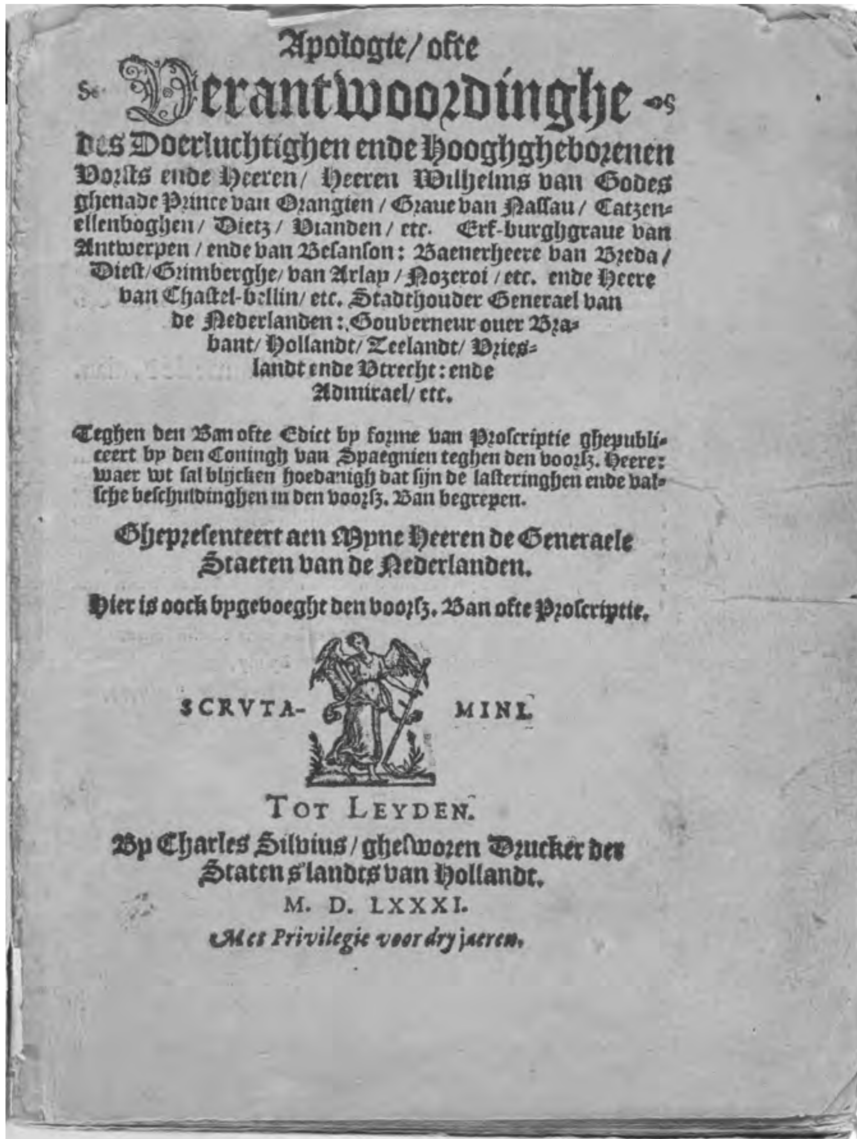

Apologie/ ofte
Verantwoordinghe
des Doorluchtighen ende Hooghgheborenen Vorsts ende Heeren/ Heeren Wilhelms van Godes ghenade Prince van Orangien / Grave van Nassau / Catzenellenboghen / Dietz / Vianden / etc. Erf-burghgrave van Antwerpen / ende van Besanson: Baenerheere van Breda / Diest/ Grimberghe/ van Arlay / Nozeroi / etc. ende Heere van Chastel-bellin/ etc. Stadthouder Generael van de Nederlanden: Gouverneur over Brabant/ Hollandt/ Zeelandt/ Vrieslandt ende Utrecht: ende Admirael/ etc.

Teghen den Ban ofte Edict by forme van Proscriptie ghepubliceert by den Coningh van Spaegnien teghen den voorsz. Heere: waer wt sal blijcken hoedanigh dat sijn de lasteringhen ende valsche beschuldinghen in den voorsz. Ban begrepen.

Ghepresenteert aen Mijne Heeren de Generaele Staeten van de Nederlanden.

Hier is oock bygevoeght den voorsz. Ban ofte Proscriptie.

SCRVTA- MINI.

TOT LEYDEN.
By Charles Silvius / ghesworen Drucker der Staten s'landts van Hollandt.
M. D. LXXXI.
Met Privilegie voor dry jaeren.

Figure 3.5 *Apologie, ofte verantwoordinghe des heeren Wilhelms Prince van Orangien* (Leiden: Charles Silvius, 1581). An edition of the *Apologie* of William of Orange printed by Charles Silvius.

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English expeditionary force despatched to bolster Dutch forces in the fight against Spain.[71]

Henceforth the regional assemblies of the Northern Netherlands were sovereign. In 1588, the States General emphasised the point by moving permanently to The Hague, where they occupied the former residence of the Count of Holland at the Binnenhof.[72] The seven United Provinces of the Dutch Republic – Gelderland, Holland, Zeeland, Utrecht, Friesland, Overijssel and Groningen – had permanent delegations at the States General to coordinate national defence and financial policy, but each province was the master of its own internal affairs. Questions of the extent and limits of provincial authority continued to bedevil the new state throughout the 17th century: the 1579 Union of Utrecht, the only charter resembling a constitution of the union, had stated paradoxically that the provinces would act together as a single state while maintaining the liberties and freedoms of each individual province. In practice, the States of Holland, by far the most populous and richest province, came to dominate the deliberations of the States General, and the others were more often than not pressured to follow Holland's lead. This was evident from the inception of the union, especially with the introduction of a new financial structure to fund the defence of the rebel provinces.[73] In the early 1570s, under the pressure of the Spanish assault, the States of Holland had developed a new system of taxation. Traditionally cities had been left to organise their own municipal excise rates and the goods for which they were charged, but the States of Holland resolved to organise the collection of the excise centrally. From the end of 1574 the cities of Holland were required to deliver two-thirds of their excise revenue to a provincial pool, which would be used to pay for the defence of the province and later the liberation of other provinces.[74]

In 1583, this centralised system led to the introduction of the *gemene middelen* (general means). The *gemene middelen* were a series of provincial excise duties on staple goods and commodities such as grain, butter, beer, cheese, meat, fish, fruit, wine, vinegar, salt, soap, peat, cattle, horses, textiles and for the use of the scales in a weighing house.[75] The *gemene middelen* were used exclusively for the common defence of the state. Rates and quotas were determined each year after an evaluation of the necessary size of the army and prospective military expenditures: this budget was aptly named the *Staat van Oorloge* (state of war). Holland and the States General cajoled the other provinces into adopting the same system in order to ensure their contributions for the defence budget were raised systematically.

[71] On Hendricksz's appointment see Schneider, *Voorgeschiedenis*, pp. 24–5. On the defence of Dutch independence under Leicester see Van Gelderen, *Political Thought*, pp. 199–205.
[72] Lauret, *Regentenwerk*, p. 54.
[73] A good overview of taxation in the Dutch Republic is provided in De Vries and Van der Woude, *First Modern Economy*, pp. 91–112.
[74] Tracy, *Founding of the Dutch Republic*, p. 103.
[75] De Vries and Van der Woude, *First Modern Economy*, p. 102.

In this they were successful, and most of the provinces had embraced the *gemene middelen* within a decade.[76]

In addition to the *gemene middelen*, the provinces frequently used one-off wealth and property taxes to raise additional funds. At other times they imposed forced loans. The inhabitants of the Dutch Republic became the most heavily taxed people in early modern Europe. 'It is bewildering', the Duke of Alba wrote to King Philip II in February 1573, 'that Your Majesty has so much trouble in getting financial support from your subjects, while the Hollanders and Zeelanders are ready to sacrifice their lives and property for a rebel like Orange.'[77]

The Duke of Alba identified one of the contradictions at the heart of the Dutch Republic: to thwart the imposition of his new centralised system of taxation (the tenth penny), the Dutch developed another, more onerous tax system. By the end of the 1570s, Holland and Zeeland jointly agreed to raise 210,000 guilders a month through the imposition of new excise duties, an extraordinary figure when one considers that in 1572 the annual sum raised in Holland was only 202,000 guilders.[78] Overall, it is estimated that the real per capita tax burden in Holland increased 400 per cent between 1572 and 1588, an increase in which the *gemene middelen* played a significant part.[79]

By the 1630s, the *gemene middelen* accounted for two-thirds of Holland's tax revenue.[80] The excise duties were revolutionary in their efficiency: in England, the fiscal health of the Dutch state was often ascribed to the imposition of these excise duties.[81] The system was expanded steadily throughout the 17th century. In 1600, most provinces raised duties on ten, fifteen or twenty commodities. Already in 1624, the States of Zeeland were raising excise duties on luxury items such as pepper, cloves, nutmeg, cinnamon, silk, indigo and elephant tusks, an indication of the riches brought in by Zeeland traders.[82] Sir William Temple famously quipped in his *Observations upon the United Provinces* (1673) that the excise duties in the Netherlands were so 'great, and so general, that I have heard it observed at Amsterdam, that when in a tavern, a certain dish of fish is eaten with the usual sauce, above thirty several excises are paid, for what is necessary to

[76] De Vries and Van der Woude, *First Modern Economy*, p.102. The only exception was Friesland, which did not adopt the *gemene middelen* until the late 1630s, when it was forced to do so after military occupation by the States General. See Hotso Spanninga, *Gulden Vrijheid? Politieke cultuur en staatsvorming in Friesland, 1600–1640* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2012), pp. 412–17.

[77] Swart, *William of Orange*, p. 50.

[78] Tracy, *Founding of the Dutch Republic*, pp. 103–5.

[79] De Vries and Van der Woude, *First Modern Economy*, p. 95.

[80] De Vries and Van der Woude, *First Modern Economy*, p. 103.

[81] D'Maris Coffman, *Excise Taxation and the Origins of Public Debt* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), pp. 29–30, 145, 159; Wantje Fritschy, 'The Efficiency of Taxation in Holland', in Oscar Gelderblom (ed.), *The Political Economy of the Dutch Republic* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016), pp. 55–84.

[82] *Men laet een yegelijck weten dat de Staten van Zeelandt sullen doen verpachten eenen impost van eene* gulden *op elcke tonne harinck ende gesonten [sic] visch* ([Middelburg]: widow and heirs Symon Moulert, [1624]), USTC 1122350.

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that small service'.[83] By the early 18th century, the States of Holland raised excise duties on fifty-two commodities, including duties on the ownership of yachts and the employment of servants.[84]

The reform of the tax system in the Dutch Republic prompted an administrative transformation. The introduction of the *gemene middelen* required a coordinated system of communication to explain, justify and organise the taxation. Each province was divided into multiple zones where the *gemene middelen* was to be collected. Within each zone (usually a major town and its surrounding countryside), a tax farmer would bid for the right to extract one of the excise taxes, with most rights lasting twelve months, others valid only for six months. In Holland, there were seventeen excise districts, and the sale would take place on the same day in each district, so that no tax farmer could own the same farm in multiple districts. In Overijssel, farms were sold twice a year on five different days for twenty-eight districts.[85] In Schiedam, in recognition of their efforts in the organisation of the excise duty sales, the secretary and messengers of the town were given special financial remuneration of up to twenty guilders per session.[86]

After winning the bid on a farm, the tax farmer was required to pay a series of substantial instalments to the authorities, who were saved the trouble of raising the tax themselves. But to manage this process the States had to devise a new publicity strategy. For the raising of each excise duty, the States published new sets of tax forms every six or twelve months, usually short quarto pamphlets of four, eight or twelve pages (Figure 3.6). Every year they also issued printed announcements of forthcoming tax sales, changes in the rates of excise and general instructions for the tax farmers (Figures 3.7 and 3.8). Municipal officers were required to proclaim the dates and places of forthcoming sales of tax farms and distribute the ordinances and forms at the tax farm sale. After the sale, the tax farmer's identity would also be announced by proclamation, and the tax farming form would be exhibited in all 'public places where it is common to affix posters'.[87]

These ephemeral publications were practical texts for use by administrators, tax farmers and citizens. They offered a breakdown of the respective taxes, but they also detailed the restrictions of the tax farmer's privileges; citizens could protect themselves from fraudulent claims by keeping a copy of the excise form. In 1633, the States of Overijssel issued a broadsheet that contained the text of the oaths to

[83] Temple, *Observations*, p. 129.
[84] For some examples, see SMHG, Gouda Oud Archief, inv. 5034.
[85] *Ridderschap ende steden van Over-Yssel, willen verpachten de generale middelen van consumptien: voor ses toecomende maenden, inghaende den eersten Aprilis 1618* (s.l.: s.n., [1618]), USTC 1122561.
[86] GAS, Archief van het stadsbestuur tot 1795 (291), inv. 646, ff. 51–3.
[87] This is a common instruction, found on many tax forms. See for example *Vande paerden. Ordonnantie volghende den welcken in den lande van Hollandt ende West-Vrieslandt geheven ende geinnet sal worden den generalen impost op de Paerden* [(The Hague: Hillebrant van Wouw, 1619]), USTC 1516117, f. A2r.

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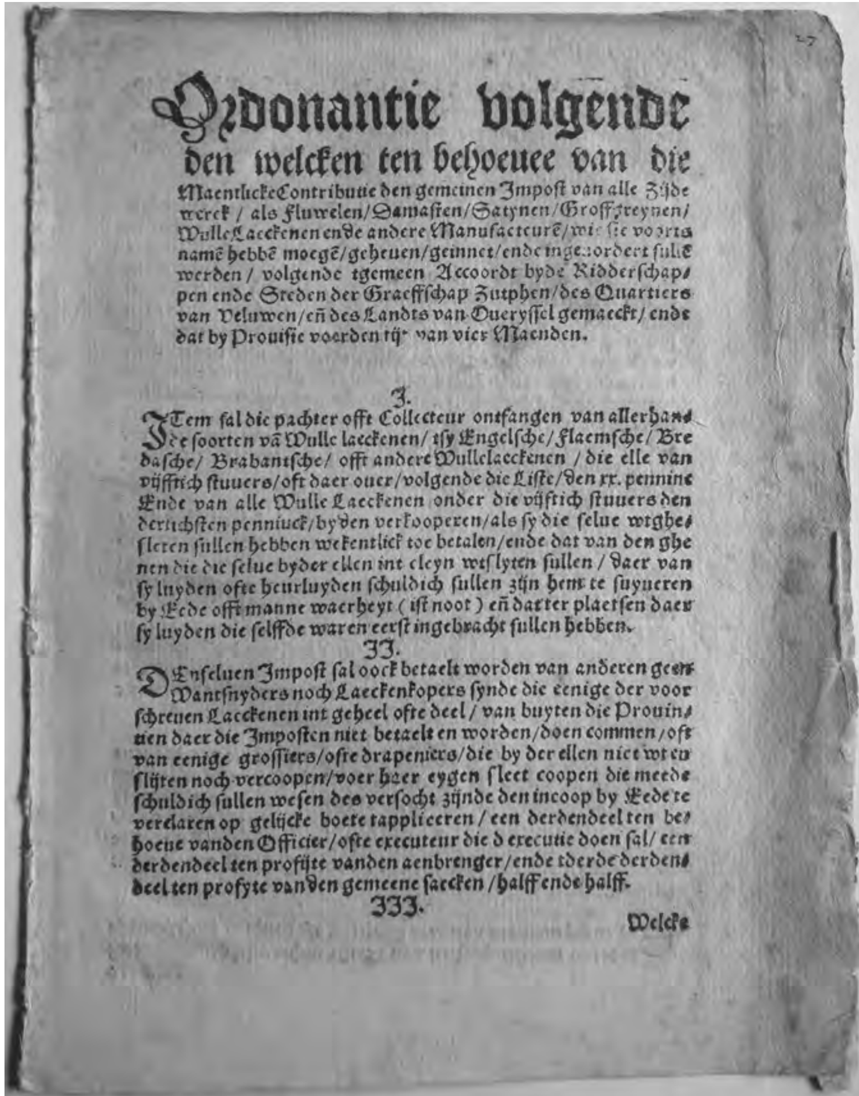

Ordonantie volgende den welcken ten behoeuee van die Maentlicke Contributie den gemeinen Impost van alle Zijde werck / als Fluwelen/Damasten/Satynen/Grofgreynen/ Wulle Laeckenen ende andere Manufacteurē/wie sie voorts namē hebbē moegē/geheuen/geinnet/ende ingevordert sullē werden / volgende tgemeen Accoordt byde Ridderschappen ende Steden der Graeffschap Zutphen/des Quartiers van Veluwen/eñ des Landts van Oueryssel gemaeckt/ ende dat by Prouisie voerden tijt van vier Maenden.

I.

ITem sal die pachter offt Collecteur ontfangen van allerhande soorten vā Wulle laeckenen/ tsy Engelsche/Flaemsche/ Bredasche/ Brabantsche/ offt andere Wullelaeckenen / die elle van vijfftich stuuers/oft daer ouer/volgende die Liste/den xx. penninc Ende van alle Wulle Laeckenen onder die vijftich stuuers den dertichsten penninck/byden verkooperen/als sy die selue wtghesleten sullen hebben wekentlick toe betalen/ende dat van den ghenen die die selue byder ellen int cleyn wtslyten sullen / daer van sy luyden ofte heurluyden schuldich sullen zijn hem te suyueren by Eede offt manne waerheyt (ist noot) eñ datter plaetsen daer sy luyden die selffde waren eerst ingebracht sullen hebben.

II.

DEnseluen Impost sal oock betaelt worden van anderen geen Wantsnyders noch Laeckenkopers synde die eenige der voorschreuen Laeckenen int geheel ofte deel / van buyten die Prouintien daer die Imposten niet betaelt en worden/doen commen/oft van eenige grossiers/ofte drapeniers/die by der ellen niet wt en slijten noch vercoopen/voer haer eygen sleet coopen die meede schuldich sullen wesen des versocht zijnde den incoop by Eede te verclaren op gelijcke boete tappliceeren / een derdendeel ten behoeue vanden Officier/ofte executeur die d executie doen sal/ een derdendeel ten profijte vanden aenbrenger/ende tderde derdendeel ten profyte van den gemeene saecken /halff ende halff.

III.

Welcke

Figure 3.6 *Ordonantie volgende den welcken ten behoevee [sic] van die maentlicke contributie den gemeinen impost van alle zijde werck, als fluwelen ende andere manufacteure[n] ingeuordert sulle[n] werden, volgende tgemeen accoordt der graeffschap Zutphen* (Arnhem: Willem Jansz van Campen, 1581). An early and rather rudimentary example of an excise duty form printed by the provincial States of the Dutch Republic. This form was published by the States of Gelderland in 1581 laying out arrangements for the collection of the duty on textiles. It is one of the earliest works printed in the town of Arnhem.

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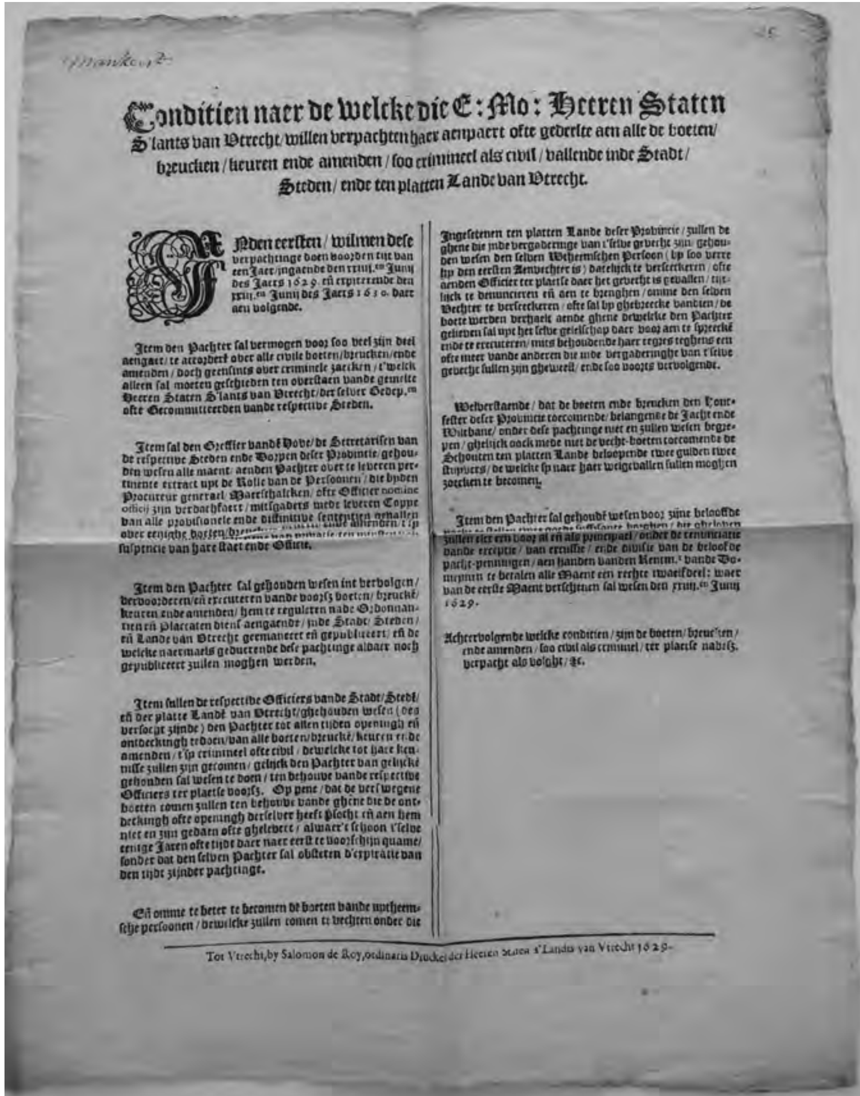
Figure 3.7 *Lijste, nae die welcke die generale middelen van consumptien beraemt sijn* ([Deventer: Jan Evertsz II Cloppenburgh, 1598]). A broadsheet issued by the States of Overijssel in 1598 announcing the excise rates of the latest round of *gemene middelen* taxation.



Conditien naer de welcke die E: Mo: Heeren Staten S'lants van Vtrecht/ willen verpachten haer aenpaert ofte gedeelte aen alle de boeten/ breucken/ keuren ende amenden/ soo crimineel als civil/ vallende inde Stadt/ Steden/ ende ten platten Lande van Vtrecht.

Inden eersten/ wilmen dese verpachtinge doen voorden tijt van een Jaer/ ingaende den xxiiij.en Junij des Jaers 1629. en expirerende den xxiij.en Junij des Jaers 1630. daer aen volgende.

Item den Pachter sal vermogen voor soo veel zijn deel aengaet/ te accorderen over alle civile boeten/ breucken/ ende amenden/ doch geensints over criminele zaecken/ t'welck alleen sal moeten geschieden ten overstaen vande gemelte Heeren Staten S'lants van Vtrecht/ der selver Gedep.en ofte Gecommitteerden vande respective Steden.

Item sal den Greffier vandē Hove/ de Secretarisen van de respective Steden ende Dorpen deser Provintie/ gehouden wesen alle maent/ aenden Pachter over te leveren pertinente extract uyt de Rolle van de Persoonen/ die byden Procureur generael/ Maerschalcken/ ofte Officier nomine officij zijn verdachvaert/ mitsgaders mede leveren Coppe van alle provisionele ende diffinitive sententien gehallen [illegible] ende amenden/ t'sy over eenighe boeten/ breucken [illegible] suspencie van hare staet ende Officie.

Item den Pachter sal gehouden wesen int vervolgen/ vervoorderen/ en executeren vande voorsz boeten/ breuckē/ keuren ende amenden/ hem te reguleren nade Ordonnantien en Placcaten diens aengaende/ inde Stadt/ Steden/ en Lande van Vtrecht geemaneert en gepubliceert/ en de welcke naermaels gedurende dese pachtinge aldaer noch gepubliceert zullen moghen werden.

Item sullen de respective Officiers vande Stadt/ Stedē/ en der platte Landē van Vtrecht/ ghehouden wesen (des versocht zijnde) den Pachter tot allen tijden openingh en ontdeckingh te doen/ van alle boeten/ breuckē/ keuren ende amenden/ t'sy crimineel ofte civil/ dewelcke tot hare kennisse zullen zijn gecomen/ gelijck den Pachter van gelijcke gehouden sal wesen te doen/ ten behouve vande respective Officiers ter plaetse voorsz. Op pene/ dat de verswegene boeten comen zullen ten behouve vande ghene die de ontdeckingh ofte openingh derselver heeft ghedaen en aen hem niet en zijn gedaen ofte ghelevert/ alwaer't schoon t'selve eenige Jaren ofte tijdt daer naer eerst te voorschijn quame/ sonder dat den selven Pachter sal obsteren d'expiratie van den tijdt zijnder pachtinge.

En omme te beter te becomen de boeten vande uytheemsche persoonen/ dewelcke zullen comen te vechten onder die Ingesetenen ten platten Lande deser Provintie/ zullen de ghene die inde vergaderinge van t'selve gevecht zijn gehouden wesen den selven Wtheemschen Persoon (by soo verre hy den eersten Aenvechter is) datelijck te verseeckeren/ ofte aenden Officier ter plaetse daer het gevecht is gevallen/ tijtlijck te denuncieren en aen te brenghen/ omme den selven Vechter te verseeckeren/ ofte sal by ghebreecke vandien/ de boete werden verhaelt aende ghene dewelcke den Pachter gelieven sal uyt het selve geselschap daer voor aen te spreeckē ende te executeren/ mits behoudende haer regres teghens een ofte meer vande anderen die inde vergaderinghe van t'selve gevecht sullen zijn gheweest/ ende soo voorts vervolgende.

Welverstaende/ dat de boeten ende breucken den Houtvester deser Provintie toecomende/ belangende de Jacht ende Wiltbane/ onder dese pachtinge niet en zullen wesen begrepen/ ghelijck oock mede niet de vecht-boeten toecomende de Schouten ten platten Lande beloopende twee gulden twee stuyvers/ de welcke sy naer haer welgevallen sullen moghen soecken te becomen.

Item den Pachter sal gehoudē wesen voor zijne beloofde [illegible] zullen elck een voor al en als principael/ onder de renunciatie vande exceptie/ van excussie/ ende divisie van de beloofde pacht-penningen/ aen handen vanden Rentm.r vande Domeynen te betalen alle Maent een rechte twaelfdeel: waer van de eerste Maent verschijnen sal wesen den xxiij.en Junij 1629.

Achtervolgende welcke conditien/ zijn de boeten/ breucken/ ende amenden/ soo civil als crimineel/ ter plaetse nadersz. verpacht als volght/ &c.

Tot Vtrecht, by Salomon de Roy, ordinaris Drucker der Heeren Staten s'Landts van Vtrecht 1629.

Figure 3.8 *Conditien naer de welcke die E: Mo: Heeren Staten van Utrecht, willen verpachten haer aenpaert aen alle de boeten* (Utrecht: Salomon de Roy, 1629). A broadsheet issued by the States of Utrecht in 1629 to announce one of the forthcoming tax farm sales. The blank space on the second column was to be filled in by hand with the details of the locations of the sale.

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be sworn by their tax farmers, and the various locations and dates when they were expected to swear in public that they would not defraud the state or individual citizens.[88] The authorities were aware that they had handed over significant power to their tax farmers and were therefore determined to hold them to account publicly. This partially explains why the Dutch were content to be taxed so heavily, but we might add one more reason. Those who live through times of anarchy and revolt are often happy to pay extra if it ensures their safety and the prosperity of their business. An active and involved government that could guarantee this was worth the cost.

The printed excise forms were soon a pervasive part of Dutch political culture. Their production required a mass of printed paper: at least 18,000 editions must have been printed in the Dutch Republic in the 17th century.[89] No more than 2,000 of these can be found today in archives and libraries in the Netherlands, and usually this is only a single surviving copy of a print run that must have run to several hundred copies.[90] The reason for this poor rate of survival is not hard to fathom. Few authorities archived copies of these forms, while tax farmers and artisans would receive a new version every six or twelve months; the redundant forms would be disposed of, or used as wrappings, toilet paper or fuel.

These administrative publications also functioned as tools of political publicity. A 1584 States of Holland ordinance which raised an extraordinary tax on real estate in the province opened with a lengthy exposition of the imminent dangers of Spanish tyranny:

> As it is daily and increasingly found that the Spaniards and their adherents, being enemies of God's word, these lands and their good inhabitants, labour through false, violent and murderous means to rid these lands and their good inhabitants of God's word, and to subject them to unbearable, hostile, barbarous and murderous government: and in resistance of these same enemies and their violent intentions, as well as the increasing ferocity of their assaults, and the scandalous desertion of some cities and members of these united provinces, the current taxes and excise are deemed insufficient: as such the States of Holland have decided after due deliberation and consideration, that it is necessary for the defence of the aforementioned lands, assistance to her neighbours and allies, and resistance to the common enemies, to raise an extraordinary contribution.[91]

[88] *De ghedeputeerden vande Staten van Over-Yssel, doen te weten; also ridderschap en[de] steden, geordonneert hebben dat oock de pachters vande middelen eedt sullen doen. Volght het formulier vanden eedt* ([Deventer: Sebastiaen Wermbouts, 1633]), USTC 1544147,

[89] Pettegree and Der Weduwen, 'What Was Published in the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic?', pp. 19, 22.

[90] In Zeeland, the print run of the various editions of the *gemene middelen* was usually between 100 and 300 copies. See Thijs Weststrate, '"Drucker ordinaris der Heeren Staten van Zeelandt": Het bedrijf van Symon Moulert en erfgenamen (1597–1646) als Statendrukkers (1618–1646)', *Jaarboek voor Nederlandse boekgeschiedenis*, 11 (2004), 51–66, here 62.

[91] *Placcaet gheemaneert aenghaende de contributien in Hollandt over d'onroerende goederen* (Delft: Albrecht Hendricksz, 1584), USTC 422238, f. [a]2. See also USTC 422239 and 415677.

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Tax forms issued by the States of Holland for the *gemene middelen* on butter, beer, weighing house fees, salt, meat and other goods and commodities contained similar prefaces, arguing that the ruination of the Dutch Republic was only prevented by the collective duty of the citizenry to pay their excise duties.[92] Such political rhetoric permeated the publications of the provincial States of the early Dutch Republic. These printed documents played a substantial role in the normalisation of the language of political independence and the formation of a new Dutch political identity (Figure 3.9). From the early 1580s onwards, the rebel States were responsible for the majority of political publications in the Dutch Republic. Alongside the print apparatus dedicated to the *gemene middelen* and other taxes, the provincial assemblies set to rewriting the political constitution of their states, publishing updated constitutional handbooks and ordinances on public order, marriage, religious practice, the book trade, the legal system, inheritance, hunting and coinage.

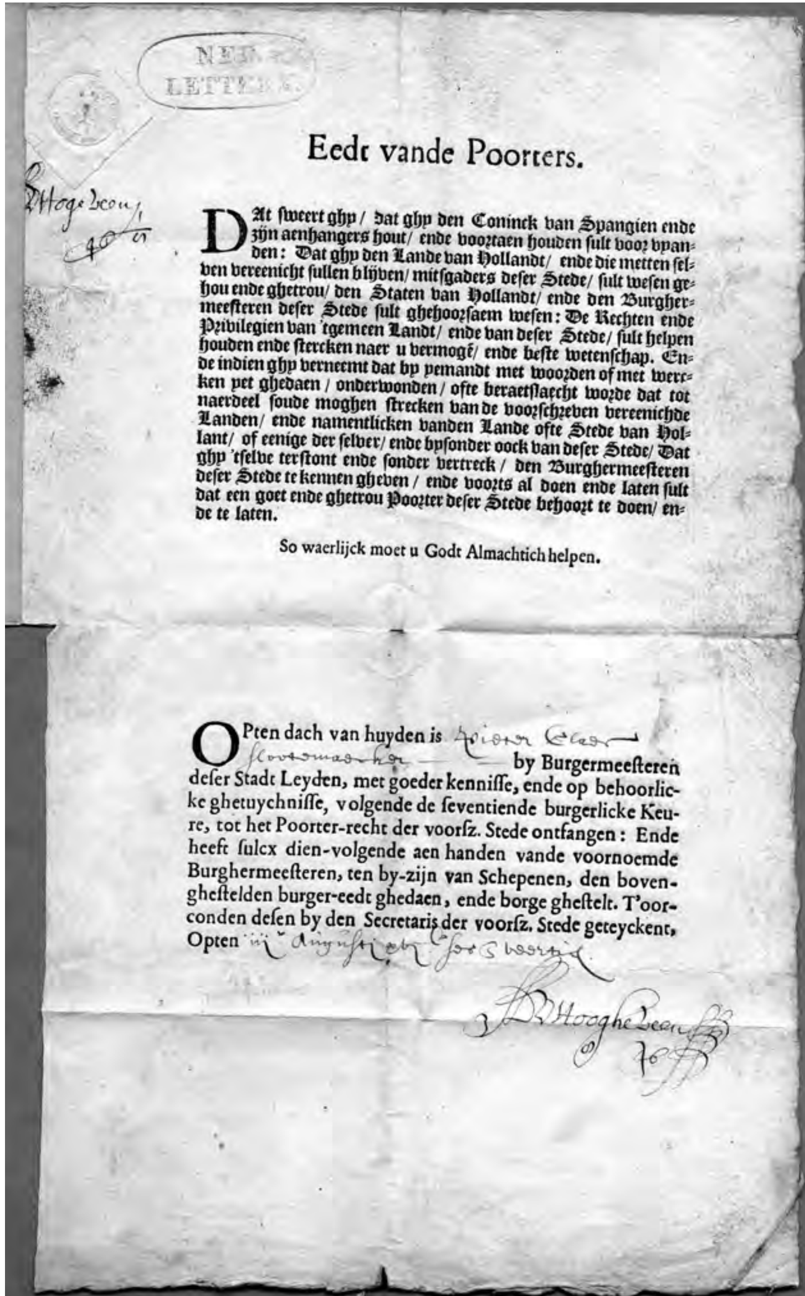
Many of these placards bore an uncanny resemblance to Habsburg publications from several decades earlier: they had usurped the crown's authority even to the extent of imitating its typographical conventions.[93] It was impossible to redraft the entire constitution of the Low Countries, but the States of the Dutch Republic had claimed sovereignty for themselves and fulfilled this claim by a frenzy of legislation. In the process they created a whole new industry of official print, sustaining employment for a substantial number of artisans and placing print at the centre of the political process. At a time when the Dutch print industry was beginning its triumphant progress to the heart of the European book trade, the easy profits generated by working for the States or municipal councils created a working capital to undertake commercial projects: religious pamphlets, schoolbooks and almanacs, all reliable easy sellers. It was this protean trade, serving the national cause and the domestic market, that would constitute the solid foundations of the extraordinary flowering of Dutch publishing throughout the century.[94]

Disseminating the law

It was essential that the States communicate their new laws effectively. Most printed ordinances include a formulaic instruction for their dissemination, commonly found at the end of the text. States General ordinances usually end with the statement:

> We therefore order and request our dear and cherished States, Stadtholders, provincial committees and delegated States of the provinces of Gelderland and

[92] A good example is *Ordonnantie vanden Impost op Boter* ([The Hague: s.n., 1624]), USTC 1435671.
[93] A point also made by Deen, *Publiek debat*, p. 168.
[94] Pettegree and Der Weduwen, *Bookshop of the World*, chs 5–8 and 16. See also Chapter 6.



Eedt vande Poorters.

DAt sweert ghy / dat ghy den Coninck van Spangien ende zijn aenhangers hout / ende voortaen houden sult voor vyanden: Dat ghy den Lande van Hollandt / ende die metten selven vereenicht sullen blijven / mitsgaders deser Stede / sult wesen ghou ende ghetrou / den Staten van Hollandt / ende den Burghermeesteren deser Stede sult ghehoorsaem wesen: De Rechten ende Privilegien van 'tgemeen Landt / ende van deser Stede / sult helpen houden ende stercken naer u vermogẽ / ende beste wetenschap. Ende indien ghy verneemt dat by yemandt met woorden of met wercken yet ghedaen / onderwonden / ofte beraetslaecht worde dat tot naerdeel soude moghen strecken van de voorschreven vereenichde Landen / ende namentlicken vanden Lande ofte Stede van Hollant / of eenige der selver / ende bysonder oock van deser Stede / Dat ghy 'tselve terstont ende sonder vertreck / den Burghermeesteren deser Stede te kennen gheven / ende voorts al doen ende laten sult dat een goet ende ghetrou Poorter deser Stede behoort te doen / ende te laten.

So waerlijck moet u Godt Almachtich helpen.

OPten dach van huyden is ... by Burgermeesteren deser Stadt Leyden, met goeder kennisse, ende op behoorlicke ghetuychnisse, volgende de seventiende burgerlicke Keure, tot het Poorter-recht der voorsz. Stede ontfangen: Ende heeft sulcx dien-volgende aen handen vande voornoemde Burghermeesteren, ten by-zijn van Schepenen, den bovengheftelden burger-eedt ghedaen, ende borge ghestelt. T'oorconden desen by den Secretaris der voorsz. Stede geteyckent, Opten ...

Figure 3.9 *Eedt van de Poorters* ([Leiden: s.n., 1646]). Administrative and polemical print: this Leiden *Portereed*, a citizen's oath (1646), opens with the statement that the citizen shall keep the King of Spain and his adherents as his enemies.

> the County of Zutphen, Holland and West-Friesland, Zeeland, Utrecht, Friesland, Overijssel, the city of Groningen and Ommelanden, and all other justices and officials, to announce, proclaim and publish this ordinance everywhere where it is common to proclaim and publish [ordinances].[95]

Similar language had been in use for the best part of a century in the Netherlands: in the 1530s, the Stadtholder of Friesland had also instructed local authorities to proclaim ordinances 'where publications are commonly done'.[96] Many other States placards from the 17th century also use the phrase that the ordinance is to be 'affixed where it is common to do so' after it has been proclaimed.[97] By 1616, the bailiffs of the States of Holland were paid eight stuivers each for the affixing of such placards.[98] The bailiffs of the States of Groningen and of the Council of Ommelanden were similarly required to 'affix and paste up [placards] where they are commonly affixed'.[99] It is noticeable that the inclusion of 'affixing' in the formal statement of dissemination became more frequent during the course of the 17th century, and by the second half of the century it was ubiquitous in the legal language of ordinances. This change in wording indicates the transformation brought about by print: with many more copies of edicts in circulation, the public posting of such placards had become routine.

Legal phrasing indicates that the authorities were determined that their publications were widely disseminated, but we must delve into provincial and municipal archives to establish how this process was implemented.[100] Archives in Alkmaar, Amsterdam, Den Bosch, Haarlem, Gouda, Leeuwarden, Leiden, Zwolle, Kampen, Deventer, Utrecht and Middelburg contain folders or stacks of States General and provincial States ordinances despatched to local officers for proclamation. These archives are invariably incomplete. What remains in these folders is usually limited to unused copies of broadsheet ordinances, though some are clearly file copies with relevant annotations. In the archive in Deventer, a small collection of 17th-century States General placards are annotated with the date of proclamation, which reveals that the magistrates usually proclaimed them 'after bell ringing' between ten days and twenty days after the ordinances were issued.[101] In Amsterdam, proclamation of States General placards similarly took place

95 See for example *Placcaet. De Staten Generael ordonneren ende statueren by desen, dat gheene in zee sullen moghen begheven, op eenighe commissien van uytheemsche princen, potentaten, of republijcken, in wat manieren dat het zy, sonder voorgaende permissie* ([The Hague: s.n., 1611]), USTC 1500010.
96 TL, Stadsbestuur Stavoren, inv. 6.
97 See for example *Placaet. De Staten Generael, verstaen dat hier te lande dagelicx overgebracht worden uyt Brabandt, seeckere silvere penningen, genaemt ducatons, waer tegens al inden jare 1619. een placaet geemaneert is gheweest* (The Hague: widow and heirs Hillebrant van Wouw, 1634), USTC 1528033.
98 *Copie. Lijste van 't salaris van de deurwaerders van de comptoire van de gemeene middelen in 't quartier van der Goude* ([The Hague: s.n., 1616]), USTC 1531723.
99 GAG, Ommelander Archief, inv. 1027, f. 72v, and inv. 750, f. 89r.
100 See also Chapter 5.
101 HCOD, Schepenen en raad van stad Deventer, periode Republiek, inv. 27a.

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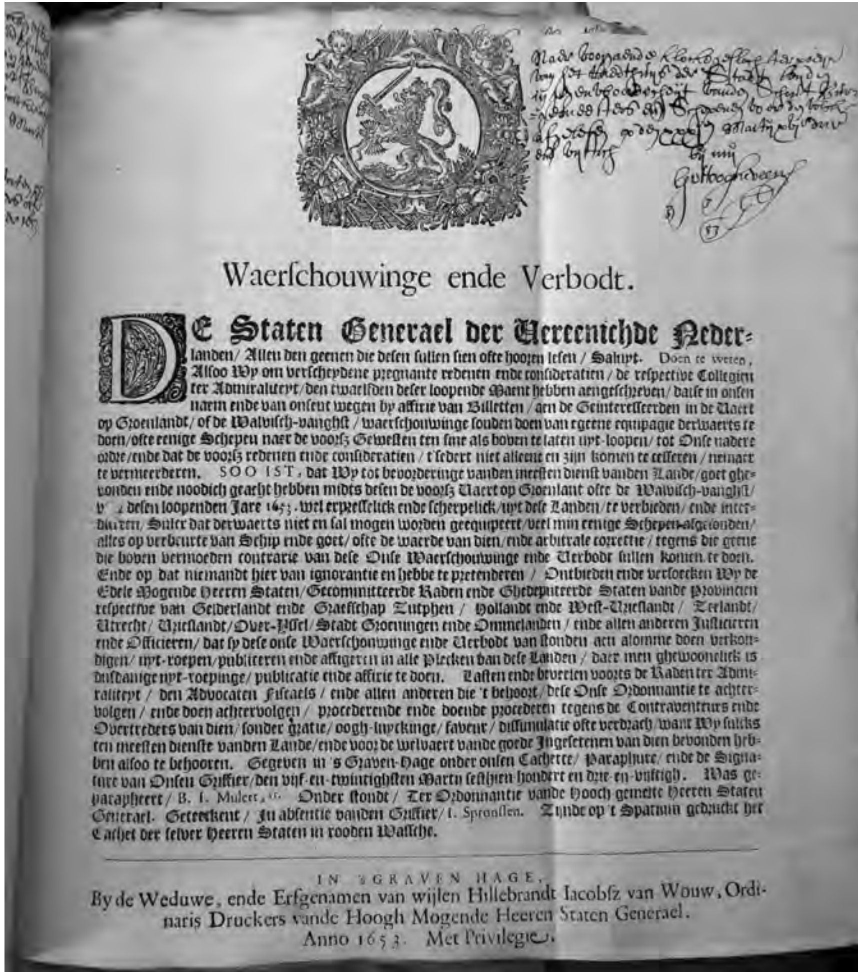

Waerschouwinge ende Verbodt.

DE Staten Generael der Vereenichde Nederlanden/ Allen den geenen die desen sullen sien ofte hooren lesen / Saluyt. Doen te weten, Alsoo Wy om verscheydene pregnante redenen ende consideratien / de respective Collegien ter Admiraliteyt/den twaelfden deser loopende Maent hebben aengeschreven/ datse in onsen naem ende van onsent wegen by affixie van Billetten / aen de Geinteresseerden in de Vaert op Groenlandt/ of de Walvisch-vanghst / waerschouwinge souden doen van egeene equipagie derwaerts te doen/ofte eenige Schepen naer de voorsz Gewesten ten fine als boven te laten uyt-loopen/ tot Onse nadere ordre/ende dat de voorsz redenen ende consideratien / t'sedert niet alleene en zijn komen te cesseren / neinaer te vermeerderen. SOO IST, dat Wy tot bevorderinge vanden meesten dienst vanden Lande/goet ghevonden ende noodich geacht hebben midts desen de voorsz Vaert op Groenlant ofte de Walvisch-vanghst/ [illegible] desen loopenden Jare 1653. wel expresselick ende scherpelick/uyt dese Landen/ te verbieden/ ende interdiceren/ Sulcx dat derwaerts niet en sal mogen worden geequipeert/veel min eenige Schepen-afgesonden/ alles op verbeurte van Schip ende goet/ ofte de waerde van dien/ende arbitrale correctie / tegens die geene die boven vermoeden contrarie van dese Onse Waerschouwinge ende Verbodt sullen komen te doen. Ende op dat niemandt hier van ignorantie en hebbe te pretenderen / Ontbieden ende versoecken Wy de Edele Mogende Heeren Staten/Gecommitteerde Raden ende Ghedeputeerde Staten vande Provincien respective van Gelderlandt ende Graefschap Zutphen / Hollandt ende West-Vrieslandt / Zeelandt/ Utrecht/ Vrieslandt/Over-Yssel/Stadt Groeningen ende Ommelanden / ende allen anderen Justicieren ende Officieren/ dat sy dese onse Waerschouwinge ende Verbodt van stonden aen alomme doen verkondigen/ uyt-roepen/publiceren ende affigeren in alle Plecken van dese Landen / daer men ghewoonelick is dusdanige uyt-roepinge/ publicatie ende affixie te doen. Lasten ende bevelen voorts de Raden ter Admiraliteyt / den Advocaten Fiscaels / ende allen anderen die 't behoort/ dese Onse Ordonnantie te achtervolgen / ende doen achtervolgen / procederende ende doende procederen tegens de Contraventeurs ende Overtreders van dien/ sonder gratie/ oogh-luyckinge/ faveur / dissimulatie ofte verdrach/want Wy sulcks ten meesten dienste vanden Lande/ende voor de welvaert vande goede Ingesetenen van dien bevonden hebben alsoo te behooren. Gegeven in 's Graven-Hage onder onsen Cachette/ Paraphure/ ende de Signature van Onsen Griffier/den vijf-en-twintighsten Martii sesthien-hondert en drie-en-vijftigh. Was geparapheert/ B. I. Mulert, vt. Onder stondt/ Ter Ordonnantie vande Hooch-gemelte Heeren Staten Generael. Geteeckent/ In absentie vanden Griffier/ I. Spronssen. Zijnde op 't Spatium gedruckt het Cachet der selver Heeren Staten in rooden Wassche.

IN 'SGRAVEN HAGE,
By de Weduwe, ende Erfgenamen van wijlen Hillebrandt Iacobsz van Wouw, Ordinaris Druckers vande Hoogh Mogende Heeren Staten Generael.
Anno 1653. Met Privilegie.

Figure 3.10 *Waerschouwinge ende verbodt. De Staten Generael, doen te weten, alsoo wy de collegien der Admiraliteyt hebben aengeschreven* (The Hague: widow and heirs of Hillebrant van Wouw, 1653). An example of a surviving States General broadsheet (1653) with attestation of proclamation by the secretary of Leiden on the top right corner. The ordinance was issued in The Hague on 25 March and proclaimed in Leiden six days later.

around two weeks after they were issued.[102] In Leiden, it could often be faster: Figure 3.10 depicts a 1653 States General broadsheet restricting the whaling trade during the First Anglo-Dutch War that contains an annotation by the secretary of Leiden that it was 'read before the people from the balustrade of the town hall after bell-ringing', only six days after the ordinance was issued in The Hague.

[102] SAA, Archief van de Burgemeesters: publicaties van de Staten-Generaal en van de Staten van Holland en West-Friesland, inv. 2–9.

Unfortunately, few jurisdictions systematically archived all ordinances sent to them by the States General or provincial States. In their handwritten instructions accompanying placards, the States tend to refer to 'various copies' attached to the letter; most recipients would receive anywhere between two and twenty copies.[103] The provincial States took charge of the dissemination of all ordinances, including those of the States General, the Stadtholder and the provincial court. In contrast to England, where the recipients of placards would pay for them, it seems that the provincial States were responsible in the Dutch Republic for the costs of sending ordinances.[104] Identical letters and batches of placards were sent out to the magistracies of all towns and bailiffs of rural districts in the province. This must have been at least a fortnightly occurrence: the most complete archival holdings demonstrate that the magistrates of Leeuwarden and Gouda would receive at least thirty consignments of placards each year.[105]

Sometimes the authorities kept notes of the arrangements made to distribute official publications throughout the province.[106] The archive of the States of Utrecht contains several manuscript documents from the 1580s and 1590s that reveal where printed copies of ordinances were despatched for proclamation and affixing.[107] In this period, placards were sent to at least thirty towns and villages in the province (Figure 3.11). This is unlikely to have constituted the full range of destinations in Utrecht (the east of the province is particularly underrepresented in the attestations), but it does demonstrate that the placards of the States General and the provincial States were regularly read out and affixed in some of the smallest communities in the country.

In many rural communities, the authorities of the Dutch Republic also made use of the services of Reformed ministers. In cities and towns one could be assured of a sizeable audience to attend proclamations, but in the countryside this was unlikely. Only on Sundays, at church, could the authorities expect that a substantial audience would gather. Ministers, accomplished orators by training, could be relied upon to proclaim the law eloquently.[108] In the Lordship of Drenthe, the most rural territory of the Dutch Republic, the regents instructed that

> [i]n the churches of this lordship . . . the preachers will ensure that their flock stay in church until the service has ended, and that after grace all publications concerning

[103] SAA, Archief van de Burgemeesters: publicaties van de Staten-Generaal en van de Staten van Holland en West-Friesland, inv. 2–9.
[104] Kyle, 'Monarch and Marketplace', 783.
[105] HCL, Archief van de stad Leeuwarden, 1426–1811, inv. 258; SMHG, Gouda Oud Archief, inv. 3163–5.
[106] EL, Stadsarchief II, 1574–1816, inv. 2982; ZAM, Staten van Zeeland en Gecommitteerde Raden, inv. 1580.1; SAA, Archief van de Burgemeesters: publicaties van de Staten-Generaal en van de Staten van Holland en West-Friesland, inv. 2–14, 16–22; NHAH, Collectie van landspublicaties, 1612–1815.
[107] HUA, Staten van Utrecht, 1581–1810, inv. 323-1 to 323-5.
[108] Joris van Eijnatten, 'Theologus eruditus, theologus modestus: The Early Modern Pastor as Communication Worker', *Dutch Review of Church History*, 83 (2003), 309–18.

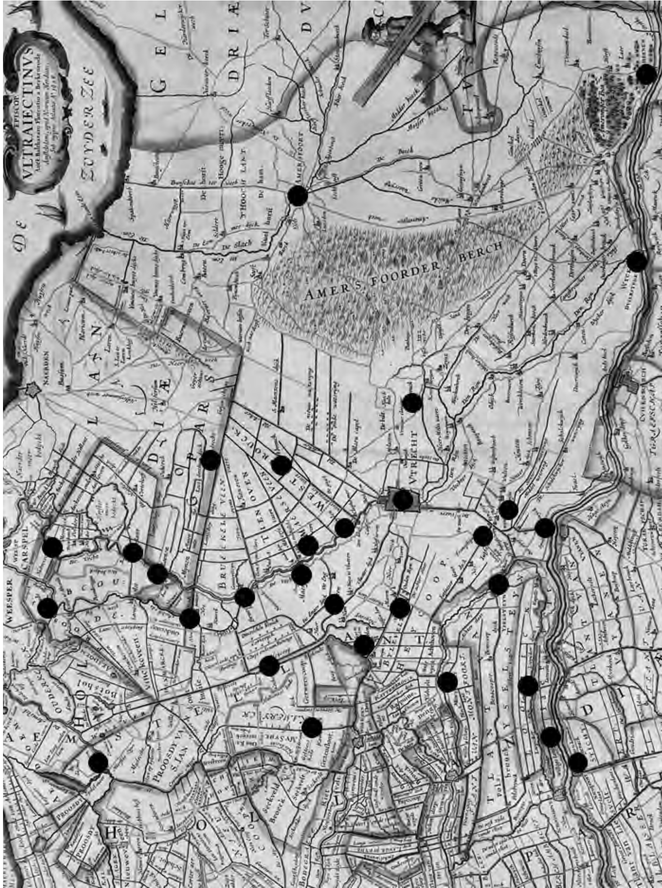

Figure 3.11 Balthasar Florisz van Berckenrode, *Episcop. Ultrajectinus* (Amsterdam: Henricus Hondius, 1628). Map of the province of Utrecht: the towns and villages highlighted are Abcoude, Jutphaas, Oud-Zuilen, Zuilen, Maarssen, Breukelen, Vleuten, Oudenrijn, Papendorp, Westbroek, Loenen, Ter Aa, Uithoorn, Vreeland, Oostbroek, Loosdrecht, Montfoort, Utrecht, Wijk bij Duurstede, Amersfoort, Rhenen, Lopik, Kockengen, Nigtevecht, Langerak, Willige Langerak, Kamerik, Harmelen, IJsselstein and Vreeswijk.

> tax and other worldly matters will be read in church: and all preachers are hereby ordered . . . to read clearly, distinctly and in their entirety all placards, regulations, resolutions, ordinances, official letters, affixed notations, &c., so that the intentions of the government may be better known and understood.[109]

The archive of the States of Groningen includes some placards returned to the authorities annotated by preachers in rural parishes. An ordinance of 19 December 1628 contains the manuscript note that 'this placard was published in the church at Bedum on three successive Sundays. 13 February 1629. Godefridus Hoisingius, Ecclesiastes in Bedu Attestor.'[110] One Groningen minister in Doezum was particularly diligent with his attestations and returned twenty-five ordinances to the States between 1629 and 1637, each of which he had proclaimed three times in his church.[111] The reading of banns of marriage would also have taken place in church three times, so the practice of proclaiming secular and ecclesiastical ordinances on three successive weeks was influenced by established procedure.

The authorities sometimes targeted the distribution of an ordinance to a specific place or audience (Figure 3.12). A States General placard of 9 August 1622 which forbade the sale of victuals and other goods to the army of the King of Spain instructed that the placard was to 'be announced all over the borders of the United Netherlands, and to be affixed and pasted in print at all prominent places throughout the countryside, even in the most isolated locations.'[112] In 1674, a States of Holland ordinance introducing an excise duty on taverns instructed all tavern owners that they would receive 'a printed copy of this present ordinance, to be pasted up in their establishments, so that everyone may know, according to which they will have to regulate themselves.'[113] Placards against itinerant booksellers published by the States of Holland were to be distributed in taverns, on barges and on other vessels.[114] A States of Overijssel placard of 5 April 1666 regulating schools in the province noted that each schoolmaster in the province would be handed a copy and would have the ordinance read out to him by a bailiff.[115] On other occasions the authorities would ask officials to proclaim ordinances several times: on 27 December 1579, the magistrates of The Hague proclaimed a placard from the

[109] H. J. Prakke, *Kerkgang om nieuws: De Kerkespraak: praejournalische nieuwsvoorziening ten plattelande* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1955), pp. 18–19.
[110] GAG, Staten van Stad en Lande, 1594–1798, inv. 475.
[111] Prakke, *Kerkgang om nieuws*, p. 19.
[112] *De hog: mog: heeren Staten Generael, hebben verboden by desen allen persoonen, gheenderhande toe-voer van eet-waren of andere goederen te voeren nae den legher vanden koningh van Spaengien* (The Hague: widow and heirs Hillebrant Jacobsz van Wouw, 1622), USTC 1529726.
[113] *Ordonnantie ende instructie, volghende de welcke ten behoeve van de gemeene saecke van Hollandt, geheven en geinnet sal werden het middel van de recreatie ofte divertissement-gelt, peyster ende morgen-dranck gelt* (The Hague: Jacobus I Scheltus, 1674), USTC 1810860. See also Chapter 10.
[114] Jeroen Salman, 'Het nieuws op straat: Actueel drukwerk in het vroegmoderne distributienetwerk', in De Kruif, Drees and Salman (eds), *Het lange leven van het pamflet*, pp. 56–67, here p. 63.
[115] *School-ordre. De Ridderschap ende steden de Staten van Overyssel, hebben goetgevonden te arresteren, dese navolgende school-ordre* (Zwolle: Gerrit Tydeman, 1666), USTC 1570999.

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Figure 3.12 Adriaen van Ostade, *Een barbierswinkel*, 1673. Broadsheet ordinances regulating specific trades would often be distributed to individual tradesmen to be exhibited or hung up in their shop. This barbershop scene by Adriaen van Ostade (1673) features what looks like an official placard behind the barber's head.

States of Holland which announced the confiscation of the goods of all inhabitants of Artois, Hainaut, Louvain and Mechelen because they had abandoned the revolt; the magistrates repeated this proclamation on 10 and 24 January 1580.[116]

The introduction of the *gemene middelen* and the establishment of a new political administration generated a mass of print. The standard print run of ordinances issued by the States General and the provincial States sadly is not known, but it must have exceeded 2,000 copies for ordinary placards issued by the States General, and around 300–800 copies for the provincial States.[117] Print runs increased steadily over the course of the 17th century: this is demonstrated by the identification of numerous broadsheet placards from the 1670s onwards that survive in multiple editions. When collating surviving copies of States General and States of Holland placards in Dutch archives, one often finds that the copies of the same placard in different archives have variant type-settings.[118] Differences are rarely present because of corrections to the printing forme: the text is identical, but variant spellings or line endings demonstrate that the copies were produced simultaneously on multiple printing presses.[119] Sometimes, this process of collation reveals up to four different editions of the same placard.[120] The presence of such variants indicates that the print run often easily exceeded 2,000 copies. Given how often the comparison of two or more surviving copies of a States General or States of Holland placard results in the identification of variants, it seems that large print runs were the norm rather than the exception.

From words to deeds

On 7 June 1602, at the beginning of a new campaigning season of skirmishes and sieges, the States General launched a new media campaign. They issued a formal plea to all Southern Netherlandish assemblies, nobles and magistrates.[121] In a

[116] HGDH, Oud archief van de gemeente 's-Gravenhage, 1313-185, inv. 635, f. 7. See also Chapter 4.
[117] Keblusek, *Boeken in de hofstad*, p. 122; Weststrate, '"Drucker ordinaris der Heeren Staten van Zeelandt"', p. 62. Kyle suggests that the average print run for royal proclamations in England was probably between 1,000 and 1,800 copies. Kyle, 'Monarch and Marketplace', 776.
[118] See for example the collections of States broadsheet ordinances in the municipal archives of Gouda and Rotterdam, and the collections of the Royal Library in The Hague: SMHG, Gouda Oud Archief, inv. 3163; SAR, Oud Archief van de Stad Rotterdam, inv. 533–4; KB, The Hague, Plakk F 45, 111 and 117.
[119] Dutch newspaper printers used the same methods: see Arthur der Weduwen, *Dutch and Flemish Newspapers of the Seventeenth Century, 1618–1700*, 2 vols (Leiden: Brill, 2017), I, pp. 11, 74, 176; and Arthur der Weduwen, 'Towards a Complete Bibliography of Seventeenth-Century Dutch Newspapers: *Delpher* and Its Applications', *Tijdschrift voor Tijdschriftstudies*, 38 (2015), 21–7, here 24–6.
[120] *Extract uyt de Resolutien van de Staten van Hollandt ende West-Vrieslandt, Het XVI. Articul van de Generale Ordonnantie, dat Pachters eenige Pagten overdoen geen Rantçoenpenningen sullen trecken* [19.03.1697] ([The Hague: Jacobus and Paulus Scheltus, 1697]), USTC 1567947–50 all in KB, The Hague, Plakk F 117 [35–8].
[121] *Aende hooch ende wel-gheboren, eerweerdige, edele, erntfeste, hooch-gheleerde, wijse, voorsienighe, zeer discrete heeren, goede vrunden, ende naghebueren, de prelate, prince, graven, heeren, edelen ende*

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pamphlet of eight pages the States warned their southern 'friends and neighbours' of the true intentions of the Spanish monarchy. The loyal provinces were being misled by the false promises of the Spanish king and the new rulers of the Southern Netherlands, the Habsburg Archduke Albert and Isabella, who abused the southern regents and people only because of the generous goodwill and loyalty of these suffering citizens.[122] The States General reminded their southern friends that they strove only for their liberation, urging the southerners to remember their common history as free and independent citizens of their glorious fatherland.[123] At the end of the pamphlet the States urged the southern assemblies and cities to contribute half their annual tax quota to the States General and to rise up in revolt against Spanish authority; if they did so, all Netherlanders could throw off the yoke of Spain. In this utopian scenario, the southern provinces would enjoy their own governance, in law as in religion.[124]

Statendrukker Albrecht Hendricksz printed multiple editions of the pamphlet for the States General. Most copies were intended for distribution in the Southern Netherlands, to accompany the summer campaign against Habsburg forces.[125] Anthonis Duyck, public prosecutor of the Council of State and future Grand Pensionary of Holland, was sceptical of the success of the pamphlet.[126] He feared that those caught in possession of the text would be severely punished, which would dampen any effort to disseminate the tract. Duyck also noted that the reputation of the magistrates and nobles in the Southern Netherlands was much higher than many regents in the north presumed. There was a noticeable discrepancy between the actions of the States General and the inducements promised in the 1602 pamphlet.[127] For years the people of Flanders and Brabant had suffered at the hands of plundering northern bands and Zeeland privateers. Almost all Southern Calvinists, those most inclined to support the rebels, had already left the south; Catholics, who made up the majority in Flanders and Brabant, remembered sourly the excesses of the Calvinist republics established in the late 1570s. Dutch occupation seemed a poor prospect in comparison with the legitimate rule of the Archdukes.

Duyck was proved right: Prince Maurice took the fortress of Grave in the summer of 1602, but there was no hint of popular support for the rebel cause.

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steden van Brabant, Vlaenderen, Artois, Henegouwe, Valenchien, Rijssel, Douay, Orchies, Namen, Dornixe, Dornick, ende Mechelen ([The Hague: Albrecht Hendricksz, 1602]), USTC 1435904. See also Vincent van Zuilen, 'Bronnen van identiteit: Het algemeen Nederlands saamhorigheidsgevoel in enkele pamfletten over de Nederlandse Opstand', in De Kruif, Drees and Salman (eds), *Het lange leven van het pamflet*, pp. 71–82, here pp. 76–81.

[122] *Aende hooch ende wel-gheboren*, f. A1v.

[123] *Aende hooch ende wel-gheboren*, f. A2.

[124] *Aende hooch ende wel-gheboren*, f. A4r.

[125] See USTC 1014430, 1016808, 1033365-1033868 and 1435905.

[126] Van Zuilen, 'Bronnen van identiteit', p. 77; Anthonis Duyck, *Journaal van Anthonis Duyck, Advokaat-Fiscaal van den Raad van State (1591–1602)*, ed. Lodewijk Mulder, 2 vols (The Hague/ Arnhem: Martinus Nijhoff & D.A. Thieme, 1862–4).

[127] Parker, *Dutch Revolt*, pp. 234–5.

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It had been much the same two years earlier, when Maurice campaigned deep into Flanders to inspire a revolt against Habsburg authority. The Dutch troops met unreceptive inhabitants throughout the campaign, and they were attacked by Flemish farmers and denied any logistical support.[128] Maurice and his army beat a retreat after a surprise attack by Archduke Albert at Nieuwpoort. The divergence between the north and south was growing, and identities on either side were hardening.[129] In 1600 the States General had disseminated pamphlets and broadsheets similar to that of the 1602 campaign, urging the south to rise up and join the rebel cause, with equal lack of success.

In 1602, an anonymous response printed in Dutch and French made short shrift of the rebel pamphlet. The loyalist *Beantwoirdinge van zekeren Brieff*, presumably written by a southern regent, circulated throughout the Low Countries.[130] The fact that it was printed by Rutgeert Velpius, the printer to the court in Brussels, might suggest that the author was familiar with the high political circles of Habsburg government.[131] Duyck noted in his diary that on two occasions a messenger from Antwerp was arrested while trying to smuggle copies of the pamphlet into the north – others undoubtedly passed through.[132] The loyalist pamphlet responded to each section of the States General's pamphlet with careful consideration, pointing out that southerners were used to much more hostile language from the north: usually they were called 'Hispanicised' Netherlanders, rather than dear friends and compatriots. The author of the *Beantwoirdinge* urged his fellow citizens to beware of the false promises of the Calvinists; he emphasised that the so-called liberators were nothing more than bands of mercenaries from England, Scotland, Germany and France, with little interest in the liberties of the Low Countries; and that the common ancestors of the Netherlands would have despaired at the disloyalty and violence of the rebels. Towards the end, the author made a counter-plea: it was the rebels who should lay down their arms and return to the fold. The title page of the *Beantwoirdinge* stated not unfairly that '[t]o speak of unity and peace is not bad, but I value those who make peace with deeds'.

From the beginning of the rebellion, Dutch authorities had shown a keen recognition of the value of publicity. Printed ordinances, tax forms and other

[128] Pollmann, 'No Man's Land', pp. 248–9.

[129] See the volume *Public Opinion and Changing Identities*, edited by Pollmann and Spicer, especially the chapter by Judith Pollmann, '"Brabanters Do Fairly Resemble Spaniards After All": Memory, Propaganda and Identity in the Twelve Years' Truce', pp. 211–27. See also Van der Steen, *Memory Wars*, esp. pp. 31–109.

[130] *Beantwoirdinge van zekeren Brieff der Staten van Hollant: den vij Junij in dit jaer gheschreuen aende Heeren Staten vande ghehoorsame ende ghetrouwe Prouintien van Nederlandt* (s.l.: s.n., 1602), USTC 1505833. For the French translation of the same see USTC 1505899. See also Van Zuilen, 'Bronnen van identiteit', pp. 78–9; and Pollmann, 'No Man's Land', pp. 249–50.

[131] Goran Proot, '"Très-humblement": Tracing the Mysteries of a 1602 Dutch Pamphlet', 13 December 2013, on *The Collation. Research and Exploration at the Folger*, accessed at http://collation.folger.edu/2013/12/tres-humblement-tracing-the-mysteries-of-a-1602-dutch-pamphlet/.

[132] Van Zuilen, 'Bronnen van identiteit', p. 81.

publications became essential cogs in the governance of the new state, both as symbols of legitimacy and as administrative tools. But this public demonstration of governance was soon accompanied by exasperation and discontent. In December 1600, Anthonis Duyck wrote in his journal that 'many people feel that there is no lack of ordinances', but that the States General 'have not made enough efforts to maintain the ordinances' which they have already proclaimed and distributed.[133]

The astute statesman hinted at an uncomfortable political reality. By issuing their ordinances in print and thus disseminating their publications and justifications, the regents of the States General and the magistrates of its cities aimed to inform, persuade and reassure their citizenry. But they also opened themselves up to increased criticism. In the summer of 1619, the States of Holland published a new excise form relating to the sale of horses, revised from the form they published in April that year, after receiving many complaints from citizens in the province about the 'extremely burdensome' excise rates of the tax farm.[134] The numerous taxes demanded by the States and the activism of urban magistrates institutionalised during the Revolt forced the authorities to tread carefully and to explain and justify their policies with greater care. Citizens could engage with the ordinances issued by the authorities and note any inconsistencies and injustices committed by their regents. Crucially, the Dutch Revolt had established the standards of state communication for the remarkably pluralistic, persuasive and participatory commonwealth of cities and provinces which were to dominate the political culture of the Golden Age.

[133] Duyck, *Journaal van Anthonis Duyck*, II, p. 778.
[134] *Vande paerden*, USTC 1516117, f. A1r.

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II

Negotiating the Republic

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4

Justifying the Law

In 1629, the Remonstrant minister Johannes Wtenbogaert reflected on a recent outbreak of popular religious violence in Amsterdam. 'The people began with rebellion, the people will end with rebellion', he concluded plaintively.[1] Although the anti-Remonstrant unrest eventually subsided, Wtenbogaert's sentiments were widely shared in the 17th-century Dutch Republic. There was a profound tension between the celebration of revolt as a keystone of Dutch liberty and the ubiquitous threat of discord: a state founded in revolt was always in danger of internal dissent, and the Low Countries had a long tradition of civic rebellion.[2] The fear of unrest was exacerbated by the daily reality of Dutch politics. Excise duties on basic foodstuffs were responsible for most of the revenue raised by the States, and over 10 per cent of the entire *gemene middelen* were generated by the milling excise alone, in effect a bread tax.[3] Few people would see where this taxation was spent, because most of it was swallowed up by the army. By the end of the 17th century, a soldier in the pay of the States General would have to be supported by the tax generated by around twenty inhabitants of the Republic; in France, that soldier would be supported by some 200 inhabitants.

We should therefore not be surprised that the willingness of Dutch people to bear this burden had its limits. When the magistrates of Delft doubled the grain excise in 1616, unrest in the city quickly turned violent. The regents initially tried to arrest the leading troublemakers, but this only riled the community further: a weaver commented to a civic messenger tasked with one of the arrests that 'the gentlemen [of the magistracy] have gone too far, the people are in the right'.[4] When the local militia (the *schutterij*) was called up, many stayed at home, and

1 Cited in Helmers, 'Popular Participation and Public Debate', p. 130.
2 Marc Boone and Maarten Prak, 'Rulers, Patricians and Burghers: The Great and Little Traditions of Urban Revolt in the Low Countries', in Karel Davids and Jan Lucassen (eds), *A Miracle Mirrored: The Dutch Republic in European Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 99–134.
3 Jan de Vries, *The Price of Bread: Regulating the Market in the Dutch Republic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), p. 132.
4 Dekker, *Holland in beroering*, p. 29.

those who attempted to contain the crowd were beaten back. The regents could only calm the people by announcing the cancellation of the rise in the duty, as well as a general pardon.[5]

Rudolf Dekker's survey of disturbances and riots in Holland in the 17th and 18th centuries shows that most riots shared common characteristics.[6] Many of the participants in riots were respectable tradesmen; leaders of some disturbances included ship's captains, blacksmiths and surgeons. As in Delft in 1616, the militia was frequently unreliable, as its companies were composed of citizens from a similar social milieu to those who joined in the rioting.[7] Few wished to shoot their neighbours. In 1696, mass riots erupted in Amsterdam after the city implemented new regulations concerning burials and the employment of undertakers. When an official asked a group of militiamen to intervene, one of them exclaimed: 'To the devil with you! Why would we stop them? Those people do us good. What business do we have [intervening] between those people and that ordinance?'[8] At other times, the militia even joined in the disturbance, as in Alkmaar in 1609, when the captains of the militia ordered the magistrates to stand down and occupied the town hall for several weeks before the States of Holland deposed the regents.[9] In 1653, the militia of Enkhuizen also ended up occupying the city in response to a popular riot.[10]

A radical intervention of this sort served to remind the magistrates that they ruled only by sanction of their citizens. Yet it is striking that, on a European scale, riots in the Dutch Republic were considerably less deadly and less frequent than those elsewhere. Dekker could only identify two food riots in Holland before 1693, and only twelve tax riots in the entire 17th century. He also found evidence of some eighty smaller tax disturbances, mostly in the hard times induced by the Franco-Dutch War of 1672–8 and the subsequent coalition wars against Louis XIV. Virtually all these concerned the *gemene middelen*, rather than municipal taxation, which offers some indication that anger was directed more generally at the regents in The Hague than at the local magistrates.[11] As Grand Pensionary Johan de Witt noted in 1653, it was easy to blame 'the poor management of the regents' holed up in the Binnenhof when there was a downturn in the economy or a hike in prices.[12]

[5] Dekker, *Holland in beroering*, p. 30.
[6] Dekker, *Holland in beroering*. See also Rudolf Dekker, *Oproeren in Holland gezien door tijdgenoten* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1979).
[7] Paul Knevel, *Burgers in het geweer: De schutterijen in Holland, 1550–1700* (Hilversum: Verloren, 1994).
[8] Cited in Dekker, *Holland in beroering*, p. 103.
[9] Paul Knevel, 'Hoofdstad van Holland boven het IJ. Politieke en bestuurlijke ontwikkelingen', in Diederik Aten et al. (eds), *Geschiedenis van Alkmaar* (Zwolle: Waanders, 2007), pp. 190–209, here pp. 201–3; and Knevel, *Burgers in het geweer*, pp. 323–67.
[10] Dekker, *Holland in beroering*, p. 42.
[11] Dekker, *Holland in beroering*, pp. 23, 28–9, 144.
[12] Dekker, *Holland in beroering*, pp. 130–1.

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The Dutch were shocked when dissatisfaction escalated into rioting and looting, but these phenomena took place more frequently in the fearful imaginations of the regents than on the streets of Dutch towns. They only occurred when the political understanding between government and citizens had broken down completely. Even when this bond was temporarily severed, it is remarkable that there was rarely popular demand to revolutionise government: the oligarchic position of the regents was never truly threatened. This says much about the stability of Dutch political culture. Despite constant tension, the bond between the regents and their citizens was resilient. It rested on the ability of the authorities to maintain political consensus, a process that required daily efforts on their parts. The regents knew that they had to listen and respond to the concerns of their citizens, and, above all, to issue laws that demonstrated their care for the community.

The three chapters in this section investigate how this was accomplished, focusing especially on the urban centres of the Republic. What becomes clear is that the ceremonies of law making and the strategies of communication employed by Dutch authorities were essential to the political stability of the Republic. The regents had to inform their citizens of the law and persuade the community of its benefits. As we shall see in this chapter, it was only by making themselves visible, approachable and accountable that the regents could sustain the support of their citizens. They also had to keep themselves open to informal political pressures. The hierarchical divisions in the Republic that excluded most citizens from policy-making were not an obstacle to the popular involvement in the making of law or broader political participation in the affairs of state.[13] Citizens did not have to sit on a town council to influence the law, and they knew how to demonstrate their discontent without resorting to the violence so feared by the regents.

Privilege and duty

The 17th-century Dutch Republic was not a democratic society. Principles of inclusivity, equality and openness were not valued in the organisation of political culture. The community was the most significant unit of politics and took priority over the individual. For many Dutch people, this community was their village, town or city. The importance of urban communities was one of the most significant distinguishing features of Dutch politics in the 17th century, and cities and towns can be regarded as the cornerstone of Dutch political society.[14]

[13] An argument advanced more generally in Prak, *Citizens without Nations*, esp. p. 162 (for the Dutch Republic) and Blockmans, *Medezeggenschap*.

[14] For some key perspectives on this issue, see 't Hart, 'Cities and Statemaking; Marjolein 't Hart, 'The Dutch Republic: The Urban Impact upon Politics', in Davids and Lucassen (eds), *A Miracle Mirrored*, pp. 57–98; Price, *Holland and the Dutch Republic*, esp. pp. 5–31; Johan Huizinga, *Nederland's beschaving in de zeventiende eeuw* (Haarlem: Tjeenk Willink, 1941), esp. pp. 25–32; Kossmann, *Political Thought in the Dutch Republic*, p. 180.

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Nowhere else in Europe did urban communities exercise so much formal control over policy-making as in the Dutch Republic.[15] In total, fifty-seven towns held formal representation in the provincial States of the Republic. Cities also provided the greatest financial contributions to the budget of the States General; they were considered to be the bulwark of the Republic, responsible for most of its commercial prosperity and industrial productivity. Holland's inhabitants were the most urbanised, with 60 per cent living in communities of more than 2,500 inhabitants, but urbanisation was widespread elsewhere too. In the province of Utrecht, over a third of the entire population lived in its eponymous city. Overall, more than 40 per cent of the Dutch population lived in urban communities. No other part of Europe experienced this level of urbanisation in the early modern period.

Belonging to one of these communities was a source of pride, security and stability for many people. In the Republic, most people maintained their loyalty firstly to their urban *patria*, then to their province, and then to the union.[16] There was serious rivalry between towns within the same province, and citizens paid regular tribute to the illustrious history of their town, not least to reinforce their significance compared to local rivals. It was no coincidence that the early 17th century saw the publication of many historical and topographical descriptions of Dutch towns, the authors of which were often rewarded generously by the magistrates.[17] Advancing the prosperity and standing of a city was a paramount duty of the entire community. When the magistrates of Zwolle appealed to their citizens to stop ruining the walls of the city by using them as thoroughfares and playing fields, they invoked the deterioration of the 'great reputation' of Zwolle in the eyes of all visitors and foreigners.[18] The coat of arms and the motto of a town could be found everywhere: carried in processions, on buildings, gates, cushions, church benches, the clothing of civic officials, goblets, silverware or the bags of messengers.[19] Many Dutch communities prided themselves as successors of the sovereign city states of ancient Greece and Rome: they were their own republic. In cities such as Haarlem, Enkhuizen, Alkmaar, Amsterdam and Leeuwarden the

[15] Frijhoff and Spies, *1650. Bevochten Eendracht*, pp. 154–8. Eighteen towns in Holland; thirteen in Gelderland; eleven in Friesland; six in Zeeland; five in Utrecht; three in Overijssel; one in Groningen. A fine comparative view is provided by Olaf Mörke, 'The Political Culture of Germany and the Dutch Republic: Similar Roots, Different Results', in Davids and Lucassen (eds), *A Miracle Mirrored*, pp. 135–72.

[16] Alastair Duke, 'The Elusive Netherlands: The Question of National Identity in the Early Modern Low Countries on the Eve of the Revolt', *BMGN*, 119 (2004), 10–38; S. Groenveld, 'Natie en nationaal gevoel in de zestiende-eeuwse Nederlanden', *Nederlands Archievenblad*, 84 (1980), 372–87.

[17] Pettegree and Der Weduwen, *Bookshop of the World*, pp. 356–60; Esser, '"Concordia Res Parvae Crescunt"', pp. 229–48.

[18] *Placcaet. Borgermeysteren schepen ende raedt, in consideratie, dat die muyren d'inghesetenen voor alle vyandtlijck overvallen bewaert werden, soo dat niemandts dieselve mochten violeren* (Zwolle: Frans Jorrijaensz, 1630), USTC 1122499.

[19] Frijhoff and Spies, *1650. Bevochten Eendracht*, p. 173.

inscriptions SPQH, SPQE, SPQA and SPQL (derived from the Roman SPQR, *Senatus Populusque Romanus*) adorned public buildings and bridges.

The classical notion of the *civitas* was also of critical importance to the organisation of Dutch communities. The *civitas* was a body of citizens (*cives*) bound together by social law.[20] This contract gave them the privilege of being members of a community, but also the duty to support the collective and to defend the community as members of the civic militia. In order for the *civitas* to flourish, unity and harmony were essential. These ideals were put into practice: the social cohesion of Dutch urban communities was, even under challenging circumstances, relatively high.[21] Being a citizen of a Dutch town with full rights, a *burgher* (or *poorter*), was a distinguishing honour. One could become a citizen by birth, marriage, the purchase of citizenship or as a gift bestowed by the town. Citizens had the privilege to join guilds, the right only to be tried before a court in their own city, and a variety of other economic benefits unavailable to mere 'inhabitants' (those who lived in a town but did not have citizenship) and 'foreigners' (visitors and temporary inhabitants).[22] One did not have to be wealthy to be a citizen, and in many Dutch towns, the largest proportion of the citizen body was made up of artisans and tradesmen. The attractiveness of citizenship rested on the basis that it was shared widely enough (around half of all inhabitants of Dutch cities held citizenship) to minimise institutionalised class divisions, but exclusive enough that it was worth protecting.[23] It granted enough inhabitants a significant stake in the welfare and defence of their community.

Citizens possessed one further distinctive privilege: only they were eligible for membership of the town council and the magistracy, the men burdened with the rule of the community. Each town had a council, known as the *vroedschap* or *meente*, from which the officers of the magistracy (the *gerecht*, *wet* or *magistraat*) were appointed on an annual rotating basis. The exact composition of the council and magistracy differed in each community: the towns of Holland had fourteen to forty councillors, who were appointed to the council for life by co-option. In most communities, the magistracy was composed of three key offices: the sheriff (*schout*) was the public prosecutor and executor of the law; the aldermen (*schepenen*) presided as judges over civic or criminal disputes and concerned themselves with

[20] On the concept of urban citizenship in early modern Europe, see Prak, *Citizens without Nations*.

[21] For two case studies, see Aart Vos, *Burgers, broeders en bazen: Het maatschappelijk middenveld van 's-Hertogenbosch in de zeventiende en achttiende eeuw* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2007); and Gabrielle Dorren, *Eenheid en verscheidenheid: de burgers van Haarlem in de Gouden Eeuw* (Amsterdam: Prometheus/Bert Bakker, 2001).

[22] A good introduction to the Dutch concept of 'citizen' is provided in Maarten Prak, 'Burghers, Citizens and Popular Politics in the Dutch Republic', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 30 (1997), 443–8. See also Prak, *Citizens without Nations*, pp. 190–204; and Joost Kloek and Karin Tilmans (eds), *Burger: Een geschiedenis van het begrip 'burger' in de Nederlanden van de Middeleeuwen tot de 21ste eeuw* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2002).

[23] Prak, *Citizens without Nations*, p. 191.

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the formulation of legislation; and the burgomasters (*burgemeesters*) were tasked with daily governance. In addition, a secretariat assisted in all administration.[24] The number of aldermen and burgomasters in each town varied throughout the Dutch Republic, but their functions and authority were instantly recognisable across the country.

In Holland, each year the town council would compose a list of candidates for the magistracy, which would be despatched to the provincial States. Together with the Stadtholder, the States would then select candidates from the nominated list. In the towns of Gelderland and Overijssel, a much broader stratum of the population was involved in the selection process, a legacy of the long-standing involvement of local guilds in urban government.[25] Zwolle had a *gezworen gemeente*, a common council, made up of forty-eight representatives from the four wards of the town. In Zutphen, the guilds and militia companies were responsible for electing the town's magistrates each year. With the exception of Dordrecht, the towns of Holland had no history of substantial guild or ward involvement of this sort. This meant that for much of the 17th century, town councils in Holland were mostly composed of men from the merchant elite and, increasingly so during the second half of the century, trained jurists from regent families.[26]

While the elective process of councils and magistracies differed throughout the Dutch Republic, one particular tension persisted everywhere. The regents who governed Dutch communities were the same as their fellow citizens, but also profoundly different.[27] They ruled by virtue of representing the community, not by hereditary title, but it was unmistakable that some citizens were cut out to be 'regent material', and others were not.[28] As a process of oligarchisation set in over time, with a secretive system of collusive power-sharing known as the 'Contracts of Correspondence' that divided council membership and offices between notable families, there was a stark delineation between the patrician class and the rest of the citizenry. Citizens who were not regents were supposed to abandon all political ambition and obey the authorities in every respect. In his translation of book two of Virgil's *Aeneid* (1655), which the poet Joost van den Vondel dedicated to Peter Hooft de Graeff, he mused:

> Happy is the body of citizens
> Where all rest safely in the shadow of the regents
> Who rule alone to protect the people

[24] For a concise overview, see Fockema Andreae, *Nederlandse Staat*, pp. 47–8.
[25] On this issue, see B. De Munck and J. Haemers, 'Het politiek zelfbewustzijn van ambachtslieden: een lange termijn-perspectief', *Noordbrabants Historisch Jaarboek*, 35 (2018), 23–49.
[26] D. J. Roorda, 'Eeuw tegen eeuw', in D. J. Roorda, *Rond Prins en Patriciaat: Verspreide opstellen* (Weesp: Fibula-Van Dishoeck, 1984), pp. 54–67.
[27] See Vos, *Burgers, broeders en bazen*, pp. 20–1, for the notion that the ideals of civic equality were rarely practised perfectly.
[28] Van Nierop, 'Popular Participation', p. 277; Von Friedeburg, 'Urban Riots and the Perspective of "Qualification for Office"', p. 34.

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. . .
It is on this foundation that heaven builds states
On this cornerstone that they receive their titles
Of fathers, shepherds, law makers, guardians, Gods.[29]

The regents enjoyed the privilege of complete obedience, but this was to be reciprocated by the paramount principle that in every respect, they would serve their community, not themselves. This took many forms: providing social care for the old, the young and the infirm, punishing transgressors of the law, maintaining the reputation of the city and protecting the commercial life of their citizens.[30] Most of all, they were the protectors of justice, upholding the law and preserving the rights and privileges of their fellow citizens. The door of the town hall of Alkmaar opens beneath an inscription which reads '[i]f the commons call out for you, take care of it as your own', a quote taken from Vondel's *Roskam* (1630), in which he praised the virtues of the late Amsterdam burgomaster Cornelis Pietersz Hooft.[31]

In their daily behaviour, as the foremost embodiment of civic (*burgherlijcke*) virtues, the regents were supposed to espouse modesty and integrity. This was frequently remarked upon by foreign dignitaries and visitors, used to the rich courtly pageantry of European diplomacy. The Italian Gregorio Leti considered the magistrates to be 'mild and humble', which ensured that 'the common people are satisfied'.[32] Sir William Temple noted that the burgomasters of Amsterdam 'are obliged to no sort of expense, more than ordinary modest citizens, in their habits, their attendance, their tables, or any part of their own domestique . . . they appear in all places with the simplicity and modesty of other private citizens'.[33] He also noted that Grand Pensionary Johan de Witt was

> [s]een usually in the streets on foot and alone, like the commonest Burger of the Town. Nor was this manner of life affected, or used by these particular men [De Witt and Admiral Michiel de Ruyter], but was the general fashion or mode among all the Magistrates of the State.[34]

It was undoubtedly true that Dutch regents walked the same streets as their fellow citizens, unaccompanied by escorts or retinues. Johan de Witt was commonly escorted only by an unarmed manservant who would carry his papers. The citizens of the Dutch Republic had more occasion for incidental contact with their rulers than inhabitants of any other European society.[35] On 28 July 1624,

[29] Cited in Marijke Meijer Drees, '"Burgerlijke" zeventiende-eeuwse literatuur', in Kloek and Tilmans (eds), *Burger*, pp. 133–53, here p. 149.
[30] For a recent case study, see Daniëlle Teeuwen, *Financing Poor Relief through Charitable Collections in Dutch Towns, c. 1600–1800* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2015).
[31] Knevel, 'Hoofdstad van Holland', p. 200.
[32] Cited in Velema, *Republicans*, p. 15.
[33] Temple, *Observations upon the United Provinces*, p. 55, and more broadly 69–70, 86.
[34] Temple, *Observations upon the United Provinces*, p. 71.
[35] Velema, *Republicans*, pp. 8–9, 14, 18.

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David Beck, a schoolmaster in The Hague, noted in his diary that he had enjoyed a pleasant walk to nearby Voorhout, and that he had bumped into the gentlemen 'Jacques Cats and C. Huijgens': the Grand Pensionary of Holland, Jacob Cats, and the diplomat and future secretary of the Prince of Orange, Constantijn Huygens.[36] Beck's meeting was noteworthy enough to be recorded in his diary, but his was not an exceptional encounter.[37] Some of the regents may have lived in grander houses than other citizens, but they lived at the heart of their community, not isolated by fences or guards.

It is also worth reflecting that regents were not necessarily the richest members of society.[38] Many of them were well off, but only a few were extremely wealthy.[39] High office did present opportunities for enrichment, especially in the municipal offices that were regularly contested, such as that of burgomaster. Yet it does not seem that Dutch regents indulged to the same extent as the great ministers of state in early modern monarchies, nor did the Dutch enjoy an institutionalised culture of the sale of offices, as in France.[40] Corruption was also less prevalent at the municipal level than the federal: the worst scandals occurred in the States General, most famously with *Griffier* Cornelis Musch, and later in the 17th century, when William III made a series of dubious appointments to bolster his regime.[41]

The relative approachability of the regents and the familiarity of the citizen body with their rulers ensured that the regents had an intimate sense of the general opinion of the community. They could judge easily when the mood in the citizenry was changing, and when they might need to spring into action. One critical means of engagement was provided by the ceremony of greeting. In the 17th century, all men were expected to wear hats in public. Those lower in the social hierarchy were expected to take off their hats when passing, meeting or speaking to their social superiors; this was a long-standing tradition, one already noted by Erasmus in his *De civilitate morum puerilium* (1530) (Figure 4.1).[42] Refusal or hesitancy to remove one's headgear was a clear sign that a regent was losing the obedience of the population. In the heady days of 1672, a coppersmith entered the office of the burgomasters in The Hague to issue the demands of the assembled citizenry and did so without taking off his hat.[43] The regents could also make use of the greeting

[36] David Beck, *Spiegel van mijn leven; een Haags dagboek uit 1624*, ed. Sv. E. Veldhuijzen (Hilversum: Verloren, 1993), p. 141.
[37] Dorren, *Eenheid en verscheidenheid*, p. 17.
[38] Price, *Holland and the Dutch Republic*, p. 46.
[39] For a good example see J. J. de Jong's study of the (relatively poor) patrician class of Gouda, *Met goed fatsoen: de elite in een Hollandse stad, Gouda 1700–1780* (Amsterdam: De Bataafsche Leeuw, 1985).
[40] Swart, *Sale of Offices*.
[41] See Chapters 1 and 10.
[42] Joris Oddens, 'You Can Leave Your Hat On: Men's Portraits, Power, and Identity in the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic', *The Seventeenth Century*, 36 (2021), 797–853, here pp. 798, 848.
[43] Oddens, 'You Can Leave Your Hat On', p. 798.

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Figure 4.1 Jan Luyken, *Jongen beledigt de burgemeester*, 1698. The regent, easily confronted: two boys steal a baton carried by a burgomaster in this engraving by Jan Luyken. Note that the three other men pictured in the left foreground and centre background all hold their hats in their hands out of deference to the passing regent.

ceremony to appeal to a disobedient crowd. An eyewitness account of a major riot in Rotterdam in 1690 noted how:

> [t]he officiating burgomaster . . . came downstairs with his hat under his arm and he appeared before the [rioting] women so humble and with such a reverence as if [he] had expected to get audience of a king.[44]

Although these episodes took place in turbulent times, they indicate that the Dutch authorities and their citizens knew how to employ the nuance of dress and ceremony to enter into a political negotiation with one another. The rituals of compliance and disobedience were well understood to everyone involved: during a riot in Brielle in 1672, fishwives confronted a burgomaster and lifted their skirts to him, a sign of disrespect and humiliation that indicated their lack of faith in their rulers.[45] Even if they tend to leave less trace in the historical record, we should not underestimate the influence of daily encounters between the regents and their fellow citizens in the maintenance of the political stability of the Republic.

[44] Dekker, *Holland in beroering*, p. 55.

[45] Rudolf Dekker, 'Women in Revolt: Popular Protest and Its Social Basis in Holland in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries', *Theory and Society*, 16 (1987), 337–62, here p. 343.

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Maintaining the constitution

In every community, there were formal ways in which the inhabitants could meet and engage with their authorities. One of the most important occasions in the calendar was the annual installation of the magistracy and the council. This public ceremony represented a renewal of the political bond between the authorities and their citizens. In Kampen, each of the thirty-six members of the council was required to swear an oath before the assembled citizenry that bound them to be

> [l]oyal and true to the city of Kampen and her citizens and that I will strive to say and do to the best of my knowledge and ability and counsel that which must be counselled, and ensure that my counsel is never to the detriment, contention, suffering or disadvantage to the city of Kampen and the country, regardless of the state, quality, office, dignity or prominence that I might reach. May God help me so.[46]

The renewal of the magistracy was accompanied by the renewal of the legal constitution of the community. Every Sunday before the new appointment of the burgomasters and aldermen of Kampen (the Wednesday after Epiphany), the magistrates proclaimed a selection of twelve laws, first issued in the 14th century, concerning the rights and duties of the citizens of Kampen.[47] In Den Bosch, this proclamation was described as the 'Annalia ordonnantie', the annual ordinance.[48] This ceremony served to remind the citizens of their responsibilities to one another and emphasised the commitment of the magistrates to uphold the community's ancient constitution.

Throughout the Dutch Republic, magistrates looked towards venerable *privilegien* or *vrijheden* (privileges or freedoms) described in their constitution as the foundation of their political ideology.[49] Every town hall had a chest which contained the oldest charters granted to the city by former lords, bishops or sovereigns.[50] These privileges were closely guarded. They were a testament to the achievements of the ancestors of a community, who had extracted them from cash-strapped feudal overlords. But they also provided a framework for the political organisation of the city, listing the arrangements for the election of the magistrates, the oaths of civic officials, judicial procedures, and the basic elements of civil and criminal law.

Ancient privileges could also be a source for civic unrest. In 1649, after a long-running dispute about the constitution of the city, a delegation of Dordrecht

[46] SAK, Oud Archief Kampen, inv. 300, f. 19r.
[47] SAK, Oud Archief Kampen, inv. 300, f. 19r.
[48] EDB, Stadsbestuur van 's-Hertogenbosch, 1262–1810 (0001), inv. 456–7.
[49] Frijhoff and Spies, *1650. Bevochten Eendracht*, p. 173.
[50] On the origins and growth of archival practices, with particular references to their political importance, see Randolph C. Head, *Making Archives in Early Modern Europe: Proof, Information, and Political Record-Keeping, 1400–1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), esp. pp. 244–65.

guildsmen demanded entry to the archive of the town hall to search for a reputed book of civic privileges. They could not find the purported mediaeval *Houtboeck*, which did little to ease tensions in the city.[51] This conflict, however, did not question the legitimacy of the authorities to make law but concerned the fact that, in the eyes of the guilds, the magistrates 'maintained so poorly our statutes and ordinances'.[52]

The mediaeval freedoms granted to cities generally afforded the right to issue by-laws or ordinances to local magistrates. While the privileges defined the parameters of the city's constitution, it was the responsibility of the magistrates to complement them with municipal *keuren* (by-laws) on commerce, public order and taxation. Together, the privileges and by-laws provided the constitutional basis for the governance of a city. They were assembled in a *keurboek*, a register of the statutes of the city. The *keurboek* of Amsterdam opened with a chronological list of privileges granted to the city by the mediaeval counts of Holland, followed by modern regulations on subjects as diverse as insurance, murder, inheritance, gambling, dyke maintenance and rental properties.[53] From the 15th and 16th centuries onwards, magistrates made increasing efforts to improve the documentation of local statutes in such *keurboeken*. As urban communities grew in size and complexity, a clearly formulated and consistent law was dependent on written historical record rather than collective memory. As the magistrates of Deventer announced when producing a new *keurboek* in 1642, it was impossible for lawyers and judges, let alone average citizens, to observe the rich variety of former statutes issued by the regents without awareness of their content.[54]

The archive of the magistrates of Leiden reveals the extent to which the regents concerned themselves with the refinement and improvement of the city's statutes. The archive contains various *keurboeken* filled with copious annotations by the magistrates, who used them to change, remove or add new by-laws to the constitutional register.[55] This was done in writing, but sometimes the secretary would paste in the text of a new, printed ordinance, or even paste in a slip of printed paper with a minor alteration to a section of text.[56] While this working copy of the statutes was kept under lock and key, the Leiden magistrates also made considerable efforts to share the *keurboek* with the wider citizenry. From 1583 onwards, the entire *keurboek* was read out from the balustrade of the town hall on the day after the new aldermen had been instated (23 July), a significant labour

[51] Pollmann, *Memory in Early Modern Europe*, p. 81.
[52] Cited in Dekker, *Holland in beroering*, p. 80.
[53] *Handt-vesten ende privilegie van Amstelredam* (s.l.: s.n., 1597), USTC 423829.
[54] For a good example, see the preface of the Deventer statutes, *Rechten ende gewoonten der stadt Deventer* (Deventer: Nathanael Cost, 1644), USTC 1026601, f. ***2.
[55] EL, Stadsarchief II, invs. 9–13.
[56] For example, the *Keur ende ordonnantie opte tappers* ([Leiden: Raadhuispers], 1588), USTC 426713, of 1 March 1588, contains the subtitle: 'to be inserted between the 82nd and 83rd statutes'.

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on the part of the secretary, certainly compared with the reading of the shorter selection of statutes in Kampen.[57] Yet this laborious practice was not uncommon: the regents of Gouda also re-proclaimed all existing statutes of the city after the annual election of their magistracy.[58]

In 1583, the magistrates of Leiden also published the first printed edition of their municipal *keurboek*, produced under the supervision of secretary Jan van Hout on the *Raadhuispers*. The magistrates of Leiden were emulated by many colleagues throughout the country. Between 1583 and the end of the 17th century, more than two dozen Dutch municipalities in five provinces issued printed editions of their *keurboeken*. Even rural authorities, such as the water board (*Hoogheemraadschap*) of Rijnland (around Leiden), had their local customs printed: the bailiff asked the Leiden printer Jan Paedts Jacobsz to publish the *keurboek*, resulting in an elegant quarto edition of over 200 pages.[59] The care taken to print the Rijnland *keurboek* indicates that such volumes of collected statutes were not only practical handbooks but also representative of the sophistication of a community, the richness of its history and the regulation of its industry. The circulation of these statutes was not restricted to the town hall alone, and regents considered these publications a cornerstone of their reputation beyond their own jurisdiction. This projection of power similarly inspired the publication of the great compendia of federal and regional ordinances produced in the Dutch Republic.[60]

Keurboeken could be found for sale in the shops of most prominent booksellers in Amsterdam, The Hague and Utrecht, including those of Hendrick Laurensz, Johannes Janssonius, Johannes Verhoeve, Johannes Janssonius van Waesberge and Pieter van den Berge.[61] The publication of a *keurboek* was generally sponsored by the relevant jurisdiction, but some opportunistic publishers issued editions of

[57] *Keuren der stadt Leyden des graefschaps van Holland* ([Leiden: Raadhuispers], 1583), USTC 422142, pp. 12, 117.

[58] SMHG, Gouda Oud Archief, inv. 5038.

[59] *Keuren ende ordonnantien vant heemraetschap van Rijnlandt ende den ghevolghe* (Leiden: Jan Paedts Jacobszoon, 1596), USTC 423639.

[60] Arthur der Weduwen, 'Rechtsnoer des rechts, breidel des onrechts. Het *Hollandts Placcaet-Boeck* (1645)', in Wim van Anrooij and Paul Hoftijzer (eds), *Tot publijcque dienst der studie: Boeken uit de Bibliotheca Thysiana* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2022), pp. 160–1; C. A. Romein, 'The Formative Role of Early Modern Books of Ordinances', in Pepijn Brandon, Lex Heerma van Voss and Annemieke Romein (eds), *The Early Modern State: Drivers, Beneficiaries and Discontents* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2022), pp. 89–111, esp. pp. 97–8; A. H. Huusen Jr, 'Het Plakkaatboek', in Jo Tollebeek, Tom Verschaffel and Leonard H. M. Wessels (eds), *De Palimpsest: Geschiedschrijving in de Nederlanden, 1500–2000* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2002), pp. 63–80.

[61] *Catalogus variorum & insignium librorum Hendrici Laurentii P.M. bibliopolæ Amsterodamensis* ([Amsterdam]: heirs Hendrick Laurensz, [1649]), USTC 1022549; *Verzeichnus vieler schönen ungebundenen in Teutsch und Niederländischen Sprache Bucher* (Amsterdam: heirs Johannes Janssonius, 1665), USTC 1846229; *Catalogus variorum insignium librorum incompactorum officinae Johannis Verhoeve* (The Hague: Johannes Steucker, 1662), USTC 1846390, lots 136–7 in quarto; *Catalogus variorum, insigniorum librorum officinae Johannis à Waesberge* (Utrecht: Johannes Janssonius van Waesberge, 1609 [=1660]), USTC 1846340; *Catalogus, variorum insignium librorum incompactorum officinae Petri van den Berge* (Amsterdam: Pieter van den Berge, 1670), USTC 1846625.

keurboeken on their own initiative. In 1657 Jan Hendricksz, an Amsterdam printer, produced a new edition of the statutes of Leiden, while *keurboeken* of Amsterdam and Utrecht appeared in multiple, successive editions during the late 16th and early 17th centuries.[62] All three cities were leading communities in the Dutch Republic, and their constitutions provided important models for other towns.

These books were valued by jurists and lawyers, used as handbooks for the legal framework of the Dutch state and for consultations on legal disputes or political history. Theodorus de Jongh, a lawyer at the Court of Holland, possessed *keurboeken* of twenty Dutch and Flemish municipalities.[63] The historian Matthias Vossius owned numerous *keurboeken*, including those of Amsterdam, Leiden, Utrecht, Delft, Workum and various other statutes from Flanders and Holland.[64] Gaspar Fagel, Grand Pensionary of Holland between 1672 and 1688, had a particularly fine library of jurisprudence, which included a collection of several dozen printed and manuscript *keurboeken* of various Dutch cities. According to the auction catalogue of his library (1689), the most prized volumes in the collection of statutes were two handwritten *keurboeken* of Dordrecht and Haarlem, two cities for which no printed statutes were available.[65] The statutes of Dordrecht sold for sixteen guilders, and those of Haarlem sold for fourteen guilders; in contrast, most of the printed *keurboeken* in Fagel's collection sold for one or one and a half guilders.

The modest price made these texts affordable to any legal scholar or statesman, but the size of the *keurboeken* (usually a few hundred pages in quarto) imposed a price level which was never low enough for a casual, non-professional book buyer. This might give the impression that information on early modern law was exclusive and protected by an elitist class of regents and jurists, but this could not be further from the truth. Ordinary citizens were deeply involved in the process of law making and critical to its successful implementation.

Demanding the law

In 1648, the Haarlem rector Theodorus Schrevelius reflected that 'just like our bodies cannot do anything orderly without our minds, so the city cannot use its parts, limbs, nerves and blood without the law'.[66] Throughout Europe, there was a widespread notion that law making was vital to the functioning of

[62] *Keuren der stadt Leyden, geamplieert ende gerenoveert* (Amsterdam: Jan Hendricksz, 1657), USTC 1842124.
[63] *Catalogus, variorum & insignium omnis generis librorum, ex bibliotheca illustrissimi domini Do. Theodori de Jongh* (Amsterdam: Hendrick and Theodoor Boom, 1679), USTC 1846961, p. 7 (=11).
[64] *Catalogus librorum clarissimi viri. Matthaei Vossii* (Amsterdam: Pieter Dircksz Boeteman, 1647), USTC 1121813, p. 42.
[65] *Catalogus Instructissimae & exquisitissimae Bibliothecae Illustrissimi Viri Gasparis Fagel* (The Hague: Arnout Leers, 1689), USTC 1820196, p. 47.
[66] Cited in Drees, '"Burgerlijke" zeventiende-eeuwse literatuur', p. 142.

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society: a community without law was unnatural and would swiftly degenerate into anarchy. It was the foremost duty of the authorities to issue laws that were beneficial to the community. In general, laws were welcomed and often demanded by the inhabitants of a community, and not considered to be unnecessary meddling.[67]

The majority of municipal ordinances did not introduce intrusive measures into the daily lives of citizens. Reading through registers of ordinances held in various Dutch municipal archives, it is clear that much of the regulation announced by magistrates was essential to the general stability of the community.[68] It was in the interest of most citizens to know local tax rates, wages and prices. Everyday commercial decisions relied upon an understanding of the law, and the guarantee that authorities would punish transgressors. The livelihoods of most citizens rested on the assurance that they could sell their produce at the market, that their business would not be challenged by competitors who undercut their prices, and that their goods would not be confiscated or stolen. It is also unsurprising that the regents involved themselves so closely in the regulation of commerce, as excise duties on goods and services raised the greater part of the government's tax revenue. This made government involvement in the commercial affairs of its citizens both desirable and inevitable.

Dutch authorities also went to great lengths to issue ordinances that fall under the European norm of 'good police' (*gute policy*). The term implied the maintenance of public order: 'police ordinances' aimed to promote general security and welfare, ranging from the maintenance of public buildings or roads, measures against pestilence, fire prevention and sanitation to vagrancy, general disorder, prostitution or sumptuary regulations.[69] Such ordinances were frequently reissued or altered. An ordinance requiring citizens to break up sections of ice on the canals in The Hague and store ice picks in their homes was issued by the magistrates of the town in the winter of 1620, 1621, 1624, 1625, 1627, 1635 and 1640.[70] In Gouda, the magistrates repeatedly published ordinances against the theft of municipal street lighting, reiterating the same proclamation four times in 1675 and 1676. Around two-thirds of proclamations listed in the Leiden and Utrecht proclamation registers for the late 16th and early 17th centuries dealt with issues

[67] For a good case study, see Jørgen Mührmann-Lund, '"Good Order and Police". Policing in the Towns and the Countryside during Danish Absolutism (1660–1800)', *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 41 (2016), 71–90.

[68] GAA, Oud Archief Arnhem, inv. 1024–30; HUA, Archief van de Raad, 1577–1795, inv. 153-1 and 153-2; EL, Stadsarchief II, inv. 14-22.

[69] M. Stolleis, K. Härter and L. Schilling (eds), *Policey im Europa der Frühen Neuzeit* (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1996). See also the various volumes of the *Repertorium der Policeyordnungen der Frühen Neuzeit*, published by the Max Planck Institute for Legal History and Legal Theory. For a recent case study, see A. H. M. Kerkhoff, *Per Imperatief Plakkaat: Overheid en pestbestrijding in de Republiek der Zeven Verenigde Nederlanden* (Hilversum: Veloren, 2020).

[70] HGDH, Oud archief van de gemeente 's-Gravenhage 1313–1815, inv. 635, f. 103.

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of everyday concern.[71] Most are short, repetitive proclamations on market days, prayer days, the sale of tax farming positions, prohibitions on the sale of unripe or rotten produce, price ceilings for staple goods, inspections of the municipal fire precautions, public order offences (especially gambling, brawling and public drunkenness), or announcements of collections for the poor, elderly or orphans. Some announcements return at the same time every year, such as the prohibition on fireworks or festivities around New Year.

Despite their formal exclusion from policy-making, citizens were deeply involved in the formulation, alteration and implementation of law, especially commercial legislation.[72] As Henk van Nierop has shown, most municipal ordinances in Amsterdam were only issued after petitions were presented by individuals, guilds or the wider citizen body.[73] Every week three of the nine aldermen of the city were required to arrive early at the town hall to read and process petitions. In other cities in the Dutch Republic magistrates were burdened by similar duties. Although it was not enshrined in statute, petitioning was considered throughout the Dutch Republic to be a right of every citizen. Judging by the large folders of petitions surviving in municipal archives, it was a right that Dutch citizens exercised with zeal.[74]

Many petitions concern requests for tax exemptions and financial subsidies, but demands for new ordinances or reiterations of existing laws were almost as common. Traders, ranging from beer carriers and peat sellers to pharmacists, cloth buyers and tax farmers, all paid especially close attention to local legislation. On 3 July 1699, the deacons of the beer brewers' guild of Utrecht complained that tax farmers in the city were not observing the regulations of the *Ordonnantie op den impost van de bieren*, as well as a revision of the same ordinance from 20 May 1667, and in consequence overcharging the beer brewers.[75] In 1644, the farmer of the tax on beer in Medemblik complained that the tenth article of the ordinance on the local beer excise was not being observed by the citizens of the city.[76] In 1683, Jacomina Oliviers urged the magistrates of Utrecht to reiterate

[71] HUA, Archief van de Raad (stadsbestuur van Utrecht) 1577–1795, inv. 153. See also Van Benthem Jutting, 'Iets over de zogenoemde aflezingboeken', 104.

[72] Liesbeth Geevers and Griet Vermeesch (eds), *Politieke belangenbehartiging in de vroegmoderne Nederlanden: De rol van lobby, petities, en officiële delegaties in de politieke besluitvorming* (Maastricht: Shaker, 2014); Joris van den Tol, 'Kondschappen: lobbyen in de zeventiende-eeuwse Republiek via petities, publieke opinie, en persoonlijke relaties', *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis – Journal of History*, 131 (2018), 431–52. For an excellent case study, see also Joris van den Tol, *Lobbying in Company: Economic Interests and Political Decision Making in the History of Dutch Brazil, 1621–1656* (Leiden: Brill, 2020).

[73] Van Nierop, 'Private Interests, Public Policies', pp. 35–6. See also Van Nierop, 'Popular Participation', pp. 286–7.

[74] Joris Oddens, 'The Greatest Right of Them All: The Debate on the Right to Petition in the Netherlands from the Dutch Republic to Kingdom (c. 1750–1830)', *European History Quarterly*, 47 (2017), 634–56.

[75] HUA, Archief van de Raad, 1577–1795, inv. 827.

[76] WFAH, Oud archief stad Medemblik, inv. 1266a.

the ordinance on the salt excise because of the rampant smuggling of salt taking place between Holland and Utrecht.[77] These were important issues: if tax farmers were not confident they would extract enough income from their farms, they would not bid for the rights to collect them.

Preambles explaining why an ordinance had been introduced or amended reveal that supplications from citizens frequently had effect. Remonstrances from merchants, butchers, skippers, officers of the guard, deacons of a guild or other citizens we commonly cited, while many by-laws also used the same or similar phrasing as the petitioners.[78] Consider the following openings of a variety of municipal ordinances issued by the magistrates of Amsterdam, all held in the municipal archive of the city.[79]

> The gentlemen of the magistracy of the city of Amsterdam have received remonstrances from various merchants trading to Groningen and Friesland and similar places in that proximity, stating that they send many goods to these regions daily, without receiving any receipt or notice from a commissary, even though this is a common practice elsewhere in the city . . . (1675)
>
> The gentlemen of the magistracy have, after receiving the remonstrance of the merchants of the city concerning the burdens and inconveniences of the currency exchange trade, agreed to ordain as follows . . . (1679)
>
> After complaints from the owners and tenants of the houses standing on the west side of the butter market, the gentlemen of the magistracy of the city of Amsterdam have ordained . . . that nobody will be allowed to deposit any rubbish there, or around the weighing house, or at the end of the Reguliersgracht . . . (1682)
>
> The gentlemen of the magistracy of the city of Amsterdam, after receiving the supplication submitted by the herb sellers of this city . . . and [considering] the justifications included in the same, have agreed to alter the statute passed on 13 January 1706 concerning the transportation of sweet woodruff through the city . . . (1706)

Through these introductory explanations, magistrates demonstrated that they listened to citizens, and that they made law only because they had been alerted to its necessity by members of the community. When regulation was lax or misjudged, then magistrates acknowledged this without qualms. On 5 February 1693, the magistrates of Alkmaar admitted in a proclamation that their statutes on the flax industry were insufficiently detailed to regulate the local tax on imported hemp and flax. They had reviewed their last by-law on the industry from 1660 after complaints by members of the trade and hereby amplified the regulation to 'end all difficulties, disorder and damage' to the local industry.[80] The regents could

[77] HUA, Archief van de Raad, 1577–1795, inv. 824.
[78] Van Nierop, 'Private Interests, Public Policies', p. 36.
[79] SAA, Archief van de Burgemeesters: stadspublicaties (5021), inv. 1.
[80] *Ampliatie vande keure, op de lyndrayers-neringe* (Alkmaar: Cornelis van Trier, [1693]), USTC 1519142.

even go a step further and apologise outright. On 30 April 1643, the magistrates of Haarlem issued a prohibition on the production or sale of a certain type of rye bread.[81] Seven months later the magistrates annulled the regulation, apologising that it had become clear that the intervention had adversely affected many citizens and their trade.[82]

Explanatory justifications were an essential element of proclamations because municipal authorities always relied on the help of their citizens. The sheriff could only employ a few assistants and otherwise relied on the urban militia or the goodwill of citizens to enforce the law. In the 1670s, the magistrates of Haarlem made repeated proclamations calling for information on the identity of citizens who caused mayhem on the streets at night by brawling and fighting.[83] They had no idea who could be involved in these disturbances and lacked the necessary means to apprehend them. The authorities knew that they, as a collective of thirty to fifty individuals, could do very little to enforce the legislation they enacted. This made communication of the law paramount to the effectiveness of the regents as guardians of the community. Listening to their citizens and issuing law was, in itself, not enough: it was only the first stage of a lengthy process.

Proclaiming the law

Gerbrand Bredero's *Spaanschen Brabander* (1617) was a popular Dutch comedy during the Golden Age. The play, set in the 1570s, sees the deceitful Brabander Jerolimo arrive in Amsterdam to relieve the naïve northerners of the contents of their purses. The play is set on the streets and squares of Amsterdam, introducing a host of characters drawn from the daily urban life of the metropolis, following their conversations, trade and criminal activities. The play also offers a portrayal of a typical urban proclamation. In Act 3, Scene 2, the characters Harmen, Andries and Jan have a conversation on the state of the country, when, all of a sudden, bells rings out:

> *Harmen*: Well, what do I hear? What can that be?
> *Andries*: It is the city's bells, something's to be read out.
> *Robbeknol, with a host of others, burst on stage*: The people rush to the Dam [square],

[81] *Verbodt, van dat geene broodt-slijters ende slijtsters gheene rogghe, nochte Grof Tarruwen-Broodt moghen verkoopen* (Haarlem: Vincent Casteleyn, 1643), USTC 1500257.

[82] *Alsoomen by naerder onderrechtinghe by het verbodt gedaen publiceren den lesten Aprilis hebben den heeren goedt geacht 't voorsz. verbot so veel te altereren ende veranderen alle soorten van broot sullen moghen verkoopen ende te koope houden* (Haarlem: Vincent Casteleyn, 1643), USTC 1500259.

[83] *Alsoo tot kennisse van mijne heeren van den gerechte gekomen is, dat personen des avonts met messen te snijden en te quetsen: soo is't, dat mijne heeren allen die eenige kennisse mochten hebben, bevelen aen te manen* (Haarlem: Abraham Casteleyn, 1675), USTC 1519833; and *Burgermeesteren ende regeerders der stad Haerlem, hebbende ondervonden, dat persoonen des avonts moetwilligheden plegen soo is't, dat de heeren bekent maecken, dat wie alsulcke handtdadigen weet te openbaren, een vereeringe sal werden gegeven* (Haarlem: Abraham Casteleyn, 1671), USTC 1519808.

> to see what it means / justice will be proclaimed, the bells are ringing / There I must haste, and see what they publish . . . the cushions have come out: there is the *schout* / and the secretary, be sure to keep your mouth shut.[84]

The secretary of Amsterdam then reads out an ordinance against vagabonds, beggars, impostors and bandits, who are roving the countryside and have entered Amsterdam to the detriment of its public order. As the crowd disperses, Harmen, Andries and Jan continue their conversation, discussing the ordinance at length. Harmen and Jan are pleased with the regulation, but Andries is sceptical whether it will do any good: who will actually enforce the strict measures against the indeterminable bands of vagrants?

When the *Spaanschen Brabander* was staged in Amsterdam in the early 17th century, the scene of the proclamation would have been a familiar trope of urban life to the chuckling audience. The sounds of the city bells, the placement of the register of statutes on the cushion, the ringing voice of the secretary; these too were familiar features to an audience confronted on a daily basis by the ceremonies of urban governance. Considerable weight was attached to such ceremony. In 1747, rioters in Amsterdam broke into the town hall and, as an act of defiance, took the ceremonial cushions that the magistrates used for the proclamation of ordinances and waved these to the rioters on the Dam from one of the windows to indicate that they had taken full possession of the town hall.[85]

Early modern political life was dominated by ritual performances. The social organisation of communities revolved around cycles of annual markets, religious feast days, festivals and civic parades. The proclamation was one of the most traditional forms of political ritual, dating back to the first organised urban communes of the mediaeval period. In the Dutch Republic it was one of the most important formal ceremonies that took place on a regular basis. The occasion was called a *proclamatie* (proclamation), *publicatie* (publication), *afkondiging* (announcement) or *aflezing* (public reading). Throughout the Dutch Republic, proclamations took place from the balustrade or one of the windows of the town hall.[86]

The town hall was a symbolic physical space, located at the heart of the urban community on the market square or one of the main commercial streets. The town hall was a projection of municipal power and authority, and a source of significant civic pride. Many Dutch town halls were redesigned or expanded in the late 16th and early 17th centuries, their interiors richly decorated with biblical stories that emphasised justice and classical allegories that glorified republican

[84] G. A. Bredero, *Spaanschen Brabander*, ed. C. F. P. Stutterheim (Culemborg: Tjeenk Willink/Noorduijn, 1974), vs. 1142–6.
[85] Dekker, *Holland in beroering*, p. 78.
[86] For the Southern Netherlands see Jean-Marie Cauchies, 'Le "cri" et l'espace urbain: bretèches et publication dans les villes des anciens Pays-Bas', *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire*, 89 (2011), 167–89, esp. 171–2.

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Figure 4.2 Theodoor van Thulden, *Justice and Concord*, 1646. This painting was commissioned by the magistrates of Den Bosch for their town hall: Justice carries her sword and scales, while Concord fastens a bundle of arrows.

self-government (Figure 4.2).[87] At the town hall, the magistrates convened in closed chambers, but it was also a space which was accessible to most citizens of the community. This was the location of the municipal court, where citizens could settle their differences or plead their case, while it could also serve as a commercial space: in Amsterdam the currency exchange was located in the town hall.

A 1662 description of Amsterdam took the reader on a tour of the magnificent new town hall, noting that 'all placards and other laws are read before the people' from a balustrade adjacent to the chamber of justice, overlooking the Dam square.[88] The secretary of Amsterdam would have to do his best to make himself heard across the busy, expansive Dam; in other cities, such as Alkmaar and Leiden, the balustrade of the town hall was only a little elevated above ground level and opened onto a street where the high walls created a natural amphitheatre,

[87] Joop de Jong, 'Visible Power? Town Halls and Political Values', in Wayne te Brake and Wim Klooster (eds), *Power and the City in the Netherlandic World* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), pp. 149–76; Pieter Vlaardingerbroek, 'Dutch Town Halls and the Setting of the *Vierschaar*', in Konrad Ottenheym, Krista De Jonge and Monique Chatenet (eds), *Public Buildings in Early Modern Europe* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010), pp. 105–18; Suzanne van de Meerendonk et al., 'Striving for Unity: The Significance and Original Context of Political Allegories by Theodoor van Thulden for 's-Hertogenbosch Town Hall', *Early Modern Low Countries*, 1 (2017), 231–72.
[88] Melchior Fokkens, *Beschrijvinge der wijdt-vermaerde koop-stadt Amstelredam* (Amsterdam: Marcus Willemsz Doornik, 1662), USTC 1525239, p. 145.

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ensuring that the proclamation would be more audible to those gathered to hear it (Figure 4.3).

In most cities, attention would be drawn to the proclamation by the ringing of the town hall's bells, the sound that startled the characters in the *Spaanschen Brabander*. The Dordrecht proclamation registers were specifically known as the *klepboeken* (ringing books), after this practice.[89] In Gouda, the magistrates reserved the ringing of the town hall bells exclusively for the purpose of making proclamations.[90] The practice was also exported overseas: in Batavia, proclamations were made 'after bell-ringing in the town and the fort'.[91] The notice that an ordinance was 'read from the town hall after bell ringing' can be found on ordinances from numerous towns, including Amsterdam, Alkmaar, Beverwijk, Delft, Den Bosch, Haarlem, Leiden, Groningen, Kampen, Rotterdam, Utrecht, Vlissingen and Zierikzee. It was sometimes also noted that the reading took place 'before the people'. In smaller towns or villages, proclamations might take place in the parish church on Sundays, where the magistrates could be assured of a sizeable audience.[92] In cities, proclamations could also be repeated in church by a minister or civic official, but this seems to have served as a supplementary announcement, never displacing the town hall as the primary location of the proclamation.

Despite the riches of the artistic culture of the Dutch Golden Age, there is a remarkable dearth of visual portrayals of proclamations. Extraordinary occasions, such as the proclamation of the Twelve Years' Truce with Spain (1609) or the Peace of Münster (1648), were frequently engraved or etched as newssheets or political memorabilia (Figures 4.4, 4.5 and 4.6). Representations of such important events show large crowds on packed squares, looking towards erected platforms or balustrades where the regents have turned out in force. The proclamation is accompanied by trumpets, drums or perhaps even by celebratory bonfires.

Municipal proclamations were a much more routine affair and, from what one can gather, more modest too. An etching by Jan (II) van de Velde of the town hall of Haarlem in 1628 features the scene of a municipal proclamation: a couple of members of the magistracy lean out of one of the windows of the town hall, while a small crowd has gathered below to listen (Figures 4.7 and 4.8). The audience is almost lost in the imposing market square. There are no trumpeters or drummers to be seen; the magistrates relied on the bells from the town hall to gather listeners from the market square and adjacent streets.

[89] Van Benthem Jutting, 'Iets over de zogenoemde aflezingboeken', pp. 100–1.

[90] *Instructie voor den wethouderen der stede vander Goude, begrijpende eensdeels wat heurluyder officie respective zy, ende wat syluyden ex officio vermoghen, ofte niet* (Gouda: Pieter Rammazeyn, 1633), USTC 1027007, p. 3.

[91] *Lyste van't salaris. Vande deurwaerder en stadsbodes* (Batavia: Hendrick Brants and Jan Bruyning, 1668), USTC 1804754, f. A4r.

[92] Van Benthem Jutting, 'Iets over de zogenoemde aflezingboeken', p. 100. See also P. Brood, *Drentse Plakkatenlijst, 1593–1840* (Bussum: Kemink, 1975), p. 9; and Prakke, *Kerkgang om nieuws*. See also Chapter 3.

Figure 4.3 The town hall of Schiedam, 2022. The town hall was the political focal point of the urban community and a prime location for proclamations. Many town hall balustrades from which the magistrates performed proclamations, such as that in Schiedam, were easily accessible and opened onto the busy commercial heart of the town.

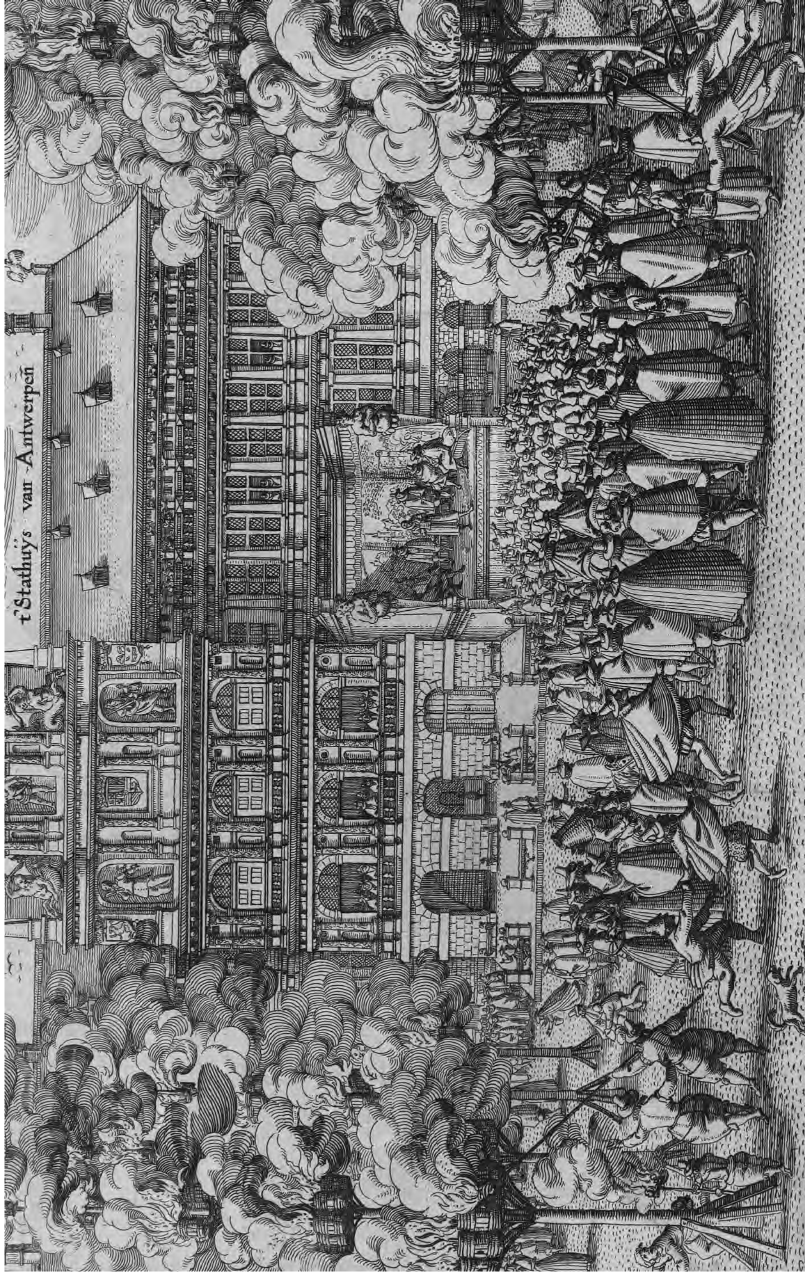

Figure 4.4 Claes Jansz (II) Visscher, *Afkondiging van het bestand voor het stadhuis van Antwerpen*, 1609. Proclamation of the Twelve Years' Truce in 1609.

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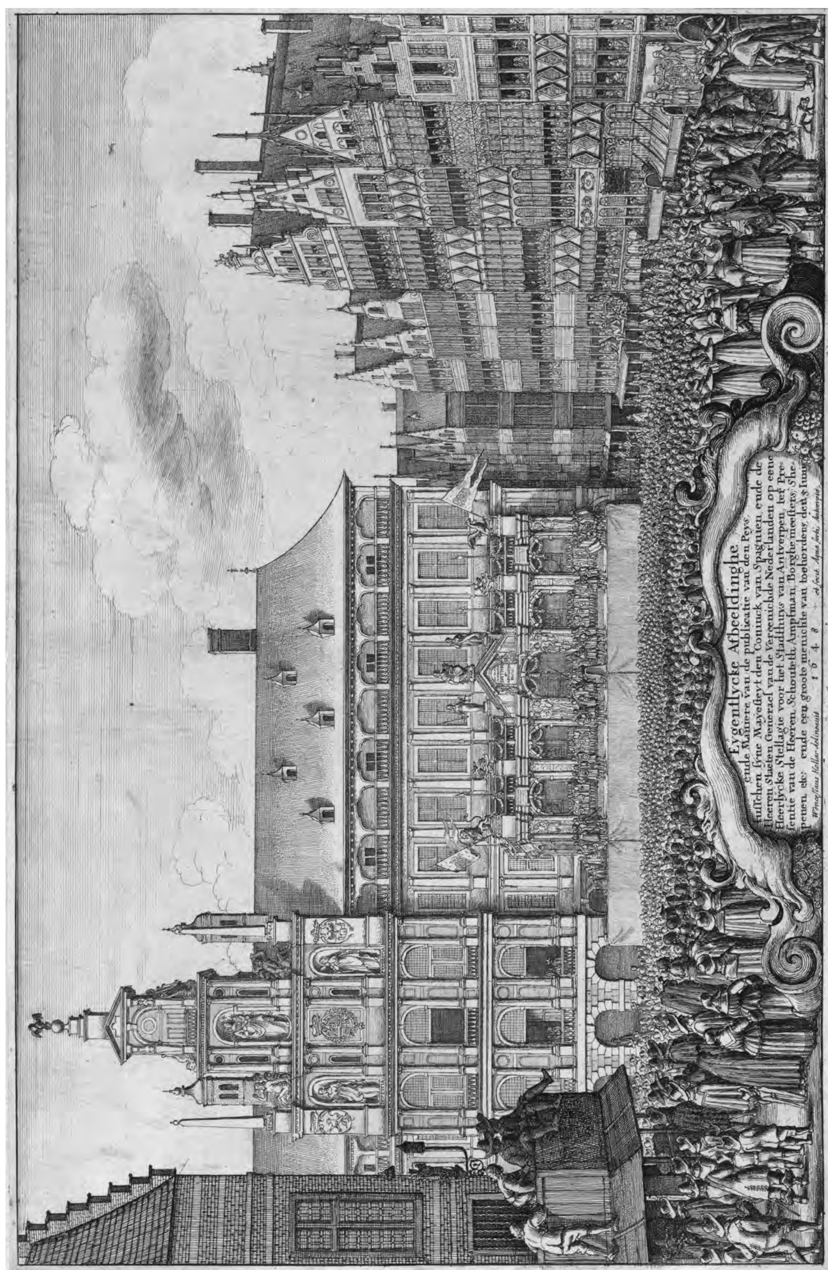

Figure 4.5 Wenceslaus Hollar, *Afkondiging van de vrede van Münster te Antwerpen*, 1648. Proclamation of the Peace of Münster in 1648.

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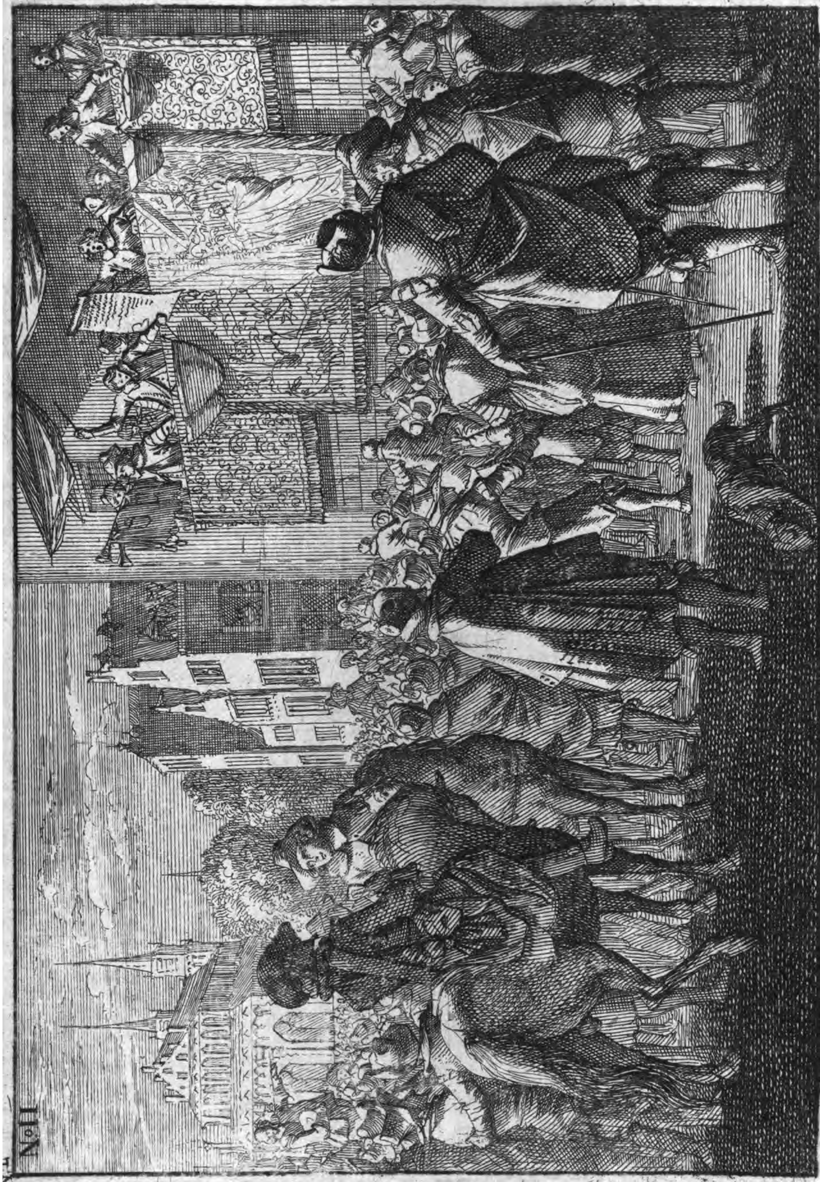

Figure 4.6 Caspar Luyken, *Afkondiging van de vrede van Osnabrück in een stad*, 1701. Proclamation of the Peace of Osnabrück (1648).

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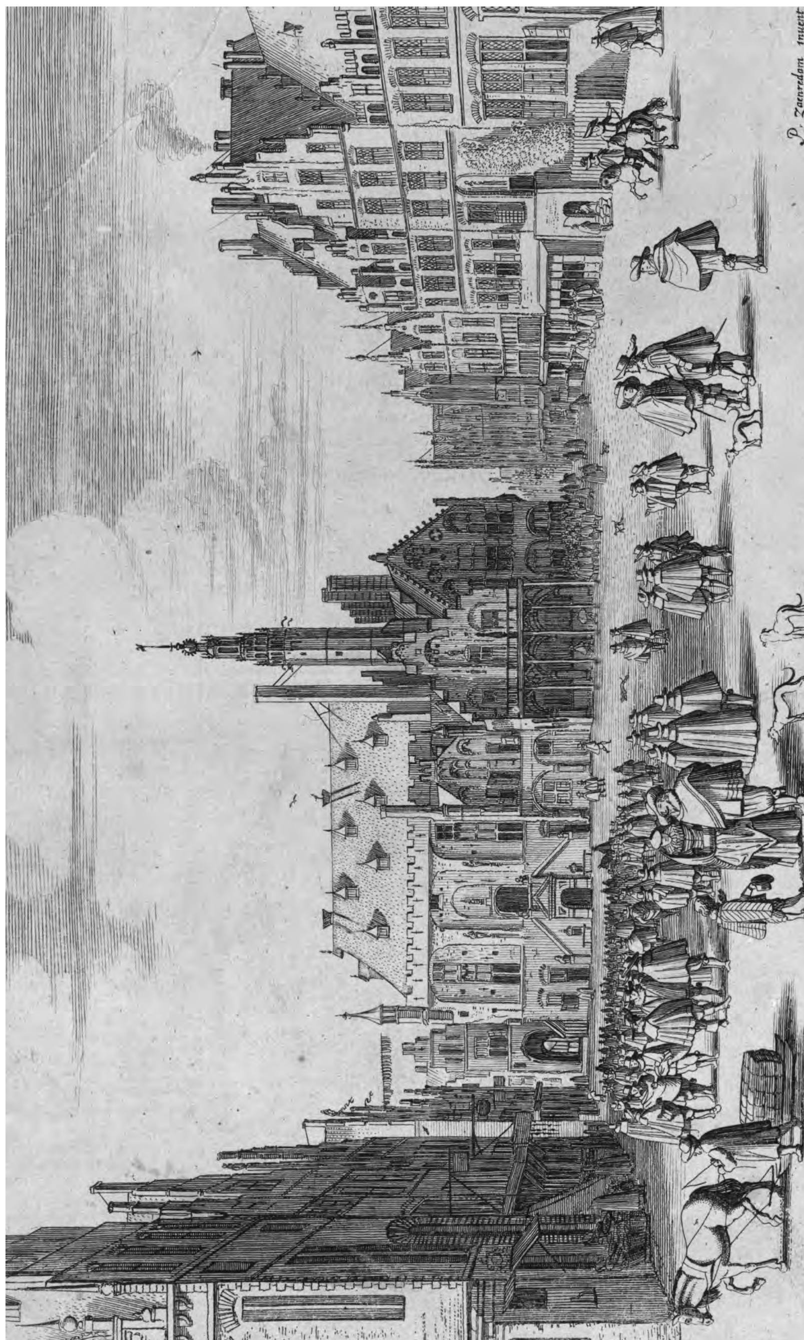

Figure 4.7 Jan (II) van de Velde, after Pieter Jansz Saenredam, *Gezicht op de Grote Markt met het stadhuis te Haarlem*, *c.* 1657–75. Portrayal of the market square and town hall of Haarlem, with a scene of a municipal proclamation taking place in the background.

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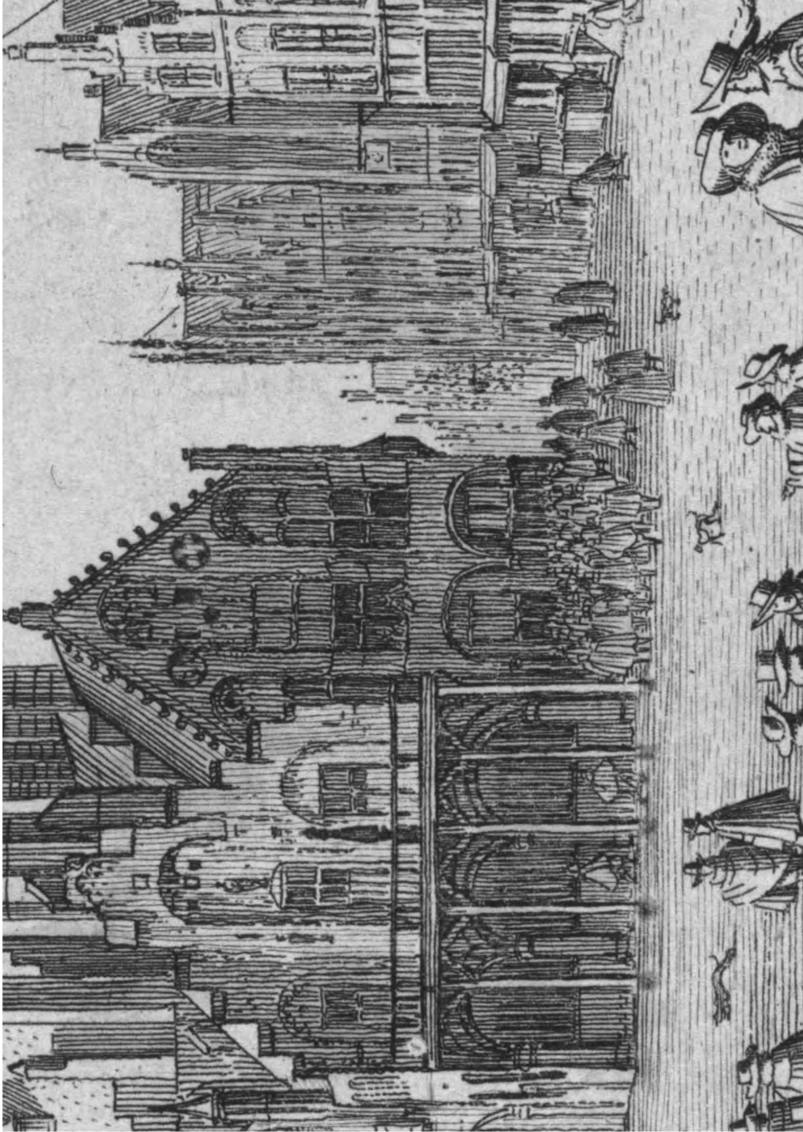

Figure 4.8 Extract from Jan (II) van de Velde, after Pieter Jansz Saenredam, *Gezicht op de Grote Markt met het stadhuis te Haarlem*, *c.* 1657–75. Detail of Figure 4.7, showing the window where the proclamation is being made.

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The municipal proclamation was one of the most common occurrences in 17th-century urban life. In a large city such as Leiden or Utrecht, one could expect to hear the town hall's bells announcing a proclamation every four or five days. In both cities, the magistrates made on average seventy-five proclamations a year in the early 17th century.[93] In smaller cities, the proclamation would generally be a less regular occurrence, but it would still take place at least once a fortnight.[94] Proclamations were a regular feature on the agenda of the municipal secretary, who was responsible with his assistants for the 'writing, registration, documentation and publication' of all ordinances.[95] This may have been a time-consuming job, but it was essential to the governance of the urban community. No law could be passed or amplified without public announcement: it would only come into effect after the magistrates had given their citizens the opportunity to acknowledge the legislation. As we have seen in Chapter 2, the municipal proclamation was an encounter that presented the law to the people but also tested the reception of its contents. The status of the magistrates, normally unchallenged rulers of a community, could easily be unsettled by a hostile reaction.[96] After the proclamation was delivered, bystanders could make their opinions known to the magistrates through abuse, commentary, apathy or violence.[97] The proclamation was an act of negotiation as much as communication.[98] In a republic shorn of monarchical trappings, it was also the most prominent form of political ceremony.

One of the striking elements of municipal proclamations was the personal accountability claimed by the individual regents responsible for the announcement. The city was a close-knit community in which the personal reputation of the magistrates played a major role in effective governance.[99] The dignities of the magistrates elevated them to the highest social rank, but they were and would remain citizens themselves, never princes or monarchs. Their names and faces were well known throughout town. The secretary, sheriff, aldermen and burgomasters who issued an ordinance and attended its proclamation strengthened their role in civic society through their physical presence. Municipal ordinances from Amsterdam, Den Bosch, Haarlem, Leiden, Schiedam, Zwolle and other cities often listed the names of the individual regents responsible for the ordinance, displaying them in a distinctive typeface. An Amsterdam ordinance of 12 April

[93] HUA, Archief van de Raad (stadsbestuur van Utrecht) 1577–1795, inv. 153-1 and 153-2; EL, Stadsarchief II, inv. 14-22.
[94] See for example Den Bosch: EDB, Stadsbestuur van 's-Hertogenbosch, 1262–1810 (0001), inv. 456–7.
[95] EL, Stadsarchief II, inv. 985, f. 34.
[96] De Vivo, *Information and Communication*, p. 127.
[97] Deen, *Publiek debat*, p. 99.
[98] This is also observed for many other urban rituals in Netherlandish cities of the period: see Anne-Laure van Bruaene, 'The Habsburg Theatre State: Court, City, and the Performance of Identity in the Early Modern Southern Low Countries', in Stein and Pollmann (eds), *Networks, Regions and Nations*, pp. 131–50. See also Chapter 2.
[99] Frijhoff and Spies, *1650. Bevochten Eendracht*, p. 178.

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1650 was signed directly below the title: 'in the presence of the gentlemen the sheriff, burgomaster Anthonis Oetgens van Waveren, and aldermen Dr Simon van Hoorn and Nicolaes Pancras.'[100] An Amsterdam ordinance of 14 December 1673 on the regulation of beer barrels featured the names of all the regents who had been responsible for the issuing of the law (which had first entered the statutes on 26 April 1668) and its republication in 1673, listing in total no fewer than twenty-eight secretaries, sheriffs, aldermen and burgomasters.

The physical presence of the regent was critical to inspire support for their rule and obedience to their laws. The physicality of the ceremony also helped instil a degree of accountability. When the citizens of a community were badly informed about the law, frustration and anger could be directed in unpredictable ways. The popular uprising in Amsterdam in 1696 that erupted because of new regulations concerning burials targeted primarily the house of burgomaster Jacob Boreel on the Herengracht. Boreel was not much liked, having previously served a lengthy term as a persecutory sheriff, and he was blamed by the crowd for the unpopular legislation.[101] His house was ransacked, and Boreel only escaped with his life by hoisting himself into his neighbour's garden.

Personal reputation mattered: it could lead to the looting of a regent's house, but it could also quell discontent. The personal intervention of specific regents played a major role in the defusing of disturbances, and burgomasters and aldermen were, courageously so, often known to intervene personally, thrusting themselves into the melee of flying fists, to calm a developing riot.[102] As we shall see in the following chapter, the regents ensured that their efforts in communicating with their citizens did not end there, or with their soothing presence on the balustrades as the proclamations were read out.

[100] *Extract uyttet register vande willekeuren der stadt Amstelredamme, gheteeckent letter M. Gepubliceert den 12 April 1650* ([Amsterdam: Broer Jansz, 1650]), USTC 1122728.
[101] Dekker, *Holland in beroering*, p. 33.
[102] Dekker, *Holland in beroering*, p. 100.

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5

Crying and Affixing the Law

On 11 October 1578, Jacob Roeper (Jacob the Crier) submitted a petition to the magistrates of Leeuwarden. For more than thirty years, he explained, he had served the magistrates dutifully as their town crier (*roeper*) and official drummer (*trommelslager*), but recently, a man named Syurdt Hylckez, a former drummer, had also taken to performing throughout the city with his drum, as well as 'crying certain things'. This, Roeper argued, was in clear contravention of his monopoly on drumming and crying, and of serious detriment to his livelihood. Roeper had 'a house filled with small children' to take care of, and given that he would continue to serve the magistrates loyally 'night and day', he hoped that they would prohibit the said Hylckez from making announcements in the streets. The magistrates of Leeuwarden were receptive to Roeper's petition and ordained that Hylckez and 'all other drummers' were not allowed to cry or drum without the permission of the magistrates.[1]

We can learn much from Roeper's petition about state communication in Dutch communities. It makes clear that Leeuwarden had employed a town crier since the 1540s, who evidently also offered his services to the inhabitants of the city. His secondary role of drummer was important, as it was his drum that marked his progress through the town and gathered crowds before he made his announcements. The position was also lucrative enough that others tried to challenge Roeper's monopoly, but the magistrates defended his privilege because Roeper performed a critical role in the daily politics of the city. He was responsible for ensuring that the law was proclaimed to all inhabitants in the community, extending the authority of the regents to every part of the townscape.

The magistrates of Dutch towns were not oblivious to the deficiencies of their rituals of state communication. A single proclamation from the balustrade of the town hall could never reach the entire urban community. The town hall bells could announce the beginning of a proclamation, but this would not gather together

[1] HCL, Archief van de stad Leeuwarden, 1426–1811, inv. 126, f. 307.

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the population of an entire city. The official proclamation was legally sufficient to introduce a regulation, but it could never suffice as a means of communication. Some regulations could be laid out in a matter of sentences, but the meaning of others, composed of a thousand words or more, might be misunderstood or misremembered when passed on to others.[2] Complex measures regulating wages, prices or taxation rates were impossible to communicate effectively through an oral proclamation. It was for this reason that the municipal authorities made persistent use of other agents, town criers and *aanplakkers* (poster-uppers), to bring the law to the people. This chapter will explore, for the first time, the role of the crier and *aanplakker* in the Dutch Republic. Although these officials have left very few traces in the archives, the evidence that does remain, in manuscript and visual sources, indicates the ubiquity of men such as Jacob Roeper. There also emerges from this investigation a new image of the regent class: one adept enough to exploit various complementary media to make themselves heard on the busy commercial streets of the Dutch Golden Age.

The crier's route

The employment of town criers, drummers and trumpeters to proclaim ordinances and municipal announcements was a necessity in large communities all over Europe. The town crier represented one of the key sources of political information for early modern European people of all social strata. He was also an embodiment of political authority: few subjects would ever meet their monarch, but they would hear their ruler's will proclaimed through the words of their local town crier. The crier was a critical link in the chain that tied rulers and ruled. His was therefore a role imbued by ceremony and ritual, emphasised by the crier's attire, instruments and a specific route of locations where he would perform proclamations. The crier had to be a dignified orator, but also accessible and easily comprehensible. In Spain, town criers were warned to perform their proclamations 'in a loud voice, slowly, and with good enunciation'.[3] The crier was required to perform in cacophonous surroundings: limiting and regulating the use of noise, especially that generated by instruments, was a common European concern and may help explain why many towns also sought to limit the number of criers or drummers, as in Leeuwarden.[4]

[2] Adam Fox, *Oral and Literate Culture in England, 1500–1700* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 41, 44–5, 349, 367.
[3] Antonio Castillo Gómez, 'Writings on the Streets: Ephemeral Texts and Public Space in the Early Modern Hispanic World', in Martyn Lyons and Rita Marquilhas (eds), *Approaches to the History of Written Culture: A World Inscribed* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), pp. 73–96, here p. 75.
[4] On the policing of noise and the politics of noise, see David Garrioch, 'Sounds of the City: The Soundscape of Early Modern European Towns', *Urban History*, 30 (2003), 5–25; Philip Hahn, 'Sound Control: Policing Noise and Music in German Towns, ca. 1450–1800', in Robert Beck, Ulrike Krampl and Emmanuelle Retaillaud-Bajac (eds), *Les cinq sens de la ville: Du Moyen Age à nos jours* (Tours:

In late mediaeval and early modern Europe there existed a broadly shared culture of town crying, and a common understanding of the public spaces where such announcements took place.[5] Bridges, market squares, crossroads and important buildings (a court, palace, weighing house) were natural places for the crier to make himself audible to a large and diverse audience. There were nevertheless local customs that dictated varying routes or modes of crying in different European cities. In 17th-century Paris, the town crier was accompanied by three mounted trumpeters and made his way to a dozen prominent locations in the city where he was to proclaim royal or municipal ordinances. He would often repeat the same announcement the following two or three days, taking a different route each day, but with a similar number of locations.[6] In Lyon, the town crier was also mounted and accompanied by a single trumpeter, and he would frequent bridges, markets and 'other intersections and public places'.[7] In 14th- and 15th-century Florence, six town criers were employed by the magistrates of the city to proclaim ordinances on horseback, with the aid of a silver trumpet.[8] Together the criers of Florence ensured that each proclamation was made at a total of forty-four locations, including the main square, the city gates, prominent crossroads, churches, bridges and palaces. The criers were to supply two horses, one of which was always to be tied close to the town hall in case a proclamation needed reading. This was obviously a very expensive service, and the criers, who needed to own or have access to two horses, would necessarily have been members of well-established families. In Venice, a city of pedestrians rather than horse riders, the *comandadori* made their proclamations from stone columns, one of which can still be seen today on Saint Mark's Square, at the south corner of the Basilica di San Marco.[9]

In communities much smaller than Paris, Lyon, Florence or Venice, criers were often officials with multiple functions. In early 16th-century Murano, a town of 5,000 inhabitants north of Venice, the *comandador* made all public announcements issued by the local Venetian governor but also summoned inhabitants required to

Presses universitaire François Rabelais, 2013), pp. 355–67; and Nicholas Hammond, *Powers of Sound and Song in Early Modern Paris* (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 2021).

[5] Didier Lett and Nicolas Offenstadt (eds), *Haro! Noël! Oyé!: Pratiques du cri au Moyen Âge* (Paris: Éditions de la Sorbonne, 2003); Nicolas Offenstadt, 'Les crieurs publics à la fin du Moyen Âge', in C. Boudreau et al. (eds), *Information et société en Occident à la fin du Moyen Âge* (Paris: Sorbonne, 2004), pp. 203–17; James Masschaele, 'The Public Space of the Marketplace in Medieval England', *Speculum*, 77 (2002), 383–421; Carol Symes, 'Out in the Open, in Arras: Sightlines, Soundscapes, and the Shaping of a Medieval Public Sphere', in Caroline Goodson, Anne E. Lester and Carol Symes (eds), *Cities, Texts and Social Networks, 400–1500: Experiences and Perceptions of Medieval Urban Space* (London: Routledge, 2010), pp. 279–302.

[6] Kim, *French Royal Acts Printed*, pp. 47–50; Fogel, *Les cérémonies de l'information*, pp. 40–50.

[7] Cumby, 'Bread and Fairs', p. 166. This was very similar to the process in Toulouse: Nadrigny, *Information et espace public*, pp. 254–5.

[8] Milner, '"Fanno bandire, notificare, et expressamente comandare"', 107–51, esp. 111–13.

[9] On criers in Venice, see De Vivo, *Information and Communication*, pp. 127–36.

appear in court, organised public auctions and ceremonies, and acted as official boatman for the governor.[10] In 15th-century Laon, in northern France, the local crier was also a watchman, firefighter, street sweeper and market official.[11] In Ath, a small town in Hainaut, the crier Jean Maes was also a bailiff and printer.[12] In provincial English towns, edicts were often cried by clerks or other town officials.[13] In Scotland, the act of crying was intimately bound up with the 'roup', a public sale or auction, a term with close linguistic affinity to the more general Dutch 'roep' (meaning 'call').[14]

The duties of criers and other agents associated with state communication in the Dutch Republic have to be pieced together from varying archival, printed and visual sources. There were clear local variations in practice, but in general there was a shared culture that privileged pedestrian criers over mounted criers, a clear contrast to the Flemish city of Ghent, where mounted trumpeters were the norm in the 16th century.[15] In the Dutch Republic, drums and bells seem to have been more common than trumpets, even if, in the 1560s and 1570s, the magistrates of Amsterdam occasionally sent out municipal trumpeters to announce a proclamation on 'all major streets and corners'.[16] In the city of Groningen, magistrates had ordinances 'proclaimed by the crier', 'circulated with the drums' or 'published with bells'.[17] In Den Bosch, only part of the Republic from 1629 onwards, ordinances were published 'on the streets with the trumpet' on the same days as formal proclamations were made from the balustrade of the town hall. This was a practice that seems to have originated only in the early 17th century but persisted long after the city's incorporation into the Dutch Republic.[18]

Municipal archives in the Netherlands often contain registers of instructions issued to civic officers, or simply a register of municipal employees. Such registers reveal that most Dutch magistrates – including those of Alkmaar, Amsterdam,

[10] Claire Judde de Larivière, 'Voicing Popular Politics: The Town Crier of Murano in the Sixteenth Century', in Stefano Dall'Aglio, Brian Richardson and Massimo Rospocher (eds), *Voices and Texts in Early Modern Italian Society* (London: Routledge, 2016), pp. 37–51.

[11] Nicolas Offenstadt, *En place publique: Jean de Gascogne, crieur au XVe siècle* (Paris: Stock, 2013), pp. 163–204.

[12] Afonso, 'L'imprimé official', p. 57.

[13] Kyle, 'Monarch and Marketplace', 784.

[14] Emma Hart, 'A British Atlantic World of Advertising? Colonial American "For Sale" Notices in Comparative Context', *American Periodicals: A Journal of History, Criticism, and Bibliography*, 24 (2014), 110–27, here 116.

[15] Vermeersch, *Multimedia in de stad*, pp. 106–9.

[16] Deen, *Publiek debat*, pp. 19, 60.

[17] J. Oomkens and J. Zoon, *Bouwstoffen tot eene geschiedenis van de boekdrukkunst en den boekhandel in de stad en provincie Groningen* (Groningen: Boekverkoopers-collegie te Groningen, 1854), p. 4; J. de Bruijn, *Plakkaten van Stad en Lande. Overzicht van Groningse rechtsvoorschriften in de periode 1594–1795* (Groningen: Nederlands Agronomisch-Historisch Instituut, 1983), p. 23. A good contemporary example is provided by *Instructie voor des stadts-majeur in Groningen* (Groningen: Frans Bronchorst, 1665), USTC 1802187.

[18] EDB, Stadsbestuur van 's-Hertogenbosch, 1262–1810 (0001), inv. 196–7, 456–7, 481–92.

Haarlem, Zwolle, Utrecht, Amersfoort and Deventer – employed town criers (*roepers* or *omroepers*), trumpeters, drummers and bell ringers, but the registers disclose little about their duties.[19] Some of these individuals, such as Jacob Roeper in Leeuwarden, also fulfilled multiple functions at once. What is clear is that criers were employed in very small towns as well as large cities, and that 17th-century Dutch towns without a crier would have constituted a negligible minority. Some communities, such as the port town of Vlissingen, also employed additional criers for specific purposes, in their case a crier for the fish market.[20] The town crier was such a common sight that he was also a recurring subject of Delft tiles: the Tegelmuseum in Otterlo holds at least six 17th-century tiles featuring criers (Figure 5.1).[21] We can also find town criers as subjects of other visual sources, including engravings and drawings (Figures 5.2 and 5.3).

Throughout the Dutch Republic, it seems that criers also offered their services to individual citizens, alongside their formal duties as municipal functionaries. They were frequently hired to make announcements concerning sales or auctions, or to share public information concerning the loss of goods, missing persons or runaway servants. Information on the commercial functions of town criers can be hard to trace in the archive, but their presence is often revealed in other sources. The copy of a surviving auction catalogue printed in Den Bosch in 1694 contains an annotation by an auctioneer that he hired the town crier for eight stuivers to spread the word of the auction.[22]

Announcements placed in Dutch newspapers also attest to the existence of town criers in Amsterdam, Haarlem, Delft and The Hague, as they are regularly mentioned as the point of contact for lost or stolen goods.[23]

> During the night from Monday to Tuesday there was stolen in Haarlem from a beer-boat from Zwolle (of skipper Tammert Hendricksz), a dark green cloth of 38 and a quarter ell long. Whoever finds this cloth is to address themselves to the town crier of Haarlem.[24]

> There has gone missing in Amsterdam a yellow silk bed frame cover. If anyone finds it they are requested to inform the town crier of Amsterdam, the town crier of

[19] Some examples include RAA, Archief van de gemeente Alkmaar, 1325–1815, inv. 300, f. 138; SAA, Archief van de Burgemeesters: stukken betreffende ambten en officiën, inv. 12 and inv. 17 (ff. 1, 32); NHAH, Stadsbestuur van Haarlem 1573–1813, inv. 1350; HCOZ, Stadsbestuur Zwolle, inv. 66, p. 528; HUA, Archief van de Raad (stadsbestuur van Utrecht) 1577–1795, inv. 199 and inv. 899; Archief Eemland, Stadsbestuur Amersfoort, 1300–1810, inv. 15, f. 824v; HCOD, Provisoren van het Oude Mannenhuis te Deventer (0793), inv. 37.

[20] GAV, Verzameling gedrukte ordonnantiën (399), inv. 153.

[21] They are digitally available on www.geheugenvannederland.nl (search 'omroeper'), last accessed 31 January 2022.

[22] *Catalogus variorum & insignium in omnia lingua* (Den Bosch: Henricus van der Hoeven, 1694), USTC 1847403, copy in GAA, Huisarchief Ammerzoden, inv. 188B:15.

[23] See Der Weduwen and Pettegree, *News, Business and Public Information*, p. 653.

[24] *Tijdinghe uyt verscheyden Quartieren*, no. 48 (Amsterdam: widow Broer Jansz, 29 November 1653); Der Weduwen and Pettegree, *News, Business and Public Information*, p. 145.

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Figure 5.1 A town crier on a stool portrayed on a 17th-century Delft tile (*c.* 1650), from the collections of the Dutch tile museum, which holds other similar tiles featuring town criers.

Figure 5.2 *De Viaansche Omroeper*, 1720. A town crier (with his drum) portrayed on a broadsheet poem satirising the *windhandel*, the crisis in share trading of the early 1720s.

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Figure 5.3 Gerard (II) ter Borch, *Omroeper op een marktplein*, *c*. 1630–35. A Dutch town crier holding forth to an attentive crowd.

> Haarlem, Mr Vinck in The Hague, opposite the town hall, in 'The Arms of Egmond', or Hendrick Martensz Sorgh in Rotterdam, on the Steiger, in 'The Dordrecht Market-Barge'.[25]
>
> Last week there was lost in Amsterdam a partridge dog, around half an ell tall, with a chestnut coloured skin, with spots, and a short, hairy white tail, and one more claw on its rear paws than most dogs. Her name is Filander. If you try to catch her then she will try to bite you, and during the night she cries out frequently, and scratches on the door. She is around two years old, and she also has a long, pointy snout. Whoever finds her is requested to bring her to the town crier, for which they will receive a good reward.[26]

Missing cloth, stolen coats, misplaced diamonds rings, even aggressive pets: these personal misfortunes were, alongside the ordinances of the magistrates, the commercial lifeblood of the crier.

Occasionally we can find incidental information in the archives that sheds more light on the salaries and duties of town criers in the Dutch Republic. In Vlissingen the magistrates employed a court bailiff (*gerechtsbode*) to proclaim ordinances throughout the town, for which he was paid five stuivers per ordinance.[27] In Kampen, a host of town criers, trumpeters, horn blowers and pipers were involved in the dissemination of ordinances.[28] The town crier of

[25] *Oprechte Haerlemse Dingsdaegse Courant*, no. 29 (Haarlem: Abraham Casteleyn, 16 July 1669); Der Weduwen and Pettegree, *News, Business and Public Information*, p. 353.

[26] *Oprechte Haerlemse Dingsdaegse Courant*, no. 2 (Haarlem: Abraham Casteleyn, 10 January 1668); Der Weduwen and Pettegree, *News, Business and Public Information*, pp. 306–7.

[27] GAV, Verzameling gedrukte ordonnantiën, *Salaris voor de Gerechtsbodes te Vlissingen*.

[28] SAK, Oud Archief Kampen, inv. 11, ff. 172, 181v, 207v, 213, 223 and inv. 306, f. 121r.

Kampen was paid one guilder for the proclamation of an ordinance, four times as much as the *gerechtsbode* in Vlissingen. In both Kampen and Vlissingen, however, it is unclear how many times the crier was required to proclaim the ordinance throughout the town.

In addition to his fee, the Kampen town crier received a salary of thirty-six guilders per year, and seven guilders for his uniform.[29] In 1638, the Groningen town crier Ubbe Pieters received a salary of twenty-eight guilders, two stuivers and four penningen, and he too was supplied with appropriate clothing.[30] This was a crucial aspect of the position. In 16th-century Venice, the criers were distinguished by 'a long, floor-length mantle in turquoise, and on their heads they wear a cap exactly the shape of those worn by noblemen and citizens but red in colour, to which they attach a gold medal engraved with an image of Saint Mark'.[31] The town crier, like bailiffs, officers of the guard, weighing masters, trumpeters and horn blowers, was to stand out in the urban landscape: he was, by privilege of his office, an extension of the magistrates' authority. In Gouda, the two town criers were valued so much that they were each paid a salary of 150 guilders a year, excluding payments for individual proclamations. This was considerably more than their colleagues in Kampen and Groningen, although it is not known how much they would be paid in addition per declaration.[32]

Happily, extremely detailed instructions have survived for town criers in two Dutch cities, Leiden and Leeuwarden. These reveal the impressive range of locations where Dutch citizens could expect their town criers to proclaim ordinances and make other announcements. The magistrates of these two cities treated the duties of the criers with care and seriousness, and they displayed a remarkable grasp of the importance of extensive and reliable communication with their inhabitants. Compared with their colleagues in European cities, it certainly seems that Dutch town criers had a more cumbersome brief, and that the magistrates paid significant sums to be omnipresent in the lives of their citizens.

On 10 December 1633, the magistrates of Leiden regulated the responsibilities and privileges of their town criers (the plural is used without denoting a specific number), and these regulations were formally proclaimed from the balustrade of the town hall.[33] The town criers had the exclusive right to make private announcements, including those for the loss of goods or missing people, the sale of real estate or notifications of bankruptcy. They were also required to announce all ordinances of the States General, the States of Holland, the city of Leiden or anything else required by the magistrates. For each official proclamation the criers would be paid five stuivers. The instruction also specified that the town

[29] SAK, Oud Archief Kampen, inv. 11, f. 182r.
[30] GAG, Archief van de stad, inv. 332 (1638), ff. 350r, 355v–356v, 402r.
[31] Cited in Judde de Larivière, 'Voicing Popular Politics', p. 41.
[32] SMHG, Oud Archief Gouda, inv. 5038.
[33] EL, Stadsarchief II, inv. 19, ff. 256v–259r.

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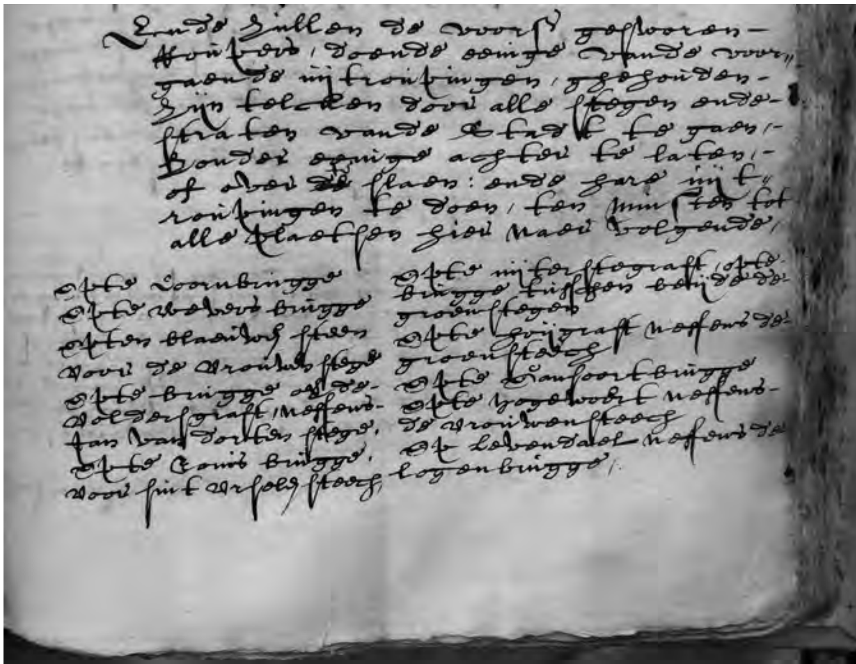

Figure 5.4 Extract from an *Aflezingboek* from the municipal archive of the city of Leiden, 1633, listing locations where the Leiden town criers had to make their announcements.

criers were never to make their announcements when the bells were ringing for the changing of the guard, or for the opening and closing of the city gates. At the end of their regulation, the magistrates listed the fifty-one locations where the criers were to make their announcements (Figures 5.4 and 5.5). These locations included prominent commercial streets such as the Breestraat and the grain and cattle markets, but most proclamations were to be made on the bridges spanning Leiden's canals. Bridges were well suited for proclamations: they were naturally busy thoroughfares, but they also elevated the town crier physically, and the sound of their oration would carry over the water. Altogether, the fifty-one locations offered comprehensive coverage of the Leiden cityscape and ensured that there would be approximately one cry for every one thousand inhabitants.

The number of locations in Leiden was almost matched by those of Leeuwarden's single town crier. In Leeuwarden, the documentation is especially rich for the duties of the town crier: the earliest detailed instruction dates from 1644, but as we have seen, the magistrates had employed a crier since the 1540s. In 1644, the crier-drummer was Agge Rinties Posch, and he was instructed by the magistrates to make his announcements at forty-one locations in the

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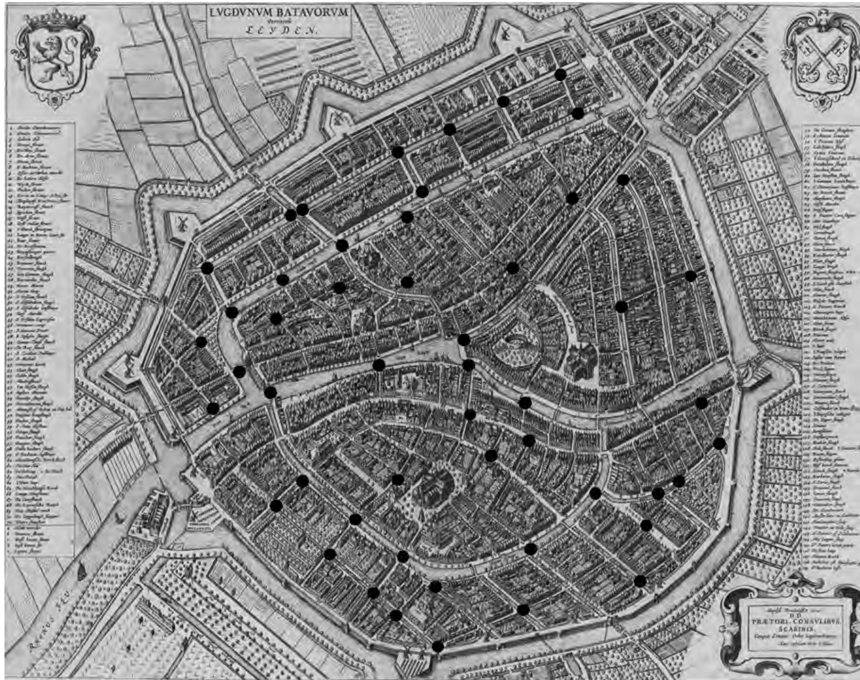

Figure 5.5 Joan Blaeu, *Plattegrond van Leiden*, 1652. The locations where the Leiden town criers had to make their announcements are highlighted.

city.[34] The magistrates also specified the order in which the town crier was to go through the city (he was conveniently allowed to begin his route on his own street, the Breedstraat). This route was expanded with seven additional stops in the 1670s and 1690s. In 1720, the magistrates once again laid out the entire circuit in an instruction, now numbering forty-eight locations (Figure 5.6).[35]

Almost all proclamations in Leeuwarden were made on squares, bridges or crossroads, locations where the town crier would enjoy maximum audibility. The stops included notable places such as the weighing house, the town hall, several marketplaces and churches; but in Leeuwarden, the town crier also found himself on narrow streets in busy residential or commercial quarters of the city. The crier sometimes called out his news only fifty yards from his previous stop, and several times retraced his steps or criss-crossed his previous route, which would allow citizens who missed the announcement to catch up or listen again.

Leeuwarden was the capital of Friesland, but it had only 15,000 inhabitants around 1650, making it a third the size of Leiden. As Figure 5.6 makes clear,

[34] HCL, Archief van de stad Leeuwarden, 1426–1811, inv. 126, ff. 325–8.
[35] HCL, Archief van de stad Leeuwarden, 1426–1811, inv. 696, ff. 128–30.

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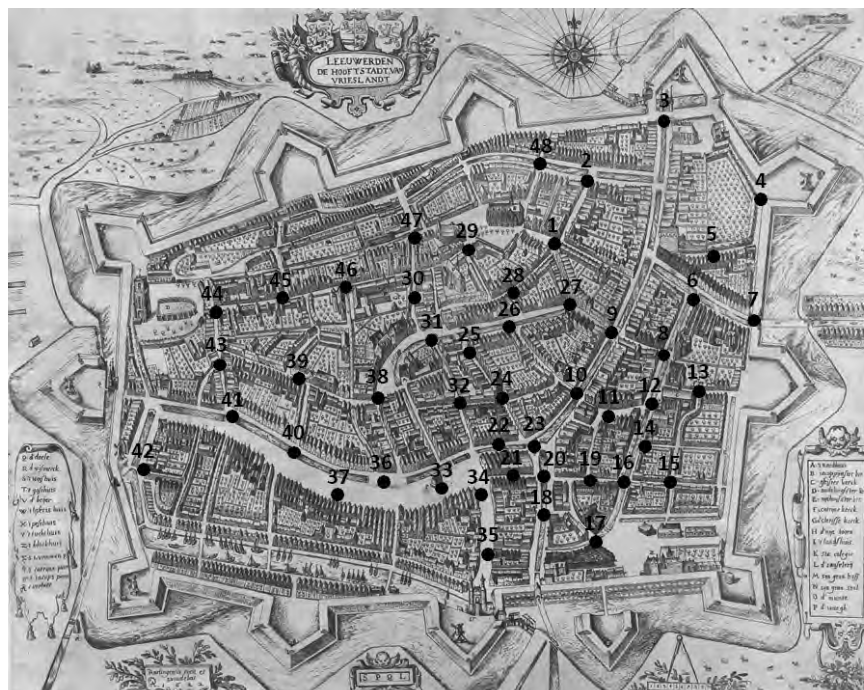

Figure 5.6 Pieter Feddes van Harlingen, *Plattegrond van de stad Leeuwarden*, 1622. The tour of the Leeuwarden town crier throughout the city (per the 1720 regulations).

forty-eight proclamations easily covered the entire city. This route did require a considerable effort on the part of the town crier, who was compensated very well for his rounds, and much better than his colleagues in Leiden, who would divide the fifty-one locations between them. Between November and May, the Leeuwarden town crier would receive five guilders and thirteen stuivers for each municipal proclamation, and three guilders and three stuivers between June and October; the magistrates recognised that the crier's job was more arduous during the cold and wet winter months. He was warned, however, that for each location he skipped he would be fined six stuivers.[36] The magistrates of Leeuwarden were determined that their announcements were heard by all inhabitants, called out at every notable bridge, square or street corner of the city. They also ensured that the crier would be grateful for their official announcements: he was only allowed to charge one guilder and six stuivers for announcements by individual citizens, less than half what he was paid by the magistrates in summer months. The loyalty of the crier was bought dearly, but it was worth every guilder.

[36] HCL, Archief van de stad Leeuwarden, 1426–1811, inv. 696, ff. 128v–129r.

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The *aanplakker* presents himself

In addition to his crying and drumming, the Leeuwarden crier was also charged with affixing municipal broadsheets and other posters. He had a monopoly on the posting of all placards, which he pasted up on the city's 'buildings and corners, town hall, weighing house and gates', presumably posting up broadsheet ordinances after he made a proclamation at one of his stops.[37] In other cities, such as Zwolle and Utrecht, we know that town criers also followed their proclamation with the posting of municipal ordinances.[38] In 1760, the Utrecht town crier and *aanplakker* Jan Hendrick Wolff was paid 458 guilders, six stuivers, eight penningen for municipal pasting and crying. He also received a salary of forty guilders, which he petitioned to have doubled to eighty guilders, the same as the city's *vendumeester* (auction master).[39] This was pushing his luck, because with the emoluments for each ordinance posted or cried, Wolff was already taking home around the standard salary of a Reformed minister. Other civic employees could also perform the duty of posting-up: in 1643 the magistrates of Alkmaar paid Gerrit Jansz, one of their *bodes* (messengers), five guilders for the 'affixing of the posters of the horse market', presumably on his journeys outside the city.[40] Jansz received an annual stipend of fifty-five guilders for his position as messenger, which was undoubtedly padded with such odd jobs.

From a unique set of manuscripts held in the municipal archive of Zutphen, we know that the national dissemination of posters concerning markets was an established phenomenon. In 1643, the magistrates of Zutphen introduced two new annual markets in their town, and to ensure their success, they had a placard printed to announce the details of the market days and conditions of trade. At least three messengers were employed to spread word of the market and to affix posters around the country: their itinerary specified which towns and villages they should visit. To demonstrate that they had fulfilled these obligations, the messengers had to ask the officials in the towns they visited to endorse their written instructions, to be handed back to the magistrates on their return: this is how they have come down to us today (Figure 5.7).[41]

One messenger travelled north, to Overijssel, Drenthe and Groningen, stopping in at least twelve towns; a second travelled through western Overijssel and Friesland, stopping in at least sixteen locations; and the final messenger

[37] HCL, Archief van de stad Leeuwarden, 1426–1811, inv. 696, f. 129v.

[38] Gerrit Bresser, town crier in Utrecht in 1734, was also stated to have been the city's *aanplakker*. HUA, Notarissen in de stad Utrecht, inv. U178a004. For Zwolle see HCOZ, Stadsbestuur Zwolle, inv. 66, p. 528. In 17th-century Lyon, the town crier was also responsible for posting placards: see Cumby, 'Bread and Fairs', p. 166.

[39] HUA, Stadsbestuur van Utrecht 1577–1795 (702), inv. 199.

[40] RAA, Archief van de gemeente Alkmaar, 1325–1815, inv. 372, f. 326v.

[41] RAZ, Inventaris van het oud-archief van de stad Zutphen (1206–1815), inv. 557.

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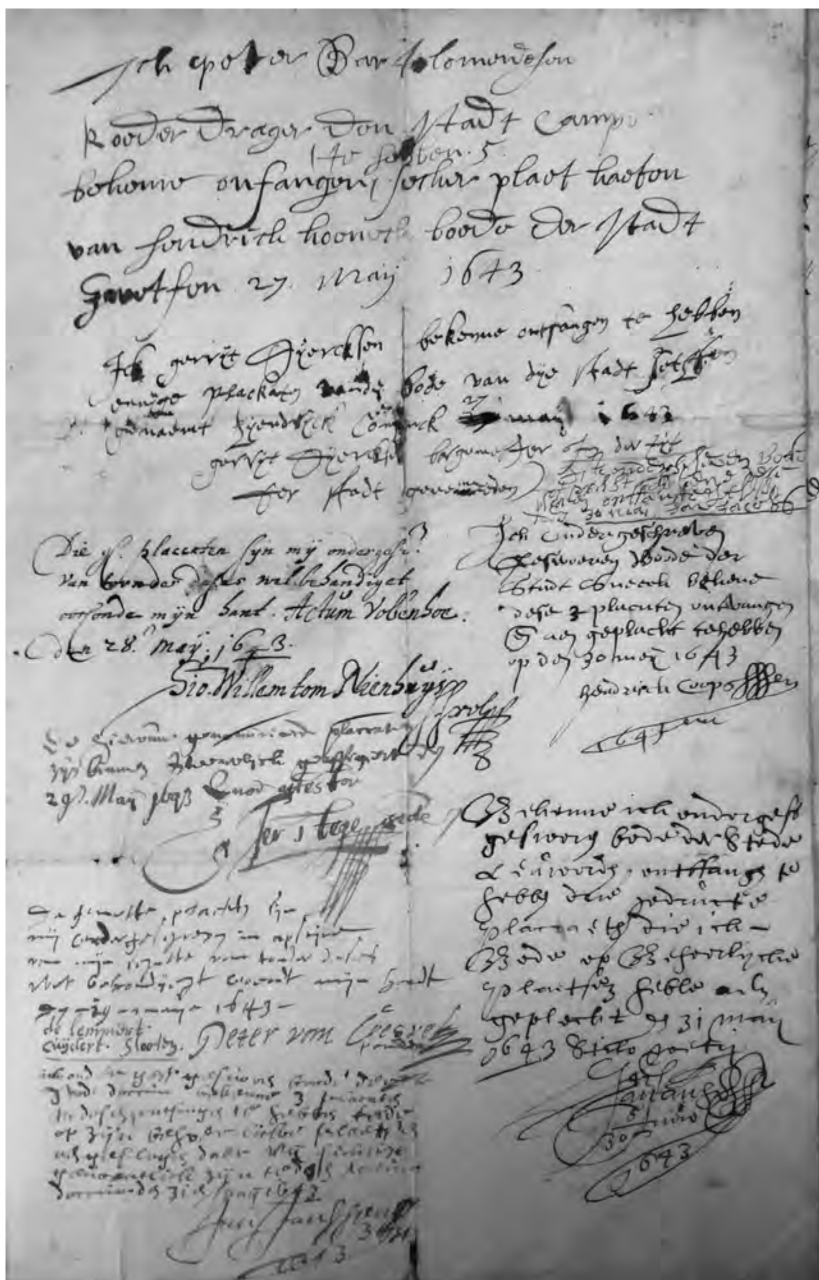

Figure 5.7 Some of the attestations (1643) from officials in Overijssel and Friesland that a Zutphen messenger proclaimed news of the new Zutphen market and handed over the placards concerning the same: in several places, such as Sneek, the number of placards affixed was specified as three.

travelled to north Holland, stopping in at least nine towns, including Amsterdam. In Amsterdam, the messenger did not visit the magistrates but went straight to Broer Jansz, the *stadsdrukker* and newspaper publisher, who ensured that copies of the placards would be affixed (presumably he added them to batches of local placards printed by him, for dissemination by the local town crier). For additional publicity, Jansz also placed an announcement in his weekly paper, incidentally the first announcement for a market in any Dutch newspaper, and promised to insert the details of the markets in his annual almanac.[42] It is probable that the magistrates of Zutphen employed other messengers to share the news elsewhere too, as it is unlikely they would not wish to generate publicity in Gelderland, Utrecht and South Holland for the markets.

While the surviving documentation for the new Zutphen markets of 1643 is extremely rich, it is probable that a similar publicity process took place all around the Dutch Republic on a regular basis. News of markets had to be shared widely, and although the printed posters rarely survive, the frequency with which magistrates advertised markets in newspapers in the second half of the 17th century suggests they made repeated use of widespread publicity that would certainly have involved printed posters.[43] It made little sense to share news of markets only via newspapers, which would reach a more circumscribed (and wealthier) audience than the use of criers and posters affixed in public spaces.

The circulation and affixing of printed broadsheets outside their issuing jurisdiction was a common practice, and many Dutch municipalities used print to communicate with citizens in other cities. The municipal archive of Veere in Zeeland contains numerous broadsheets published by the magistrates of Vlissingen and Middelburg concerning commercial regulations: these were despatched to Veere to inform traders of regional regulations affecting their business.[44] The magistrates of Delft sent printed placards on the sale of bread to The Hague; the magistrates of Haarlem sent ordinances on shoe making and the textile trade to Alkmaar and Leiden; while an Amsterdam broadsheet of 25 October 1656 on the inspection of hops found its way to the magistrates of the village of Schijndel in North Brabant.[45] The municipal archive of Den Bosch contains numerous placards issued by the Admiralty of Rotterdam on the tolls raised by the Admiralty on the waterways around Den Bosch.[46]

[42] *Tijdinghen uyt verscheyde Quartieren*, no. 24 (Amsterdam: Broer Jansz, 13 June 1643); Der Weduwen and Pettegree, *News, Business and Public Information*, p. 85.
[43] Arthur der Weduwen and Andrew Pettegree, *The Dutch Republic and the Birth of Modern Advertising* (Leiden: Brill, 2020), pp. 132–7; and Der Weduwen and Pettegree, *News, Business and Public Information*, pp. 626–7. On the use of newspapers by Dutch authorities see more broadly Chapter 9.
[44] ZAM, Stad Veere, Gedrukte ordonnanties, 16^{e}–19^{e} eeuw (2003).
[45] HGDH, Oud archief van de gemeente 's-Gravenhage, 1313–1815, inv. 4844; NHAH, Stadsbestuur van Haarlem, 1573–1813, inv. 7021 and 7025; BHIC, Dorpsbestuur Schijndel, 1312–1811 (5016), inv. 236.
[46] EDB, Stadsbestuur van 's-Hertogenbosch, 1262–1810 (0001), inv. 481–92.

In 1625, the magistrates of Rotterdam ordered the compilation of a register of all properties in the city and called upon every house owner to present their certificate of ownership to the council. Because many property owners lived outside Rotterdam, the magistrates sent out printed copies of the ordinance to towns and villages throughout Holland. The municipal archive of Rotterdam contains twenty-eight copies of this broadsheet, each with an annotation of a secretary of a Holland jurisdiction, notifying the magistrates of Rotterdam that they proclaimed the ordinance from the balustrade of their town hall (Figure 5.8).[47] Some of the secretaries noted that they also affixed copies of the ordinance, implying that the magistrates of Rotterdam despatched multiple copies of their placard to each jurisdiction.

Messengers carried placards beyond the city walls, and town criers could also be relied upon to affix posters on their routes. The abundance of officials in the service of the authorities makes it remarkable that some magistracies, such as those of Haarlem, Utrecht and Gouda, created a new municipal office in the 17th century to organise the distribution of placards and posters: the *stadsaanplakker*.[48] The creation of this additional functionary indicates that the quantity of broadsheets that required posting was so substantial by the second half of the 17th century that the authorities wished to delegate this responsibility to someone other than their town crier.[49] The creation of this separate office offers further evidence of the precocious engagement with print by Dutch authorities, while it also emphasises the desire of the magistrates to regulate carefully the flow and dissemination of information throughout their communities.

We can learn much about the duties of the *aanplakker* from an extant instruction issued by the magistrates of Haarlem in 1682, which is reproduced here in full:

> Instruction for the *stadsaanplakker*.
>
> 1. Nobody will be permitted to post up publicly any posters to publicise any general information or advertisement, except the person who will be appointed formally by a resolution of the gentlemen burgomasters [of Haarlem].
> 2. The appointed *stadsaanplakker* will post up all placards, ordinances, statutes and notifications, which are to be posted up on the orders of the country [meaning the States of Holland], the city [of Haarlem], and other institutions and private individuals within the jurisdiction of this city and its freedoms, whether they are printed or written posters.
> 3. The posting must be done on the town hall, on the doors of the churches, on the *Heeren Logement* [the headquarters of the militia], on the weighing house, on

[47] SAR, Oud Archief van de Stad Rotterdam, inv. 532, nos. 24–51.

[48] 18th-century Toulouse also had a specific *afficheur*: see Jean-Louis Laffont, 'La production réglementaire des capitouls de Toulouse sous l'Ancien Régime', *Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes*, 156 (1998), 525–35, here 530–1.

[49] See also Chapters 3 and 6 on the increasing use of print by Dutch municipalities.

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Schout / Burghemeesteren ende
Schepenen der Stadt Rotterdam/doen hier me-
de te weten / dat sy met advijs van de Vroetschappe der
zelver Stede / tot verhoedinghe van de groote schade/
die hare Inghesetenen ende andere dagelijcx zijn lijden-
de / in't koopen ofte belegghen van penninghen/ van of-
te op eenighe Huysen ofte Erven binnen de voorsz Stadt
ghelegen/ door dien dat men ter Secretarie der voorsz
Stede tot noch toe niet zekerlijc heeft konnen vinden de
belastinghe van de zelve Huysen/ ende Erven/goet ghe-
vonden hebben/ te keuren ende ordonneren/ dat in de voorsz Secretarie zal werden
gemaect een pertinent Register/ Index ofte Repertorium vā alle de Huysen/gron-
den van Erven/ ende andere onroerende goederen/ binnen de voorsz Stadt eñ de
Jurisdictie van dien ghelegen/ daer inne sommierlijc by yder parcheel zullen wer-
den aengheteeckent alle de Transporten/ ende speciale Hypothecatien ofte Ver-
bintenissen/zoo die na date van dese publicatie daer op voor Schepenen der voorsz
Stede zullen werden ghedaen/ als die voor desen daer op alreede ghedaen zijn: Eñ
dat tot dien eynde alle de gene/ 't sy Inwoonders ofte Wtheemsche/ die eenige Sche-
penen Brieven vā speciale Hypothecatien ofte Verbintenissen zijn hebbende op ee-
nighe Huysen/ gronden van Erven/ ofte andere onroerende goederen/ binnen de
voorsz Stadt eñ de Jurisdictie van dien ghelegen/ verleden voor date van dese pu-
blicatie / dat syluyden ghehouden zullen wesen de zelve brieven ter Secretarie der
voorsz Stede/ te komen vertoonen eñ bekent maken/ om in't voorsz nieuwe Regi-
ster aengeteeckent te werden/ te weten/ de Inwoonders van de voorsz Stadt ende
van de Provincie van Hollant eñ West-Vrieslant/ die present ofte binnen 'slants
zijn/ binnen ses eerst-komende maenden/ eñ alle andere buyten 'slants zijnde ofte
woonende/ binnen twaelf maenden/ beyde na date vā dese publicatie/ op peyne vā
den zelvē tijt overstreken zijnde/ te verliesen het effect van hare speciale Hypotheca-
tien ofte Verbintenissen / in't regardt van de ghene die na den voorsz tijt eenigh
Transport ofte speciael verbont / op de zelve onroerende goederen zoude moghen
acquireren/ als breeder te zien is by de voorsz keure van date den eerstē Decembris
xvj^c een ende twintich/ by de Ed: Mo: Heeren Staten van Hollant eñ West-Vries-
lant geconfirmeert eñ geapprobeert/ den 5 Januarij 1622. vā alle twelcke/ ende na-
mentlijc dat den voorsz tijt van het aenbrenghen ofte bekent maken van de voorsz
brieven zal beginnen te loopen/ van den eersten Meye xvj^c vijf ende twintigh toe-
komende.
Schout/ Burghemeesteren ende Schepenen voorñ. allen ende yeghelijcken In-
woonders der voorsz Stadt / eñ andere daer buyten woonende/ hier mede willen
geadverteert eñ gewaerschout hebben/ ten eynde een yeder hem daer na mach regu-
leren/ op peynen hier boven verhaelt.

Figure 5.8 *Schout, burghemeesteren ende schepenen der stadt Rotterdam, doen hier mede te weten, dat hare inghesetenen dagelijcx zijn lijdende, in 't koopen van eenighe huysen* ([Rotterdam: s.n., 1625]). One of the copies of the Rotterdam placard (1625) on the registration of properties in the city, here annotated on the top-left corner with a statement confirming that the proclamation was made by the magistrates of Brielle from the balustrade of their town hall.

the city gates and on all the corners of the streets in and outside in the city where it is common that one posts notifications.

4. The *aanplakker* will receive for each posting of 40 or fewer posters, 1 guilder and 4 stuivers, but he will receive an increased sum for each additional poster above this number.
5. If anyone wishes to post something up without using the labour of the *aanplakker*, then they are forbidden to do so, except if they recompense the *aanplakker* for the sum as if he had posted up the posters.
6. The *aanplakker* will be required to present himself at the secretariat of the city every day at 11 am and 4 pm to inquire whether there is something to be posted up on the orders of the country or the city.
7. The *aanplakker* will maintain himself honourably to all those who wish to employ him for posting up, and will uphold all the instructions specified here, and all further instructions which the burgomasters may give him in the future.

As was thus issued and resolved by the gentlemen burgomasters of Haarlem on this date, the 27th of June 1682.[50]

The instruction is remarkable for its detail, and for the stringent conditions that the magistrates imposed upon their *aanplakker*. The official enjoyed a monopoly of posting-up, but for that privilege he had to present himself twice daily at the town hall, at 11 am and 4 pm, to receive placards from the authorities. This indicates the frequency with which broadsheets were issued by the magistrates and the regents of the States: they could be expected any day of the week. Presumably, the *aanplakker* would also receive placards from citizens at these times. After receiving his posters, the *aanplakker* would proceed on a stately perambulation that would take him more than an hour. There were ten gates and six churches in Haarlem, which required a walk that would criss-cross the entire breadth and length of the city, home to some 40,000 inhabitants. On this route, placards would also be attached to the walls of the weighing house and the headquarters of the civic militia, as well as 'the corners of the streets in and outside the city where it is common to affix posters'.

The instruction of 1682 is unusual in its specificity in describing the locations where municipal ordinances were to be affixed. Most archival references to affixing use only the frustratingly opaque phrase: 'to be affixed where it is common to do so'. We can assume that these common locations varied little across most Dutch cities. They would include, as in Haarlem, the town hall, church doors, gates, prominent communal buildings (the weighing house, headquarters of the militia) and walls, doors or posting boards on busy streets and squares. In Leeuwarden, the crier-drummer was supposed to affix placards on the city's 'buildings and corners, town hall, weighing house and gates'.[51] In Amsterdam, the weekly lists of

[50] NHAH, Stadsbestuur van Haarlem 1573–1813 (3393), inv. 1252.

[51] HCL, Archief van de stad Leeuwarden, 1426–1811, inv. 696, ff. 128–30. In 16th-century Lyon and 17th-century Madrid, broadsheets were posted at similar locations: see Mingous, 'On Printing and

bread prices were posted up at all churches, the town hall and the grain exchange, while in Leiden they were also affixed at the cloth hall.[52]

The *aanplakker* was expected to post up printed and handwritten placards, but we can presume that those issued by the magistrates or the States would by 1682 have been in printed form. Given the manner in which the sum due to the *aanplakker* was calculated (article 4), it seems that forty copies of a poster was a standard norm, but the print run of some municipal broadsheets or commercial notices of sales would have easily exceeded this. In terms of his remuneration, it seems that the *aanplakker* would earn a similar amount from his work as town criers did elsewhere in the Dutch Republic. Receiving one guilder and four stuivers for posting up a single placard around town would mean that if the *aanplakker* did so every working day of the week, he would earn close to 400 guilders. In reality, his income would be much higher, as it seems unlikely that he would post only a single placard (either official or non-official) per day. Given that he could bundle different placards together, it is highly likely that this was an extremely lucrative position.

The instruction to the Haarlem *stadsaanplakker* makes clear that this official and his broadsheets were a ubiquitous sight in the daily life of the city. With each posting a small group of bystanders and onlookers might gather, peek at the new ordinance, or ask the *aanplakker* what he was posting up today. Illiteracy was not a barrier to the ceremonial spectacle of the *aanplakker*'s tour: citizens from all walks of life would have recognised that the municipal officer and his pot of glue were the harbinger of something new, possibly something troublesome. As the *aanplakker* made his way to the next stop, the municipal broadsheets would be left as imposing evidence of the interventions of the magistrates in the lives of their citizens.

The politics of affixing

The posting up of placards, the act of *aanplakken*, *affigeren* or *aanslaan*, was a routine process of early modern governance. Dutch authorities even exported their penchant for affixing throughout their overseas empire: VOC (Dutch East India Company) placards on the theft of company goods were to be 'affixed on board at all times on all outgoing and incoming vessels' between the Netherlands and the East Indies. A copy was also to be exhibited by the commander of the colony at the Cape of Good Hope, where it was to be replaced whenever the copy had become too worn to be displayed.[53] In Fort Orange (now Albany, New York),

Decision-Making', pp. 55–7; and Isabel Castro Rojas, 'A viva voz y en papel: Formas y espacios de publicación de las disposiciones oficiales en el Madrid de los Austrias', *La Bibliofilía*, 121 (2019), 259–82, here 273–9.

[52] De Vries, *Price of Bread*, pp. 67–8.

[53] *De bewindhebberen van de Generale Nederlandsche Geoctroyeerde Oost-Indische Compagnie, doen*

the local Dutch commander would also post up placards on the orders of the Governor-General in New Amsterdam.[54]

The desire to affix and exhibit stemmed from the widespread belief that no regulation could be observed if those affected had no knowledge of the law. The magistrates of Leiden, in an ordinance of 1614, stated that 'so that no one will be able to use any arguments of ignorance, we have ordered . . . to affix copies of this [ordinance] on all public places where it is common to do so'.[55] A 1676 Groningen ordinance reiterated the same: 'so that this [ordinance] may be better followed and observed, and so that nobody can pretend to be ignorant [of the law], we have let this be affixed at all places where it is common to do so'.[56] One 1623 Haarlem broadsheet ordinance concerning the coopers of the city was delivered to the house of every single cooper, so that they could not claim to be unaware of the new regulation.[57]

Affixing the law was also a highly symbolic and potentially perilous political act. The distinctive style of the ordinances and the prominent locations in the cityscape where they were posted were chosen by the magistrates for maximum publicity. Anyone entering the city would be confronted by the demonstration of public authority alongside the city gates. The spiritual well-being of citizens, fulfilled at church, would be accompanied by a reminder of their civic duties as they passed through its doors. Tradesmen and merchants watching their goods weighed at the weighing house could not escape the gaze of the law.

The broadsheets issued by the magistrates of Dutch cities were designed to stand out amid the hustle and bustle of urban life.[58] The posters were substantial: usually around 40 by 30 centimetres in size, roughly the dimensions of modern A3 paper. They were composed using a large black letter typeface, generally including an arresting woodcut initial. Roman or cursive typefaces were used to emphasise certain words, phrases or transitions in the text. A woodcut of the municipal coat of arms at the header of the broadsheet reinforced its official status. Most imposingly, the municipal broadsheet contained spacious margins, leaving a significant amount of white space. In an age when paper was expensive (and

te weten: dat 't volck van de schepen verscheyde waren weten over te geven om haren handel te dryven, 21.05.1670 (Amsterdam: Adriaan Wor and the heirs of G. Onder de Linden, [1670]), USTC 1546109.

[54] Janny Venema, *Beverwijck: A Dutch Village on the American Frontier, 1652–1664* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2003), pp. 103, 134, 136.

[55] *Asch ende vulynisse neder te gieten, verboden* ([Leiden: s.n., 1614]), USTC 1532054.

[56] *Borgemesteren ende raadt in Groningen doen te weten. Alsoo wy geinformeert zijn, dat verscheydene gilde-broederen der schuiten schipper gilde hijr opbreecken, ende elders neder setten, nae verloop van tijdt de gilde vermogen t'exerceren* ([Groningen: s.n., 1676]), USTC 1519491.

[57] *Den heeren ende gerechte der stadt Haerlem, verstaende de groote faulten ghepleecht werden by den cuypers hebben daeromme goedt gevonden te lasten 't geene ende sulckx hier naer volght* (Haarlem: Adriaen Roman, 1623), USTC 1505698.

[58] Arthur der Weduwen, '"Everyone has hereby been warned": The Structure and Typography of Broadsheet Ordinances and the Communication of Governance in the Early-Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic', in Pettegree (ed.), *Broadsheets*, pp. 240–67. See also Chapter 6.

largely determined the price of a book), the liberal use of white space was a sign of luxury; it marked out the broadsheet ordinance as a distinguished text.

The idiosyncratic features of municipal ordinances made them easy to recognise, but it also made them a target for mockery, anger and dissent. On 15 December 1640, the magistrates of Haarlem issued an ordinance which prohibited citizens from ripping down, defacing or destroying broadsheet ordinances (Figure 5.9).[59] A fine of twenty-five guilders was imposed on any person caught in the act. This was not the first or the last time that the *aanplakker* was ordered to paste up such a regulation. Similar broadsheets were published on 14 December 1637 and 19 January 1643.[60] Undoubtedly, many similar ordinances (now lost) followed, and not just in Haarlem. Respect for the law was a sensitive issue in all the cities and provinces of the Republic and had to be both nurtured and defended.

The defacement of ordinances was a common ignominy suffered by magistrates in the Dutch Republic. The placard embodied the implementation of rule: to affix it was a demonstration of power; to rip it down was to challenge authority. While legislation was issued in the privacy of the council chamber, once it was displayed on the streets of the city, the law was at the mercy of its citizens. An unwelcome announcement could be quickly torn down or defaced, often to the frustration of the authorities. In March 1686, the magistrates of Groningen were forced to post a militiaman next to each copy of an affixed placard calling for the arrest of a corrupt receiver of the treasury, who evidently had many friends in the city.[61] To affix a placard was also to extend the physical boundaries of a jurisdiction. The *Courante uyt Italien*, a weekly Amsterdam newspaper, reported in January 1631 on a very public struggle in the village of Standdaarbuiten, west of Breda, on the border between the Dutch Republic and the Southern Netherlands:

> The honourable gentlemen of the States of Holland affixed a placard on the church of Standdaarbuiten, ordering that no papists would be allowed to hold their service there on pain of a serious fine, [but then] a papist ripped the placard down and performed a [religious] service; the same papist then had a price declared on his head and became a fugitive, until the [Habsburg] governor of Breda sent around 300 cavalry and 300 infantry [to the town] with the papist, whom they installed in the church, and then affixed a placard, that nobody will be allowed to molest the papist.[62]

[59] *Keure, teghens het affscheuren van Biljetten, Placcaten, Keuren ende Ordonnantien* (Haarlem: Adriaen Roman, 1640), USTC 1500230.

[60] *Alsoo den heeren verbieden, af te scheuren eenighe billetten op de publieke plaetsen binnen deser stadt gheaffigheert voor ende aleer datten verkoopdach es gepasseert* (Haarlem: Adriaen Roman, 1637), USTC 1500208. *Keure, teghens het afscheuren van Biljetten, Placcaten, Keuren ende Ordonnantien* (Haarlem: Vincent Casteleyn, 1643), USTC 1500254.

[61] *Oprechte Haerlemse Dingsdaegse Courant*, no. 13 (Haarlem: [widow] Abraham Casteleyn, 26 March 1686).

[62] *Courante uyt Italien, Duytslandt, &c*, no. 2 (Amsterdam: Jan van Hilten, 11 January 1631).

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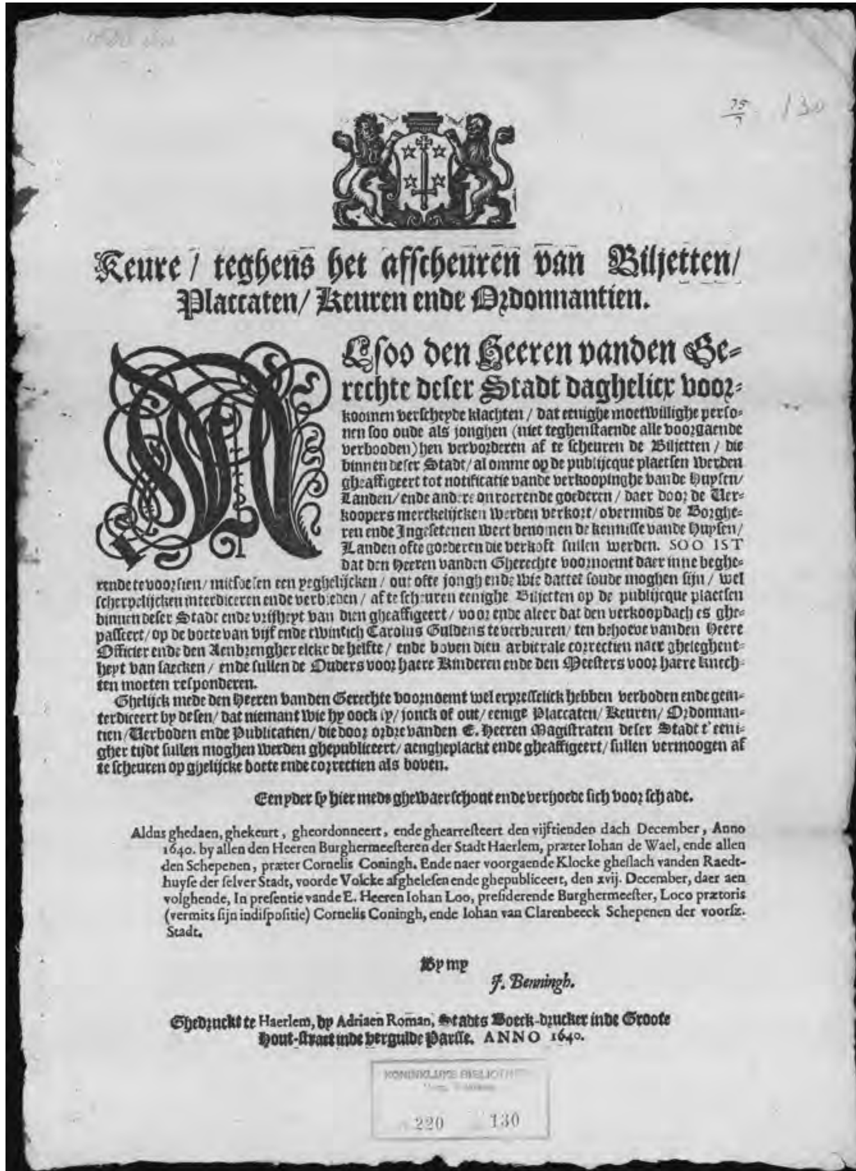

Keure / teghens het afscheuren van Biljetten / Placcaten / Keuren ende Ordonnantien.

Alsoo den Heeren vanden Gerechte deser Stadt daghelicx voorkoomen verscheyde klachten / dat eenighe moetwillighe persoonen soo oude als jonghen (niet teghenstaende alle voorgaende verbooden) hen verborderen af te scheuren de Biljetten / die binnen deser Stadt / al omme op de publijcque plaetsen werden gheaffigeert tot notificatie vande verkoopinghe vande Huysen / Landen / ende andere onroerende goederen / daer door de Verkoopers merckelijcken werden verkort / overmids de Borgheren ende Ingesetenen wert benomen de kennisse vande Huysen / Landen ofte goederen die verkoft sullen werden. SOO IST dat den Heeren vanden Gherechte voornoemt daer inne begherende te voorsien / mitsdesen een yeghelijcken / out ofte jongh ende wie dattet soude moghen sijn / wel scherpelijcken interdiceren ende verbieden / af te scheuren eenighe Biljetten op de publijcque plaetsen binnen deser Stadt ende vrijheyt van dien gheaffigeert / voor ende aleer dat den verkoopdach es ghepasseert / op de boete van vijf ende twintich Carolus Guldens te verbeuren / ten behoeve vanden Heere Officier ende den Aenbrengher elcke de helfte / ende boven dien arbitrale correctien naer gheleghentheyt van saecken / ende sullen de Ouders voor haere Kinderen ende den Meesters voor haere knechten moeten responderen.

Ghelijck mede den Heeren vanden Gerechte voornoemt wel expresselick hebben verboden ende geinterdiceert by desen / dat niemant wie hy oock sy / jonck of out / eenige Placcaten / Keuren / Ordonnantien / Verboden ende Publicatien / die door ordre vanden E. Heeren Magistraten deser Stadt t'eeniger tijdt sullen moghen werden ghepubliceert / aengheplackt ende gheaffigeert / sullen vermoogen af te scheuren op ghelijcke boete ende correctien als boven.

Een yder sy hier meds ghewaerschout ende verhoede sich voor schade.

Aldus ghedaen, ghekeurt, gheordonneert, ende ghearresteert den vijftienden dach December, Anno 1640. by allen den Heeren Burghermeesteren der Stadt Haerlem, præter Iohan de Wael, ende allen den Schepenen, præter Cornelis Coningh. Ende naer voorgaende Klocke gheslach vanden Raedthuyse der selver Stadt, voorde Volcke afghelesen ende ghepubliceert, den xvij. December, daer aen volghende, In presentie vande E. Heeren Iohan Loo, presiderende Burghermeester, Loco prætoris (vermits sijn indispositie) Cornelis Coningh, ende Iohan van Clarenbeeck Schepenen der voorsz. Stadt.

By my

J. Benningh.

Ghedruckt te Haerlem, by Adriaen Roman, Stadts Boeck-drucker inde Groote Hout-straet inde verguldе Parsse. ANNO 1640.

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Figure 5.9 *Keure, teghens het affscheuren van biljetten, placcaten, keuren ende ordonnantien* (Haarlem: Adriaen Roman, 1640). The Haarlem ordinance of 15 December 1640 forbidding the defacement of posters and broadsheets. Note the arresting title, the coat of arms of Haarlem and the large woodcut initial. The overall typographical effect is striking.

Attacks on official broadsheets were not only common to the Dutch Republic. Placards announcing new tax rates were targeted by indignant citizens throughout Europe: in 1619 the *Tijdinghen uyt verscheyde Quartieren*, another weekly Amsterdam paper, reported how all ordinances announcing a new excise duty were ripped off walls and doors in East Frisia by the citizenry.[63] In the same year tax rioters in Ceneda, in Venetian territory, spat on a publicly displayed copy of a tax decree, ripped it to pieces and, as the ultimate humiliation of the law, splattered faeces over the paper and the column upon which it had been posted.[64] Unfortunate town criers, charged with the affixing of ordinances, could be abused or assaulted by unreceptive citizens, especially as criers were not ordinarily accompanied by guards.[65]

Citizens did not have to resort to violence to resist the implementation of an unwelcome ordinance. One of the tasks of Jan Franchoyssen, bailiff of the Council of Brabant in The Hague, was to proclaim and affix placards in the Generality Lands, the territories in North Brabant conquered from the Southern Netherlands and administered directly under the authority of the States General. On 25 July 1648, he travelled through the domain of Gemert, where he announced the latest placard of the regents, issued a week earlier, on the expulsion of Catholic clergy from the area surrounding Den Bosch. When he attached the placard to the church door in Gemert, the local Catholic priest demanded to know whether he had a written commission. Because Franchoyssen only had oral instructions, the inhabitants of Gemert refused to accept the ordinance, and the placard was taken down.[66] Only after the bailiff had retrieved signed and sealed certification was he permitted to return to Gemert.

Citizens could also express their dissent by counter-posting libels, poems, songs, images or even animal parts in public spaces.[67] A civic disturbance in Dordrecht in 1651 was accompanied by 'various inciting pasquilles affixed in public locations'.[68] Such practices were pervasive and difficult to restrict, because the practice of affixing broadsheets was not limited to official bodies. The services of the Haarlem *stadsaanplakker* were also available to citizens wishing to post advertisements for commercial goods, the sale of properties or

[63] *Wt Romen den 10 Augusti* ([Amsterdam: Broer Jansz, 31 August 1619]).
[64] De Vivo, *Information and Communication*, p. 132. For other examples, see Castillo Gómez, 'Writings on the Streets', pp. 81–3.
[65] De Vivo, *Information and Communication*, pp. 131–2.
[66] *Attestatien, raeckende 't publiceren van't placcaet van haere hoog-mog. vanden 16. julij 1648. binnen Gemert* (s.l.: s.n., 1648), USTC 1515322.
[67] Fox, *Oral and Literate Culture*, pp. 299–334; Castillo Gómez, 'Writings on the Streets', pp. 83–9; Maartje van Gelder, 'Graffiti in Venetië: Teksten, tekeningen en posters in een vroegmoderne Italiaanse stad', *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis*, 130 (2018), 73–94, esp. 81–3; Boswell, *Disaffection and Everyday Life*, pp. 45–70.
[68] *Placcaten ende ordonnantien, rakende de beroerten die laetst ontstaen zijn tot Dordrecht* (Utrecht: Johannes van Waesberge, 1651), USTC 1840104, f. A2r.

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other announcements. These private placards would be posted up on the same buildings, boards or doors where official ordinances were affixed (Figure 5.10).[69] This provided another lucrative sideline for the *stadsaanplakker*, not least because the official fee was very likely augmented by a tip in return for these private notices receiving a prominent position at eye level. When the *stadsaanplakker* was not given the monopoly of posting up private notices, as was the case at Utrecht, this left a real sense of grievance.

The wealth of ephemeral print commissioned by Dutch citizens to be affixed in public has not been studied in depth, but preliminary investigations suggest that the quantity required must have been enormous.[70] As a result, the magistrates had to compete for physical space with their citizens. While municipal broadsheets could aspire to a higher standard of production, on the buildings of the city they shared the same political platform as the multitude of individuals jostling for publicity. Sometimes this was a source of contention, and authorities could order the removal of private placards.[71] On 16 August 1683, the magistrates of Groningen circulated a broadsheet which called on all officers and citizens of the city to rip down placards pasted up by a troupe of comedians camped outside the city's walls.[72]

Other magistrates tried to find more systematic ways to stem the tide of undesirable announcements. The Haarlem magistrates gave the municipal *aanplakker* the exclusive right to post broadsheets throughout the entire city.[73] Anyone caught posting an announcement themselves was required to compensate the *aanplakker*, 'as if he had pasted it up'. The Leeuwarden crier-drummer had a similar monopoly, infringement of which was punished with a three guilder fine.[74] Such measures might have restricted the quantity of private commercial announcements, but it would have done little to stem the publication of political libels. On 9 July 1685, the *aanplakker* of Utrecht, Gysbert Yserma, complained to the magistrates that mischievous Catholics were 'pasting up all sorts of things' throughout the city.[75]

Libelling or petitioning through the affixing of texts was a ubiquitous part of early modern political culture. Posting or distributing libels afforded a means for citizens excluded from policy-making to engage in a dialogue with their rulers. They could demand reforms, respond to official proclamations, or simply insult

[69] See also Salzberg, *Ephemeral City*, p. 63.
[70] Pettegree and Der Weduwen, 'Forms, Handbills and Affixed Posters', pp. 15–40.
[71] For the concern of Venetian authorities with seditious writings on walls, see Van Gelder, 'Graffiti in Venetië', 75.
[72] *Borgemesteren ende raadt in Groningen doen te weten. Alsoo eenige tooneel-speelders ofte commedianten versocht hadden te mogen speelen, ende wy nae't exempel van andere zulcx niet hebben willen toelaten* ([Groningen: s.n., 1683]), USTC 1519510.
[73] NHAH, Stadsbestuur van Haarlem 1573–1813, inv. 1252.
[74] HCL, Archief van de stad Leeuwarden, 1426–1811, inv. 696, f. 129v.
[75] HUA, Archief van de Raad, 1577–1795, inv. 269.

Figure 5.10 Jan Abrahamsz Beerstraten, *Het Paalhuis en de Nieuwe Brug te Amsterdam*, 1640–66. The *Paalhuis* on the *Nieuwe Brug* in Amsterdam was a prominent location for the posting of official and private posters.

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their superiors in a public arena, wounding their reputation.[76] On 25 September 1658, the Council of Ommelanden in Groningen denounced the citizens who had affixed placards throughout the city accusing one of the Ommelanden's leading administrators of stealing from the state's coffers.[77]

These anecdotes highlight an important dimension of Dutch political culture: the decorous regents who governed the cities of the Dutch Republic may have been masters of their community, but they contended with a fierce, expressive and independent public. This was a public that did not receive the multitude of printed laws and placards affixed all around them in a passive manner. Citizens in the 17th-century Dutch Republic knew they could use the law for their own benefit. It was the reason they petitioned their regents so often, pestering them for reiterations, enlargements or amplifications of specific regulations.[78]

Citizens actively engaged in a process of law making with their rulers, and state publications could play a prominent role in this discussion. On 14 March 1641, the States General issued a placard by which they regulated the use of looms for specific types of textiles, reserving their use for valuable export products rather than frivolous items.[79] This placard, like the thousands of broadsheets issued by the States General, found its way across the country, despatched to the seven provinces and all their towns. It reached Amsterdam, where a copy was acquired by the three merchant-inspectors of the Amsterdam looms. These men, Jonas Matthyssen, Jan de Graef and Matthijs Evertsen, promptly composed a letter to Philip Theodore, the Count of Culemborg, a tiny independent principality within the borders of the Republic. The merchants attached a copy of the placard to the count and urged him to publish the broadsheet and uphold its contents.[80]

The distribution of placards not only enforced the authority of the state but could also reinforce the status or prosperity of its citizens; or, in some cases, it could be used by citizens to point out inconsistencies in the law to their local regents. In 1690, the *vendumeester* (master of auctions) of Hoorn petitioned his local magistrates that they should enforce their own legislation to protect his office. To press his case, the *vendumeester* attached to his petition a copy of a broadsheet ordinance published by the magistrates which regulated auctions in the city.[81] Similarly, when the States of Holland issued an ordinance to raise

[76] Fox, *Oral and Literate Culture*, p. 329.

[77] *De heeren ordinaris ende extraordinaris gecommitteerde raaden der Ommelanden tusschen d'Eems ende Lauwers doen te wieten. Alsoo wy in ervaeringe zijn gekomen, dat eenige comparanten in druck onder de gemiente van stadt uyt te stroyen* ([Groningen: s.n., 1658]), USTC 1519449.

[78] See Chapter 4. See also Roorda, *Partij en Factie*, pp. 46, 244.

[79] *Placaet ende ordonnantie vande Staten Generael, waer naer die genen gebruyckende eenige gepractiseerde instrumenten van lint-molens, hen voortaen sullen hebben te reguleren* (The Hague: widow and heirs Hillebrant van Wouw, 1641), USTC 1528029.

[80] GAA, Heren en graven van Culemborg, inv. 8138.

[81] WFAH, Oud archief stad Hoorn, 1356–1815, inv. 2528. The broadsheet is: *Mijn Ed: Heeren de Schout, Burgermeesteren ende Schepenen des Stadts Hoorn, bevindende dat eenighe articulen [op de*

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funds for the requisitioning of wagons for the army, a schoolmaster in Heenvliet, a small community in South Holland, got hold of a copy of the printed notice and attached it to his remonstrance demanding to be made exempt from the ruling.[82] The widespread dissemination of the law in print played an important but thus far unrecognised role in the democratisation of politics in the Dutch Republic.

The routine circulation of ordinances introduced from the late 16th century in most Dutch cities was pursued by the authorities because they recognised that there were very real limits to their power. Whether it concerned the careful production of the constitutional *keurboeken*, the ceremonial routines of the proclamation or the affixing of placards, the regents understood that a lack of democratic access to the formulation of policy did not render politics secretive or exclusive. In the city, magistrates held grave responsibilities but often lacked the means to enforce their will. They required the consent, if not always the active support, of their citizens to exercise their power. They solicited this consent through traditional ceremonies of spectacle, and through the services of town criers and *aanplakkers*. Thanks to frequent announcements, and the distribution of official placards, forms and pamphlets, the law could be examined, tested or ripped down in protest. Proclaiming and affixing ordinances could reassure, but it could also embolden an attentive and engaged citizenry.

venditien van de meubile goederen] in verloop zijnde gekomen, ordonneren en statueren mitsdesen (Hoorn: Abraham Isaacksz vander Beeck, 1690), USTC 1571001.

[82] Streekarchief Voorne-Putten, Brielle, Stad en ambacht Heenvliet (033), inv. 846.

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6

Printing and Selling the Law

By the middle decades of the 17th century, printed ordinances were a ubiquitous feature of life in the Dutch Republic. Posted up on all notable buildings and found at all commercial spaces, citizens were confronted on a daily basis by official print. Printed ordinances, forms and passports were the most common form of print to enter the homes or businesses of many Dutch people. The manner in which print pervaded the daily politics of the city did not go unnoticed. In 1657, the Amsterdam publisher Jan Hendricksz reflected that 'our fatherland did not used to be governed by printed and publicly affixed laws'.[1] Hendricksz was not wrong: a century earlier, Dutch authorities had rarely, if ever, used print to communicate with their citizens, but now they placed it at the heart of political administration and state communication.

Dutch authorities paid close attention to publicising the law.[2] Official print embodied their authority, so it was paramount that their placards were produced to a high standard. When Jan van Dockum became *stadsdrukker* of Den Bosch in 1641, he was appointed on the condition that his press would 'do justice to the prestige' of the city.[3] The printers chosen as *stadsdrukkers* were experienced practitioners, able to invest in quality typefaces and capable of executing complex print jobs. In 1639, Amelis Jansz van Paddenburgh secured the position of *stadsdrukker* of Utrecht after demonstrating to the magistrates his typographical skill and range of available typefaces by producing twelve sample pages of ordinances.[4] In Dordrecht, Johannes van Braam was instructed upon his appointment as *stadsdrukker* that he must always print ordinances with a 'neat and suitable typeface' on white paper of the best quality.[5]

[1] *Keuren der stadt Leyden, geamplieert ende gerenoveert* (Amsterdam: Jan Hendricksz, 1657), USTC 1842124, f. *2r.

[2] For a comparative case study, see Marco Francalangi, 'Produzione e strategie di diffusione di testi normative nella Milano del Cinquecento: un caso di studio', *La Bibliofilia*, 121 (2019), 237–58.

[3] Van den Oord, *Twee Eeuwen Bosch' Boekbedrijf*, p. 361.

[4] Evers, 'Gegevens betreffende Utrechtsche Staten-, Stads- en Akademiedrukkers', pp. 35–6.

[5] RAD, Stadsarchieven, inv. 1953a.

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To those lucky enough to be appointed as *Statendrukker* or *stadsdrukker*, official print represented the most important segment of their business. As we shall see, the position of privileged printer provided lucrative jobs aside from the production of ordinances, but the authorities expected the printers never to forget their core responsibility. The account books of the Plantin-Moretus printing firm in Antwerp suggest that compositors in the workshop frequently halted their work on large projects, such as missals, to compose an ordinance required by the magistrates of Antwerp.[6] The regents in the Dutch Republic could also be demanding: in Middelburg, the widow of Symon Moulert, *Statendrukker* of Zeeland, petitioned her paymasters in 1629 that she required additional assistance in her shop because the 'short time' allowed by the regents for the turnaround of their placards put her workshop under pressure.[7] That this was a legitimate request is attested by the fact that the States of Zeeland immediately provided her with funds to hire additional workmen.

Perhaps the most decisive proof of the involvement of Dutch authorities in the production of their ordinances is provided by the regulation of the press of the States General of 1669. Their High Mightinesses used the occasion of the appointment of their new *Statendrukker*, Jacobus Scheltus (who was by custom also appointed *Statendrukker* by the States of Holland), to introduce several new conditions. The States ordered that all administrative documents, including 'resolutions, letters, acts and other pieces' that were required in five copies or more, would be printed by Scheltus.[8] This was a remarkable demand since orders with such limited circulation could conveniently be circulated in manuscript copies, as they would be in other government services throughout Europe. Even confidential documents marked secret would be printed, but in these cases Scheltus was instructed that he himself should be present for the entire printing process and deliver the copies to the secretary (*Griffier*) of the States General himself (naturally, the workshop of a *Statendrukker* would be a busy place, with numerous pressmen, compositors and apprentices involved in the work).[9] In return for undertaking these new, onerous responsibilities, the regulations stipulated that Scheltus would receive, free of charge, a residence and workshop in the Binnenhof, while he also received the sole right to deliver paper, newspapers and almanacs to the regents.

The 1669 regulation represented an extraordinary commitment by the States General to their *Statendrukker*. It also heralded a notable development in their appreciation of and reliance on the printed word. Nowhere else in Europe did the authorities commit to print so much of their day-to-day administration. Yet the engagement with print by Dutch authorities was also distinctive because it took

[6] See, for some examples, Museum Plantin-Moretus, Antwerp, Arch. 786 (Ouvriers, 1590–1610), ff. 160, 170–2, 176, 178, 181, 187–8.
[7] Weststrate, '"Drucker ordinaris der Heeren Staten van Zeelandt"', p. 55.
[8] Schneider, *Voorgeschiedenis*, p. 60.
[9] Schneider, *Voorgeschiedenis*, p. 61.

place at so many different jurisdictional levels. This chapter explores the variety of federal, regional and municipal authorities throughout the country that routinely used printed ordinances, placards and forms to govern their communities. By committing so many of their laws to print, the authorities ensured that an extraordinary quantity of legislation was available to the public, attached to doors, walls and noticeboards, but also sold in bookshops. This chapter will also consider the critical role played by official print in the Dutch print trade and assess the costs and profits involved for those printers fortunate enough to be chosen by the authorities. To do so, we must also attempt to reconstruct the total size of the market for printed ordinances, an exercise that demonstrates that the business of selling the law was the bedrock of the print industry in the 17th-century Dutch Republic.

A national culture of official print

One of the paradoxes of early modern official print is that while it can be found in large quantities in many archives and libraries, the surviving examples usually represent only a small portion of contemporary output. This is rarely reflected upon, especially because official print looks to be so common: it comprises the third largest category of publications by genre in the Universal Short Title Catalogue (USTC), and it represents almost a tenth of its entire dataset of editions.[10] The true share of official print in the early modern print trade was higher still, as this is a genre that has suffered far higher rates of loss (in terms of copies and editions) than works of Latin scholarship and other large volumes that grace many library shelves.[11] Official print was ephemeral by nature. Broadsheet ordinances, posted up around cities, were not meant to be preserved. After a while they would be buried under new posters, destroyed by rain or trampled underfoot on muddy streets. Printed forms suffered much the same fate: designed to be written on, kept as proof of payment or exemption, and made obsolete by the passage of time.[12]

Our knowledge of the production of official print is further bedevilled by bibliographical neglect. Many standard national bibliographies, such as those of 17th-century Sweden or 16th-century Germany, do not include official print or broadsheets.[13] Until recently, the Dutch National Bibliography (the STCN)

[10] See the USTC: www.ustc.ac.uk, limit search by subject classification to 'Ordinances and Edicts', last accessed 20 November 2022.

[11] See, on this issue more broadly, Flavia Bruni and Andrew Pettegree (eds), *Lost Books: Reconstructing the Print World of Pre-Industrial Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 2016); and Arthur der Weduwen, 'Lost and Found: On the Trail of the Forgotten Literature of the Dutch Golden Age', *Jaarboek voor Nederlandse Boekgeschiedenis*, 27 (2020), 45–65.

[12] For a general consideration of the place of broadsheets and forms in the European print world, see Pettegree, 'Broadsheets: Single-Sheet Publishing'; and Stallybrass, '"Little Jobs"'.

[13] Isak Collijn, *Sveriges bibliografi. 1600-talet* (Uppsala: Svenska litteratursällskapet, 1942–6); *Verzeichnis der im deutschen Sprachbereich erschienenen Drucke des 16. Jahrhunderts* (VD16): https://www.bsb-muenchen.de/sammlungen/historische-drucke/recherche/vd-16/.

likewise did not include broadsheets: this exclusion, in place for several decades, ensured that many thousands of broadsheet ordinances were passed over for cataloguing when the project catalogued mixed volumes of pamphlets and broadsheets. Official print is also neglected because many bibliographical projects confine themselves to library collections and do not include print that is kept in archives. It is often in archives that one can find the largest collections of surviving broadsheets, and those bibliographical studies that do engage with archival holdings are generally dominated by official print.[14]

Most Dutch archives contain a selection of surviving ordinances from the 17th and 18th centuries. Some archives contain volumes of bound ordinances, ordered chronologically; others retain unsorted stacks of print.[15] Such collections are predominantly made up of late 18th- and 19th-century ordinances, but they also contain 17th-century items. Printed ordinances or forms can be found in municipal archive collections concerning local trade, taxation and public order, or among court cases and petitions. In theory, in the 17th century, the secretariat of a Dutch municipality would receive a copy of each ordinance or form for record keeping, but there is not a single archival collection in the Netherlands in which a complete archive of municipal print survives.[16] Prescribed administrative practices were rarely followed to the letter; and if they were, they have been obscured by later acts of destruction. Some early modern municipal archives, such as that of Middelburg, were virtually destroyed, in Middelburg's case during the Second World War.

17th-century printed ordinances have also made their way to larger institutional libraries, usually as the result of the donation or purchase of private collections. The Royal Library in The Hague contains a collection of more than 1,700 17th-century broadsheet ordinances and several thousand catalogued pamphlet ordinances from the same period.[17] Other major research libraries, in the Netherlands and abroad, also hold significant collections. Bound collections of pamphlet ordinances are relatively common, while broadsheet ordinances are more often found folded into volumes of political pamphlets, as in the Fagel collection in Trinity College, Dublin. Many volumes of ordinances are also in private hands: the author owns a volume of forty-six Nijmegen ordinances, eleven of which are not currently documented in any public collection, including the municipal archive of Nijmegen.

[14] Good examples include Begheyn and Peters, *Gheprint te Nymeghen*; and the Latvian National Bibliography: *Latvijas citvalodu seniespiedumu kopkatalogs, 1588–1830* (Riga: Latvian National Library, 2013).

[15] The municipal archive of Veere in the Zeeuws Archief in Middelburg has a collection of twenty-four carts with unsorted stacks of municipal print, each cart holding several hundred items. Almost all the items date from the eighteenth and early 19th centuries.

[16] RAD, Stadsarchieven, inv. 1953a.

[17] The broadsheets are held under class mark KW Plakk F, and the pamphlet ordinances under KW Plakk Q. See also Der Weduwen, '"Everyone has hereby been warned"', pp. 241–3.

Relying on surviving examples in Dutch national, regional and municipal archives, as well as library collections around the world, the USTC project has in 2022 documented more than 16,000 17th-century printed Dutch ordinances.[18] These ordinances were issued by 114 jurisdictions, reflecting the rich political diversity and decentralisation of the Dutch Republic. They include all notable federal institutions (such as the States General and the Council of State), the provincial States, the provincial courts, the Admiralties and the West and East India Companies.[19] Remarkably, the total figure also includes eighty-one municipalities, ranging from the greatest commercial centres of the country to small towns with a few thousand inhabitants and rural water boards (*waterschappen*) in the polders of Holland and Zeeland (see Figure 6.1, Tables 6.1 and 6.2). The number of municipalities that issued printed ordinances is even more extraordinary when one considers that only twenty of these municipalities were able to rely on the services of a local printing press for the entirety of the 17th century. Another twenty-six had a local press for some portion of the century; the remaining thirty-five never had one at all.

The variety of municipalities listed in Tables 6.1 and 6.2 attests to the ubiquity of print in the political culture of the Dutch Republic. In European terms, it is also highly distinctive. Although official print was an important segment of the print trade in all European countries, there was nowhere else in the 17th century where so many small communities used print on a regular basis. In the British Isles, the number of municipalities that issued printed ordinances was limited to a handful, as provincial towns were largely hamstrung by the concentration of the print industry in London. In Scandinavia, where government print was also critical to the survival of printing presses in the leading cities of the region, there was no critical mass of small communities employing printed ordinances.[20] Even in the Southern Netherlands, a small but highly urbanised region with many printing presses, the use of printed ordinances was restricted to some twenty-five

[18] The USTC currently includes more than 5,500 ordinances printed in the Dutch Republic ('Northern Netherlands') between 1580 and 1650. The developing data of the project, which in 2023 is extending till 1700, documents another 10,500 ordinances for the second half of the 17th century. This figure is certain to grow over the coming years.

[19] In total, there are at least thirty national and regional jurisdictions: the States General, Stadtholders, Council of State, Council of War, Council of Brabant, States of Gelderland, Quarter of Nijmegen, Quarter of Veluwe, Quarter of Zutphen, States of Holland, States of Zeeland, States of Walcheren, States of Utrecht, States of Friesland, States of Overijssel, States of Groningen, Council of Ommelanden, Lordship of Drenthe, Governor-General of the East Indies, Court of Gelderland, Court of Holland, High Court of Holland, Court of Utrecht, Admiralty of Amsterdam, Admiralty of the Northern Quarter, Admiralty of Rotterdam, Admiralty of Zeeland, Admiralty of Friesland, East India Company, West India Company. Included in this statistic are also the three occupying forces of France, Cologne and Münster, which issued ordinances in print in the period 1672–4. See also Pettegree and Der Weduwen, 'What Was Published', 4–7, 21–2.

[20] Arthur der Weduwen and Barnaby Cullen, 'A Nordic Press: The Development of Printing in Scandinavia and the Baltic States before 1700 in a European Perspective', *Mémoires du livre / Studies in Book Culture*, 13 (2022), 1–30.

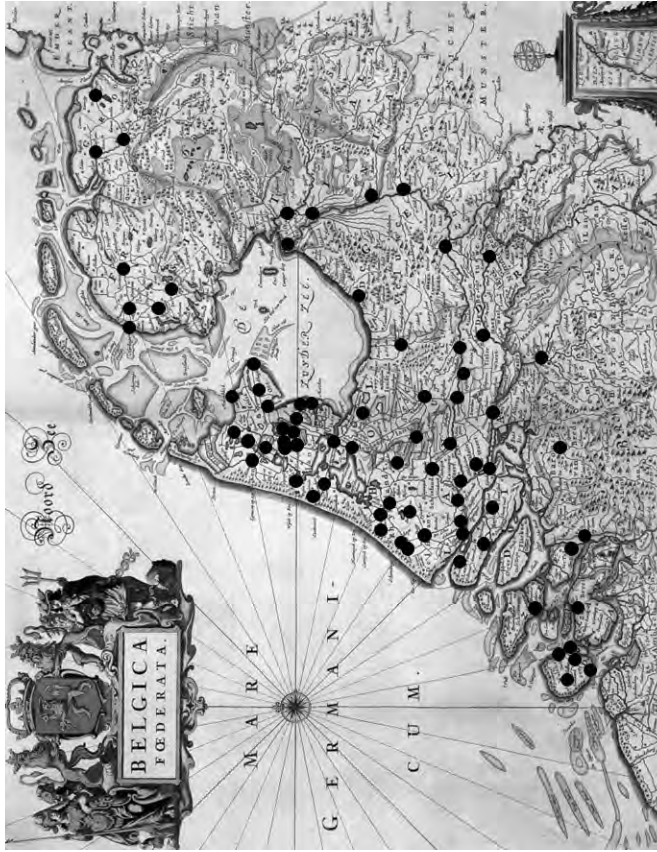

Figure 6.1 *Belgica Foederata* (Amsterdam: Johannes Janssonius, 1658). Map of the Dutch Republic, annotated with the location of all municipalities that published printed ordinances in the 17th century.

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Province	Municipality	(Temporary) Presence of a printing press
Gelderland	Arnhem	✓
Gelderland	Harderwijk	✓
Gelderland	Nijmegen	✓
Gelderland	Tiel	✓
Gelderland	Zutphen	✓
Holland	Aalbertsberg, Overveen and Vogelenzang	
Holland	Alblasserwaard	
Holland	Alkmaar	✓
Holland	Amstelveen	
Holland	Amsterdam	✓
Holland	Beemster	
Holland	Beverwijk	✓
Holland	Brielle	✓
Holland	Delft	✓
Holland	De Rijp	
Holland	Den Haag	✓
Holland	Dordrecht	✓
Holland	Edam	✓
Holland	Engewormer	
Holland	Enkhuizen	✓
Holland	Gorinchem	✓
Holland	Gouda	✓
Holland	Graft	
Holland	Grootebroek	
Holland	Haarlem	✓
Holland	Heerhugowaard	
Holland	Hoorn	✓
Holland	Krimpenerwaard	
Holland	Leiden	✓
Holland	Medemblik	
Holland	Middelharnis	
Holland	Monnickendam	

Table 6.1 (*cont.*)

Province	Municipality	(Temporary) Presence of a printing press
Holland	Nieuwkoop and Noorden	
Holland	Purmerend	✓
Holland	Rijnland	
Holland	Rijswijk	
Holland	Rotterdam	✓
Holland	Schermer	
Holland	Schiedam	✓
Holland	Schieland	
Holland	Schoonhoven	✓
Holland	Vlaardingen	✓
Holland	Voorne	
Holland	Wassenaar	
Holland	Watergraafsmeer	
Holland	Weesp	✓
Holland	Wieringerwaard	
Holland	Woerden	
Holland	Wormerveer	
Holland	Zoeterwoude	
Zeeland	Arnemuiden	
Zeeland	Goes	✓
Zeeland	Grijpskerke	
Zeeland	Middelburg	✓
Zeeland	Tholen	
Zeeland	Veere	
Zeeland	Vlissingen	✓
Zeeland	Zierikzee	✓
Utrecht	Amersfoort	✓
Utrecht	Montfoort	
Utrecht	Rhenen	
Utrecht	Utrecht	✓
Utrecht	Wijk bij Duurstede	
Friesland	Bolsward	✓
Friesland	Franeker	✓

Table 6.1 (*cont.*)

Province	Municipality	(Temporary) Presence of a printing press
Friesland	Harlingen	✓
Friesland	Leeuwarden	✓
Friesland	Sneek	✓
Overijssel	Deventer	✓
Overijssel	Hasselt	✓
Overijssel	Kampen	✓
Overijssel	Zwolle	✓
Groningen	Aduaderzijlvest	
Groningen	Appingedam	
Groningen	Groningen	✓
Generality Lands	Bergen op Zoom	✓
Generality Lands	Breda	✓
Generality Lands	Den Bosch	✓
Generality Lands	Maastricht	✓
Fiefdom of Culemborg	Culemborg	✓
Fiefdom of Vianen	Vianen	

Table 6.1 Municipalities in the Dutch Republic that published printed ordinances at least once in the 17th century, divided alphabetically by province (in their traditional order). A '✓' in the third column indicates that a local printing press was present for a portion or the entirety of the 17th century.

Province	Number of municipalities publishing printed ordinances	Number of municipalities with a local printing press
Holland	45	20
Zeeland	8	4
Gelderland	5	5
Friesland	5	5
Utrecht	5	2
Overijssel	4	4
Groningen	3	1
Generality Lands	4	4
Autonomous fiefdoms	2	1
Total	**81**	**46**

Table 6.2 Breakdown, by province, of municipalities in the Dutch Republic that published printed ordinances at least once in the 17th century.

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municipalities. It is only in France, the Holy Roman Empire and Italy that one can find printed ordinances for a more substantial number of municipalities, but these domains were far larger and more populous than the Dutch Republic.

It will nevertheless come as little surprise that the magistrates of the village of Wassenaar did not print as many ordinances as the regents of urban centres such as Leiden or Groningen. Size was the greatest determining factor in the use of print by a municipality. It seems that there was little need to use official print for every public announcement in small towns or rural conglomerations of a few hundred or a thousand inhabitants. Proclamations at church, supplemented by the use of town criers, would be sufficient to announce regulations on local commerce or public order. Small municipalities such as Bergen op Zoom, Brielle, Edam, Grootebroek, Monnickendam, Tholen and Vlaardingen only used print as a medium of public communication when they issued ordinances of particular importance. In this case, each of these towns issued in print the regulations of their orphanages (*weeskamer*).

The organisation of a local orphanage was not only important to the bereft children of the community; it was also a mark of municipal prestige.[21] It paid tribute to the orderliness of the community and provided evidence of the charitable virtues of its magistrates. Without a local printer, the magistrates of a small town such as Tholen were required to call upon printers in nearby cities, in their case Middelburg.[22] The regulations of the Vlaardingen orphanage were printed in Delft; those of Schiedam in Rotterdam; those of Grootebroek in Enkhuizen; and those of Edam even further afield, in The Hague.[23] The integrated infrastructural network of the Dutch Republic and the presence of a national market of print help explain why so many municipalities could publish these ordinances even if they did not have a local press. It should also be said that even if they commissioned the printing of their own ordinances only infrequently, the circulation of announcements from larger communities, described in the previous chapters, will have meant that these villages and smaller towns still would have experienced a fairly continuous exposure to official print.

Most surviving orphanage regulations were printed as quarto pamphlets, ranging in size from sixteen to sixty pages. Their format and size were ideal for reference use and collecting: Gaspar Fagel, Grand Pensionary of Holland, owned orphanage regulations from Edam, Monnickendam, Rotterdam, Vlaardingen,

[21] Teeuwen, *Financing Poor Relief*.
[22] *Ordonnantie van de weescamer der stede Tholen* (Middelburg: Symon Moulert, 1617), USTC 1033040.
[23] *Ordonnantie vande wees-camer der stede Vlaerdinghen* (Delft: Andries Cloeting, 1614), USTC 1019789; *Ordonnantie van de wees-camer der stede Schiedam* (Rotterdam: Jan van Waesberghe, [1598]), USTC 424096; *Ordonnantie van de weescamer der stede Groote Broeck* (Enkhuizen: Jacob Lenaertsz Meyn, 1624), USTC 1017740; *Nieuwe ordonnantie van de wees-kamere binnen de stadt Edam* (The Hague: widow and heirs Hillebrant van Wouw, 1626), USTC 1031947.

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Dordrecht and Haarlem, bound together as a single volume.[24] Yet some municipalities also published their regulations as broadsheets: the magistrates of Weesp published the regulations of their orphanage in 1649 as a large placard composed of two sheets pasted together, printed in Utrecht by Amelis Jansz van Paddenburgh.[25] The regulations dated from 1598, but evidently the magistrates wished to exhibit the ordinance in their town for all to see. It is likely that it was affixed to the orphanage itself, an enduring reminder of the rules of the institution.

The orphanage regulations are one example of official print which was published by small municipalities, not least because they were happy to see them circulate widely, advertising the prideful fulfilment of their civic duty. They have often survived precisely because of their collectable form as quarto pamphlets; the 1649 Weesp example, as a two-sheet placard, is a unique survivor. But it seems that the publication of similar broadsheets on a variety of subjects was a common practice in many small towns and rural communities. When we do locate 17th-century broadsheets issued in municipalities of several thousand inhabitants, including Beverwijk, Breda, Brielle, Gorinchem and Vlissingen, they have one characteristic in common: they contain information relevant to a broad audience.[26] Common examples include announcements for forthcoming markets and lotteries; the sale of tax farming positions; upcoming employment opportunities; lists of tax, passenger or transportation rates; regulation of barge times, wages and tax measures; or ordinances on the local militia.[27]

Although there are no more than fourteen extant 17th-century printed ordinances for the small commercial centre of Veere in Zeeland, the surviving examples attest to a keen appreciation by the magistrates of the value of printed placards and pamphlets for state communication. The municipal archive of Veere contains two early 17th-century broadsheet ordinances, both printed in Middelburg. The first advertises the sale of tax farming positions in Veere, while the second announces municipal employment opportunities at the harbour (Figure 6.2).[28] Five pamphlet ordinances issued by the magistrates of Veere dated between 1616 and 1644 have also survived: they cover regulations concerning

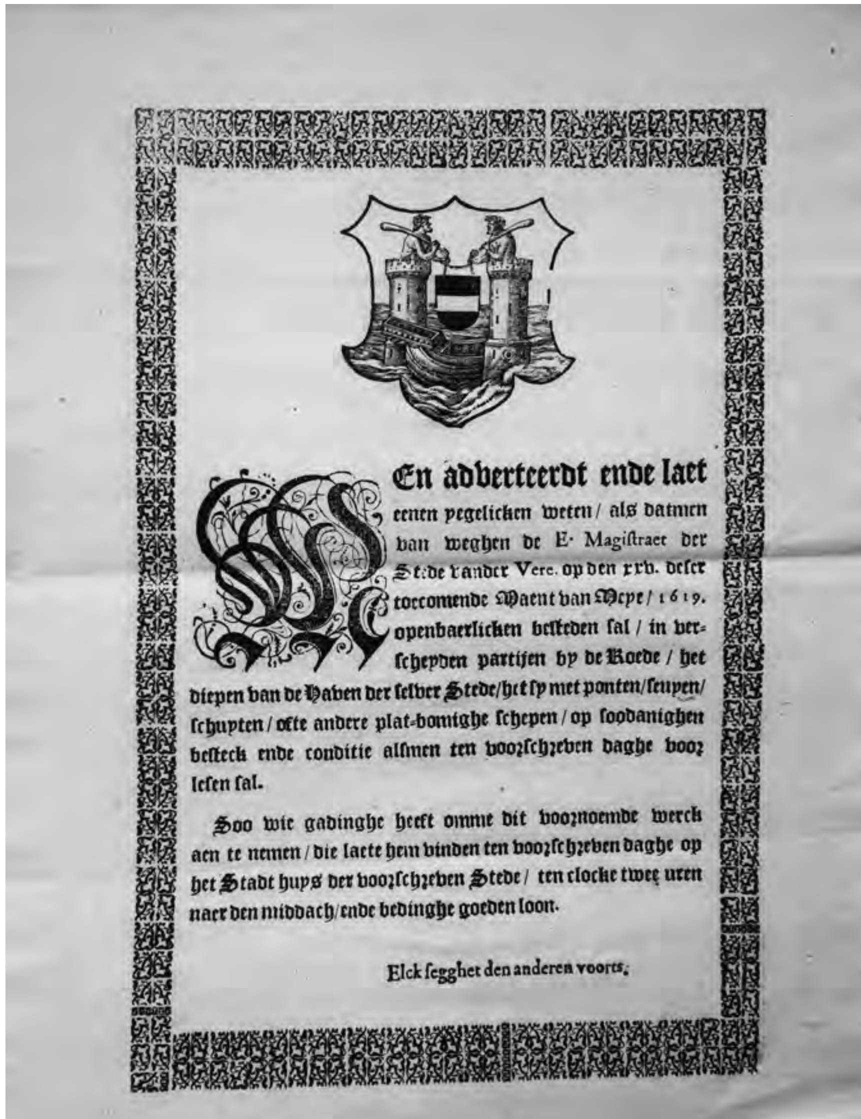
[24] These were sold together for three guilders and twelve stuivers at the sale of his library in 1689. See *Catalogus instructissimae & exquisitissimae Bibliothecae Illustrissimi Viri Gasparis Fagel* (The Hague: Arnout Leers, 1689), USTC 1820196, p. 47.

[25] *Ordonnantie vande wees-kamer over Weesp ende Weesper-carspel* (Utrecht: Amelis Jansz van Paddenburgh, 1649), USTC 1122544.

[26] This is a characteristic that is also confirmed for Cologne by Limbach, *Government Use of Print*; and for Lyon by Cumby, 'Bread and Fairs', pp. 162–87.

[27] For lotteries in particular see Sophie Raux, *Lotteries, Art Markets, and Visual Culture in the Low Countries, 15th–17th Centuries* (Leiden: Brill, 2018), pp. 61–3, 71–174.

[28] *Men adverteert ende laet weten eenen yegelicken datmen op deser maendt Decembris openbaerlicken verpachten sal, den wijn ende bier accys* ([Middelburg: s.n., s.d.]), USTC 1122347; *Men adverteerdt ende laet eenen yegelicken weten, als datmen van weghen de E. Magistraet vander Vere, op den xxv. deser toecomende maent van meye, 1619. openbaerlicken besteden sal het diepen van de haven* ([Middelburg: s.n., 1619]), USTC 1122348.



Men adverteerdt ende laet eenen pegelicken weten / als datmen van weghen de E. Magistraet der Stede vander Vere. op den xxv. deser toecomende Maent van Meye / 1619. openbaerlicken besteden sal / in verscheyden partijen by de Roede / het diepen van de Haven der selver Stede / het sy met ponten / seupen / schuyten / ofte andere plat-bomighe schepen / op soodanighen besteck ende conditie alsmen ten voorschreven daghe voor lesen sal.

Soo wie gadinghe heeft omme dit voornoemde werck aen te nemen / die laete hem vinden ten voorschreven daghe op het Stadt huys der voorschreven Stede / ten clocke twee uren naer den middach / ende bedinghe goeden loon.

Elck segghet den anderen voorts.

Figure 6.2 *Men adverteerdt ende laet eenen yegelicken weten, als datmen op den xxv. deser maent van Meye, 1619 besteden sal, het diepen van de haven* ([Middelburg: s.n., 1619]). The magistrates of Veere announce an employment opportunity to deepen the harbour of the town in May 1619.

the orphanage, the registration of properties in the town for tax and inheritance purposes, wages of labourers in Veere, and the departure of barges from Veere to Dordrecht. Examples from later in the century concern measures against tax evasion, rates of excise duties, local judicial procedures and wages. In all these cases the surviving ordinances are of significance to a wide range of citizens in Veere itself, and potentially to inhabitants outside the town.

Evidence from newspapers also suggests that some small communities used print more commonly than might be deduced from extant ordinances. In the second half of the 17th century, many municipalities placed notices in newspapers to announce forthcoming markets, or changes in market days.[29] In September 1667, the magistrates of Vianen, an autonomous fiefdom south of Utrecht, announced in two Dutch newspapers that their annual horse market would take place towards the end of the month, adding that more details were to be found on 'affixed posters' distributed throughout the country.[30]

The advertised Vianen poster does not survive, and no other Vianen ordinances can be located. Nevertheless, this single reference from two extant Dutch newspapers hints at the true extent of the infiltration of print into the municipal life of the Dutch Golden Age. Even tiny rural authorities in the Dutch Republic sometimes used official print to address recurring concerns of daily life. In 1591, the magistrates of Aalbertsberg, Overveen and Vogelenzang, three districts close to Haarlem, issued a broadsheet ordinance concerning regulations on a variety of local issues, including the registration of cattle and sheep, the quality of beer brewing and road repairs.[31] By 1683, the sheriff of the village of Grijpskerke, in rural Zeeland, published regulations on the maintenance of the roads and paths in the municipal district.[32] In 1660, court orders handed out by bailiffs in Zoeterwoude and Voorhout, around Leiden, were no longer handwritten but issued as standardised printed forms.[33] In the polders of northern Holland, the magistrates of Engewormer and Schermer issued printed rental receipts from the 1630s onwards. The archive of the burgomasters of Hoorn, who rented various plots of land on both polders, contain thirty-three editions of such forms.[34] We do not know of other printed publications by any of these authorities, but it is likely

[29] See Chapter 9.
[30] *Ordinaris Dingsdaeghsche Courant*, no. 39 (Amsterdam: Johannes van Ravesteyn, 27 September 1667) and *Oprechte Haerlemse Dingsdaegse Courant*, no. 36 (Haarlem: Abraham Casteleyn, 6 September 1667).
[31] *Schout ende schepenen van Overveen, Tetrode, Vogelensanck ende Aelbertsberge, doen condt allen haren ingesetenen, ende allen anderen des noot zijnde, dat also sylieden ghevonden hebben de groote abuysen ende disorder die de beesten ende schapen doende* (s.l.: s.n., [1591]), USTC 1532055.
[32] *Ordonnantie, op het schouwen ende bedrijven van de kerck, molen en voet-paden, onderhoorigh onder de parochien en ambachts heerlijckheden van Grijpskercke en Poppendamme* (Middelburg: Aäron van Poulle, [1683]), USTC 1521926.
[33] EL, Voorhout, Rechterlijke Archieven, inv. 40.
[34] WFAH, Oud archief stad Hoorn, 1356–1815, inv. 2498a.

that the above examples do not represent their only engagement with official print.

It is striking that most surviving examples of official print issued by small municipalities originated in the province of Holland. We know of at least forty-five Holland municipalities that used print, but only four in Overijssel and five in Gelderland and Friesland. To what extent does this reflect the reality of 17th-century state communication? Holland was the centre of the international book trade in the Dutch Republic, but printing presses were found across the entire country. Small towns in Friesland without a press could be serviced by presses in nearby Leeuwarden, Franeker, Sneek, Dokkum, Bolsward and Harlingen. Although the smaller towns of Friesland and Gelderland had less political influence than their counterparts in Holland, it seems highly unlikely that six of the eleven Frisian towns with representation in the provincial States never issued printed ordinances in the 17th century; the same could be said for the eight Geldrian towns with a vote in their respective provincial quarters. This too suggests that the use of print is likely to have been far more extensive in rural communities and small towns in the Dutch Republic than will ever be evident from surviving examples.

What is undoubtable is that the presence of a local printing press did ensure that municipal authorities made more use of printed ordinances than communities that did not have a local press. Zierikzee had a local printing press early in the 17th century, but not between 1617 and 1710. Very few printed Zierikzee ordinances are extant today, and it is noteworthy that the proclamation registers of the magistrates stated during the 17th century that ordinances were 'published from the town hall after bell ringing'. In the early 18th century, however, this phrasing changed to 'published and affixed', offering a likely indication that the presence of a local press from 1710 onwards prompted the magistrates to have most of their proclamations, if not all, printed as well.[35]

The law in splendour

The great urban centres of the Dutch Republic, cities of international renown and global commerce, fully embraced the potentialities of print. We can find hundreds of surviving 17th-century ordinances from Amsterdam, Haarlem, Leiden, Utrecht and Groningen. Survival is nevertheless by no means complete. For some years there are more than thirty extant publications published by the magistrates of Leiden; in other years there are none, or only a few. Below I attempt to reconstruct a sense of the annual production of ordinances in these cities, but what stands out from an assessment of surviving examples is the remarkable diversity of official print. The magistrates of these cities possessed a shrewd grasp of the applications of print in the regulation of their communities.

[35] ZAZ, Stad en Gemeente Zierikzee 1275–1939 (5022), inv. 292–3.

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The most common form of municipal print in Dutch cities was the broadsheet, the size of a modern A3 sheet of paper. Broadsheets were always used to announce the introduction of new legislation. New *keuren*, or amplifications to existing statutes, were printed as placards so they could be affixed around town by the *stadsaanplakker* or the town crier. As we have seen, new regulations frequently required additional proclamations to remind citizens of their duties, and these announcements too would appear as broadsheets: the magistrates of Haarlem published at least six different broadsheets on the production and sale of yarn in the city between 25 August 1634 and 8 February 1650.[36] In 1647, the same magistrates published a broadsheet ordinance on the sale of pigs, which featured the text of three previous ordinances on the same subject, to remind citizens of the existing regulations.[37] Broadsheets were also the preferred form to announce important events such as markets, lotteries and the sale of tax farming positions or municipal properties and to share news of military victories, prayer days or the election of the magistracy. But whether they concerned prohibitions on brawling, the establishment of a maximum price that could be charged for beer or new guild regulations, municipal broadsheet ordinances contained certain standard elements, all designed to maximise the visibility of the text.[38] Although broadsheet ordinances were ephemeral publications, they were not carelessly produced, nor can one describe them as items of 'cheap print' (Figures 6.3–6.9).

Broadsheet ordinances stand out firstly through the generous use of high-quality printing paper: this was necessary if they were going to withstand the wear and tear of exhibition outside. But it is also the case that the dignity of the magistracy, and their authority, required a high standard of workmanship, and that equally applied to the quality of the paper. The presence of ample white space was an imposing gesture which distinguished official print from other publications in a public setting. Many municipal ordinances also featured ornate woodcut borders (see especially Figures 6.3 and 6.6), which drew further attention to the text contained within. Most importantly, broadsheets contained various typographical features that emphasised their qualities as official print and guided the reader through the provisions of the ordinance. Woodcut coat of arms at the top of the broadsheet identified the issuing authority; the use of such woodcuts was the privilege of the magistrates and their officers alone. Municipal print is characterised by a rich variety of typefaces: *stadsdrukkers* often used a combination of black letter, roman and cursive typefaces to highlight important phrases, statements or divisions within the text. This generally includes the phrase 'Soo ist' (therefore it is), which marks the transition between the justification offered for the new order and the

[36] USTC 1500190, 1500206, 1500347, 1500225, 1500215 and 1500291.
[37] *Burgermeesteren ende regeerders der stadt Haerlem vercken-schouwers voor haer arbeydts-loon te ontfanghen sulcks hier nae volght* (Haarlem: Vincent Casteleyn, 1647), USTC 1500194.
[38] See here also Der Weduwen, '"Everyone has hereby been warned"', pp. 254–66.

details of the regulation. Different sizes of typefaces or small woodcut initials were also used for such transitions, or to distinguish different clauses in a lengthy ordinance. This typographical discontinuity is a standard feature of Dutch official print and plays a significant role in the visibility of the publications.[39]

The careful production of broadsheet ordinances demonstrates that magistrates were conscious of the importance of visibility in the daily governance of their communities. This is most evident in the adoption by Dutch authorities of descriptive titles and large headers at the top of their broadsheet ordinances. 16th-century broadsheet ordinances were traditionally composed of a single block of text, opening with the standard salutation of the issuing authority.[40] One can gain little sense of the contents of the ordinance without delving far into the text. In contrast, Dutch authorities began to use prominent titles on their broadsheets which summarised the contents of the text or indicated the general subject under consideration (Figures 6.5–6.8).

Dutch authorities possessed a keen appreciation of the potential audience for their ordinances. An Amsterdam ordinance of 20 January 1649, issued on the request of Hendrick Roelofsz, the official charged with assessing incoming ships for tax purposes, is only 15 by 10 centimetres in size and is composed of fewer than eighty words. This regulation affected only a small community in the city – instead of a large broadsheet ordinance, the announcement was printed as a small handbill, designed to be distributed at the docks rather than pasted up all around the city.[41] The extremely fine printing of this little ordinance is striking, as is the presence of the imprint of Broer Jansz, the *stadsdrukker* of Amsterdam, who rightly considered even this tiny print job a serious undertaking (Figure 6.9). It is clear that Dutch *stadsdrukkers* were able to live up to the expectations of their paymasters, and that they heeded the insistent demands of the authorities about the quality of their typography. Reading through thousands of surviving examples, it is rare to find composition or printing errors on 17th-century ordinances.

In the larger cities of the Dutch Republic, municipal regulations could also appear in pamphlet form. Most pamphlet ordinances are composed of eight or sixteen pages in quarto (using one or two sheets of paper) and contain relatively lengthy regulations: new statutes for a municipal guild, the protocols of the civic militia, lists of wages or tax rates, and instructions for surgeons, schoolmasters or

[39] Goran Proot, 'Mending the Broken Word: Typographic Discontinuity on Title-Pages of Early Modern Books Printed in the Southern Netherlands (1501–1700)', *Jaarboek voor Nederlandse boekgeschiedenis*, 22 (2015), 45–59.

[40] Der Weduwen, '"Everyone has hereby been warned"', pp. 257–8.

[41] *Extract uytet register vande willekeuren der stadt Amstelredamme, gheteeckent letter M. Fol. 52. Mijne heeren, hebben goet ghevonden, dat alle ponten, binnen komende, hermeeten worden* (Amsterdam: Broer Jansz, [1649]), USTC 1122534. See for another similar example *Extract uytet registre van de willekeuren der stadt Amsterdamme, gheteeckent letter M. Gepubliceert den 12 May 1648. Alsoo mijne heeren bevinden, de groote disordre, die dagelijckx ghepleeght worden in 't voeren van de gelden, naer Dantzick* ([Amsterdam: Broer Jansz, 1648]), USTC 1122327.

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Alsoo daghelijcx onder-von-
den wert / dat niet teghen-staende de veel-
vuldige verboden by Bailliu Burge-mees-
ters Schepenen ende Raeden deser Stede
ghedaen / soo met af-condighen voor den
Stadt-huyse/ als affictie van Billietten ten
eynde/ hem niemandt soude vervoorderen
eenighe Vuylicheydt op de Straeten/ veel
min inde Havenen deser Stede te werpen /
t'welck niet teghen-staende meer ende meer
wert ghepleecht/ streckende niet alleene tot groote cleyn-achtinghe van-
de voor-noemde verboden/ maer oock groote Schade ende na-deel van
de Stadt/ tot welckers cost de selve Vuylicheydt soo uyt de Havens als
vande Straten moet werden gheweert. SOO IST dat Bailliu Bur-
ghe-meesters Schepens ende Raeden voor-noemt/ midts desen wel ex-
presselijck sijn verbiedende dat niemant van wat qualiteyt hy sy/ hem sal
vervoorderen eenige Vuylicheyt te werpen of doen werpen op de Stra-
ten/ veel min in de Havens deser Stadt/ maer dat sy de selve in hare Huy-
sen of ten Minsten voor hare Deuren sullen houden staende/ tot dat de
Karren die daer toe midts desen wel expresselijck werden gestelt/ de selve
sullen op nemen/ op pene wie contrarie bevonden wierde gedaen te heb-
ben/ sal verbeuren de Boeten van oudts daer toe gestatueert/ tot Innin-
ge vande welcke s'Heeren Dienaers / werden geauthoriseert te procede-
by Pant-halinghe omme de selve Boeten daer aen verhaelt te werden /
ren/ ende sullen de Ouders voor hare kinderen/ ende de Meesters ende
Vrouwen voor hare Dienst-knechten ende Dienst-maeghden in-staen /
dus houde hem yegelijck ghewaerschout.

Ghepubliceert den 16. Meerte 1646

Elck verhoede sijn Schade.

Tot Vlissinghe, Ghedruckt by Samuel Versterre, Ordinaris Stadts Drucker 1646.

Figure 6.3 *Alsoo daghelijcx onder-von-den wert, dat niet teghen-staende de verboden hem niemandt soude vervoorderen eenighe vuylicheydt op de straeten te werpen, Soo ist dat Bailliu wel expresselijck sijn verbiendende dat niemant eenige Vuylicheyt te werpen op de Straten* (Vlissingen: Samuel Claeys Versterre, 1646). A Vlissingen broadsheet ordinance of 16 March 1646 warning citizens not to dump rubbish on the streets or into the harbour. Note the intricate woodcut border, emblem and initial, as well as the prominent 'Soo ist' in the centre of the text. The final phrase, set in a large black letter typeface, is 'Elck verhoede sijn schade' (Each should take care not to be fined).

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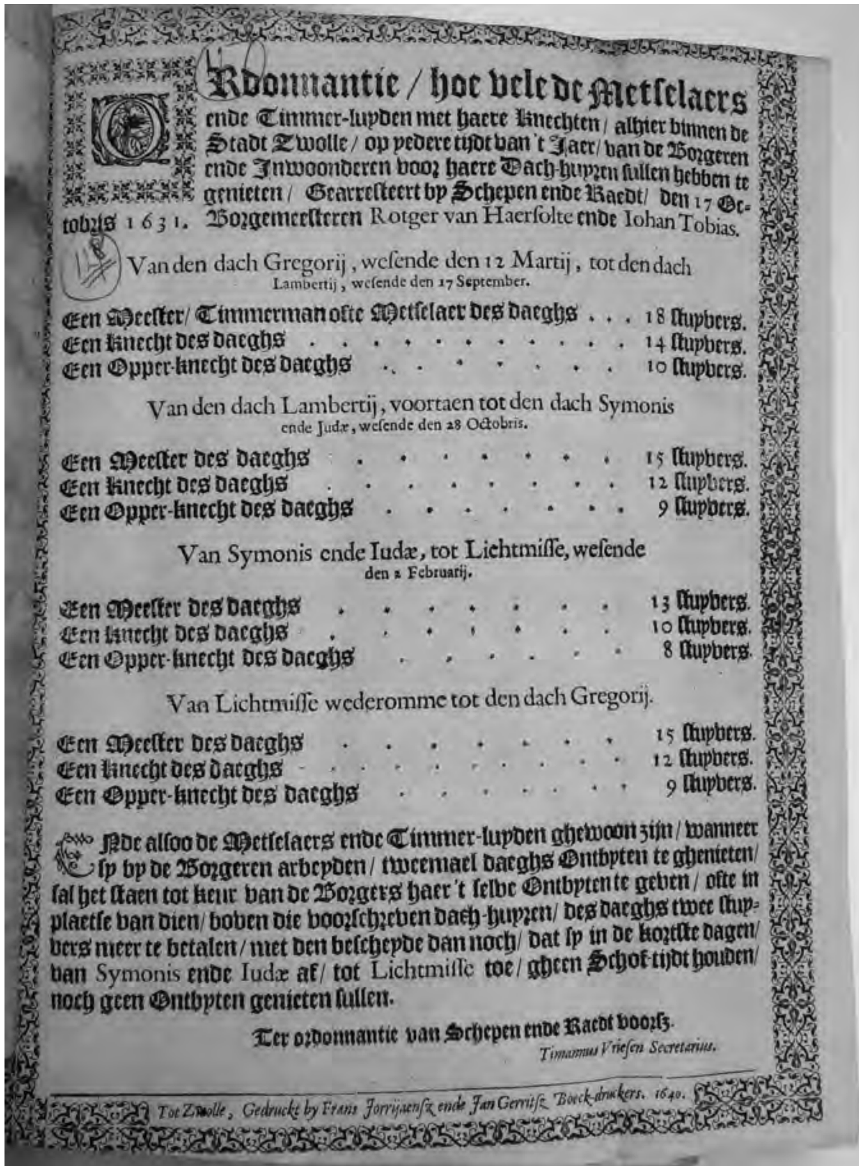


ORdonnantie / hoe vele de Metselaers ende Timmer-luyden met haere Knechten / alhier binnen de Stadt Zwolle / op yedere tijdt van 't Jaer / van de Borgeren ende Inwoonderen voor haere Dach-huyren sullen hebben te genieten / Gearresteert by Schepen ende Raedt / den 17 Octobris 1631. Borgemeesteren Rotger van Haersolte ende Iohan Tobias.

Van den dach Gregorij, wesende den 12 Martij, tot den dach Lambertij, wesende den 17 September.

Een Meester / Timmerman ofte Metselaer des daeghs . . . 18 stuyvers.
Een Knecht des daeghs . . . 14 stuyvers.
Een Opper-knecht des daeghs . . . 10 stuyvers.

Van den dach Lambertij, voortaen tot den dach Symonis ende Judæ, wesende den 28 Octobris.

Een Meester des daeghs . . . 15 stuyvers.
Een Knecht des daeghs . . . 12 stuyvers.
Een Opper-knecht des daeghs . . . 9 stuyvers.

Van Symonis ende Iudæ, tot Lichtmisse, wesende den 2 Februarij.

Een Meester des daeghs . . . 13 stuyvers.
Een knecht des daeghs . . . 10 stuyvers.
Een Opper-knecht des daeghs . . . 8 stuyvers.

Van Lichtmisse wederomme tot den dach Gregorij.

Een Meester des daeghs . . . 15 stuyvers.
Een knecht des daeghs . . . 12 stuyvers.
Een Opper-knecht des daeghs . . . 9 stuyvers.

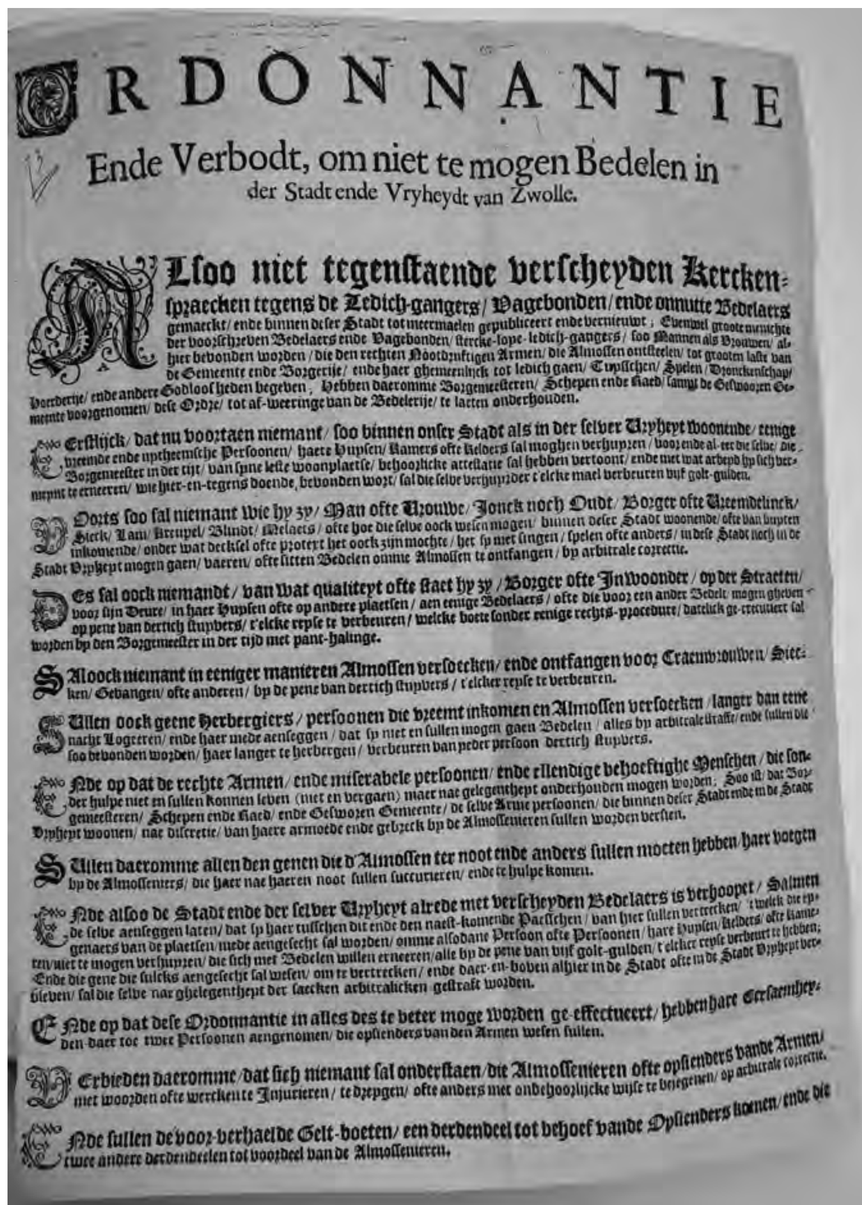
ENde alsoo de Metselaers ende Timmer-luyden ghewoon zijn / wanneer sy by de Borgeren arbeyden / tweemael daeghs Ontbyten te ghenieten / sal het staen tot keur van de Borgers haer 't selve Ontbyten te geven / ofte in plaetse van dien / boven die voorschreven dach-huyren / des daeghs twee stuyvers meer te betalen / met den bescheyde dan noch / dat sy in de kortste dagen / van Symonis ende Iudæ af / tot Lichtmisse toe / gheen Schof-tijdt houden / noch geen Ontbyten genieten sullen.

Ter ordonnantie van Schepen ende Raedt voorsz.

Timannus Vriesen Secretarius.

Tot Zwolle, Gedruckt by Frans Jorrijaensz ende Jan Gerritsz. Boeck-druckers. 1640.

Figure 6.4 *Ordonnantie, hoe vele de metselaers ende timmer-luyden met haere knechten, binnen de Stadt Zwolle, sullen hebben te genieten* (Zwolle: Frans Jorrijaensz and Jan Gerritsz, 1640). A Zwolle broadsheet ordinance of 17 October 1631 reprinted in 1640, concerning the wages of carpenters and bricklayers in the city.



ORDONNANTIE

Ende Verbodt, om niet te mogen Bedelen in der Stadt ende Vryheydt van Zwolle.

ALsoo niet tegenstaende verscheyden Kercken-spraecken tegens de Ledich-gangers/ Vagebonden/ ende onnutte Bedelaers gemaeckt/ ende binnen deser Stadt tot meermaelen gepubliceert ende vernieuwt; Evenwel groote menichte der voorschreven Bedelaers ende Vagebonden/ stercke-lope-ledich-gangers/ soo Mannen als Vrouwen/ alhier bevonden worden/ die den rechten Nootdruftigen Armen/ die Almossen ontsteelen/ tot grooten laste van de Gemeente ende Borgerije/ ende haer ghemeenlijck tot ledich gaen/ Tuysschen/ Spelen/ Dronckenschap/ Hoererije/ ende andere Godlooscheden begeven; Hebben daeromme Borgemeesteren/ Schepen ende Raed/ sampt de Geswooren Gemeynte voorgenomen/ dese Ordre/ tot af-weeringe van de Bedelerije/ te laeten onderhouden.

Erstlijck/ dat nu voortaen niemant/ soo binnen onser Stadt als in der selver Vryheyt woonende/ eenige vreemde ende uytheemsche Persoonen/ haere Huysen/ Kamers ofte Kelders sal moghen verhuyren/ voor ende al-eer die selve/ die Borgemeester in der tijt/ van syne leste woonplaetse/ behoorlicke attestatie sal hebben vertoont/ ende met wat arbeyd hy sich vermeynt te erneeren/ wie hier-en-tegens doende, bevonden wort/ sal die selve verhuyrder t'elcke mael verbeuren vyf golt-gulden.

Voorts soo sal niemant wie hy zy/ Man ofte Vrouwe/ Jonck noch Oudt/ Borger ofte Vreemdelinck/ Sieck/ Lam/ Kreupel/ Blindt/ Melaets/ ofte hoe die selve oock wesen mogen/ binnen deser Stadt woonende/ ofte van buyten inkomende/ onder wat decksel ofte protext het oock zijn mochte/ het sy met singen/ spelen ofte anders/ in dese Stadt noch in de Stadt Vryheyt mogen gaen/ vaeren/ ofte sitten Bedelen omme Almossen te ontfangen/ by arbitrale correctie.

Des sal oock niemandt/ van wat qualiteyt ofte staet hy zy/ Borger ofte Inwoonder/ op der Straeten/ voor sijn Deure/ in haer Huysen ofte op andere plaetsen/ aen eenige Bedelaers/ ofte die voor een ander Bedelt/ mogen ghehen op pene van dertich stuyvers/ t'elcke reyse te verbeuren/ welcke boete sonder eenige rechts-procedure/ datelick ge-executeert sal worden by den Borgemeester in der tijd met pant-halinge.

Sal oock niemant in eeniger manieren Almossen versoecken/ ende ontfangen voor Craemvrouwen/ Siecken/ Gevangen/ ofte anderen/ by de pene van dertich stuyvers/ t'elcker reyse te verbeuren.

Sullen oock geene Herbergiers/ persoonen die vreemt inkomen en Almossen versoecken/ langer dan eene nacht Logeeren/ ende haer mede aenseggen/ dat sy niet en sullen mogen gaen Bedelen/ alles by arbitrale straffe/ ende sullen die soo bevonden worden/ haer langer te herbergen/ verbeuren van yeder persoon dertich stuyvers.

Ende op dat de rechte Armen/ ende miserabele persoonen/ ende ellendige behoeftighe Menschen/ die sonder hulpe niet en sullen konnen leven (niet en vergaen) maer nae gelegentheyt onderhouden mogen worden; Soo ist/ dat Borgemeesteren/ Schepen ende Raed/ ende Geswooren Gemeente/ de selve Arme persoonen/ die binnen deser Stadt ende in de Stadt Vryheyt woonen/ nae discretie/ van haere armoede ende gebreck by de Almossenieren sullen worden versien.

Sullen daeromme allen den genen die d'Almossen ter noot ende anders sullen moeten hebben/ haer voegen by de Almosseniers/ die haer nae haeren noot sullen succurieren/ ende te hulpe komen.

Ende alsoo de Stadt ende der selver Vryheyt alrede met verscheyden Bedelaers is verhoopet/ Salmen de selve aenseggen laten/ dat sy haer tusschen dit ende den naest-komende Paesschen/ van hier sullen vertrecken/ t'welck die eygenaers van de plaetsen mede aengesecht sal worden/ omme alsodane Persoon ofte Persoonen/ hare Huysen/ Kelders/ ofte Kameren/ niet te mogen verhuyren/ die sich met Bedelen willen erneeren/ alle by de pene van vyf golt-gulden/ t'elcker reyse verbeurt te hebben; Ende die gene die sulcks aengesecht sal wesen/ om te vertrecken/ ende daer-en-boven alhier in de Stadt ofte in de Stadt Vryheyt verbleven/ sal die selve nae ghelegentheyt der saecken arbitralicken gestraft worden.

Ende op dat dese Ordonnantie in alles des te beter moge worden ge-effectueert/ hebben hare Eersaemheyden daer toe twee Persoonen aengenomen/ die opsienders van den Armen wesen sullen.

Verbieden daeromme/ dat sich niemant sal onderstaen/ die Almossenieren ofte opsienders vande Armen/ met woorden ofte wercken te Injurieren/ te dreygen/ ofte anders met ondehoorlijcke wijse te bejegenen/ op arbitrale correctie.

Ende sullen de voor-verhaelde Gelt-boeten/ een derdendeel tot behoef vande Opsienders komen/ ende die twee andere derdendeelen tot voordeel van de Almossenieren.

Figure 6.5 *Ordonnantie ende verbodt, om niet te mogen bedelen in der Stadt ende Vryheydt van Zwolle* ([Zwolle]: s.n., s.d.). A Zwolle broadsheet ordinance (early 17th century) against begging. Note the prominent title at the header of the broadsheet, as well as the ornate woodcut initials used for the beginning of each clause.

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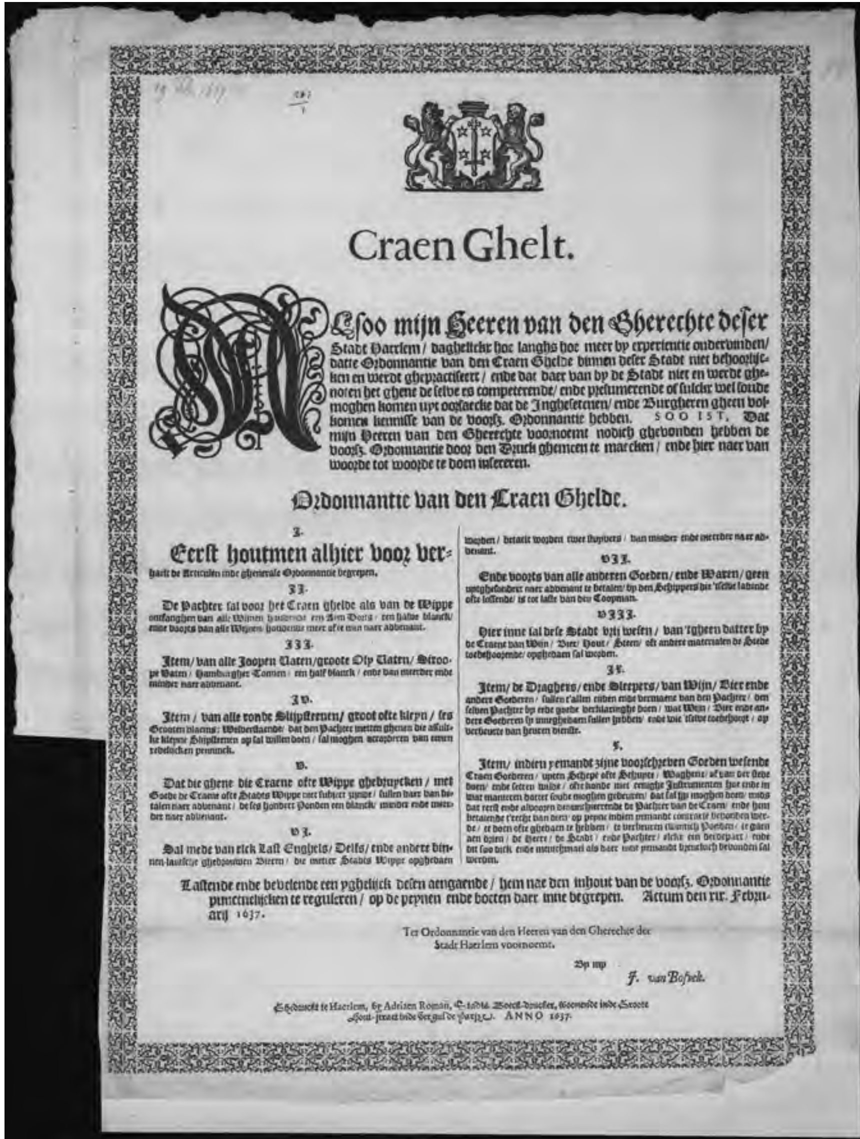

Craen Ghelt.

Alsoo mijn Heeren van den Gherechte deser Stadt Haerlem / dagheliicks hoe langhs hoe meer by experientie ondervinden / datte Ordonnantie van den Craen Ghelde binnen deser Stadt niet behoorlijcken en werdt ghepractiseert / ende dat daer van by de Stadt niet en werde ghenoten het ghene de selve es competerende / ende presumerende of sulcks wel soude moghen komen uyt oorsaecke dat de Inghesetenen / ende Burgheren gheen volkomen kennisse van de voorsz. Ordonnantie hebben. SOO IST, Dat mijn Heeren van den Gherechte voornoemt nodich ghevonden hebben de voorsz. Ordonnantie door den Druck ghemeen te maecken / ende hier naer van woorde tot woorde te doen insereren.

Ordonnantie van den Craen Ghelde.

I.

Eerst houtmen alhier voor verhaelt de Articulen ende ghenerale Ordonnantie begrepen.

II.

De Pachter sal voor het Craen ghelde als van de Wippe ontfanghen van alle Wijnen houdende een Aem [illegible] een halve blanck / ende voorts van alle Wijnen houdende meer ofte min naer advenant.

III.

Item / van alle Hoopen Vaten / groote Oly Vaten / Siroope Vaten / Hamburgher Tonnen / een half blanck / ende van meerder ende minder naer advenant.

IV.

Item / van alle ronde Slijpsteenen / groot ofte kleyn / ses [illegible] [illegible] dat den Pachter [illegible] sulcke kleyne Slijpsteenen op sal willen doen / sal moghen [illegible] van eenen redelijcken penninck.

V.

Dat die ghene die Craene ofte Wippe ghebruycken / met Goede de Craene ofte Stadts Wippe niet subject zijnde / sullen daer van betalen naer advenant / de ses hondert Ponden een blanck / minder ende meerder naer advenant.

VI.

Sal mede van elck Last Enghels / Delfs / ende andere binnen-landtsche ghebrouwen Bieren / die metter Stadts Wippe opghehaelt worden / betaelt worden twee Stuyvers / van minder ende meerder naer advenant.

VII.

Ende voorts van alle anderen Goeden / ende Waren / geen uytghesondert naer advenant te betalen / by den Schippers die 'tselve ladende ofte lossende / is tot laste van den Coopman.

VIII.

Hier inne sal dese Stadt vrij wesen / van 'tgheen datter by de Craene van Wijn / Bier / Hout / Steen / oft andere materialen de Stede toebehoorende / opghehaelt sal worden.

IX.

Item / de Draghers / ende Sleepers / van Wijn / Bier ende andere Goederen / sullen t'allen tijden [illegible] van den Pachter / den selven Pachter by [illegible] doen / wat Wijn / Bier ende andere Goederen sy [illegible] sullen hebben / ende wie 'tselve toebehoort / op verbeurte van heuren dienste.

X.

Item / indien yemandt zijne voorschreven Goeden wesende Craen Goederen / upten Schepe ofte Schuyte / Waghens / [illegible] doen / ende setten wilde / ofte konde met eenighe Instrumenten hoe ende in wat manieren datter soude moghen gebeuren / dat sal hy moghen doen / mids dat eerst ende alvooren [illegible] de Pachter van de Craen / ende hem betalende t'recht van dien / op peyne indien yemandt contrarie bevonden werde / te doen ofte ghedaen te hebben / te verbeuren [illegible] Ponden / te gaen aen drien / de Heere / de Stadt / ende Pachter / elcks een derdepart / ende dit soo dick ende menichmael als daer [illegible] yemandt [illegible] bevonden sal werden.

Lastende ende bevelende een yghelijck desen aengaende / hem nae den inhout van de voorsz. Ordonnantie punctuelijcken te reguleren / op de peynen ende boeten daer inne begrepen. Actum den xix. Februarij 1637.

Ter Ordonnantie van den Heeren van den Gherechte der Stadt Haerlem voornoemt.

By my

F. van Bosvelt.

Ghedruckt te Haerlem, by Adriaen Roman, [illegible] Boeck-drucker, woonende inde Groote Hout-straet inde Vergulde Parsse. ANNO 1637.

Figure 6.6 *Craen Ghelt* (Haarlem: Adriaen Roman, 1637). A Haarlem broadsheet ordinance of 19 February 1637 on excise duties on the use of municipal cranes. Note the liberal use of white space, the use of woodcuts and the rich variety of typefaces.

Nadere Ampliatie van

het xvj^e Artijckel vande Keuren vande Vleyſ-halle,

Verboth van binnen daeghs Sonneſchijn niet te mogen over doen of weder verkopen eenige Beſtialen by ſmackinge verkregen,

Mitſgaders

Authoriſatie op den Vinder en Deecken en Hooftmans vande Vleyſ-hal, omme de Kalveren, Schaepen, of Lammeren, by hen uyt de Halle gekeurt, te moghen doen brenghen in het Weeſ-huys, of te doen begraeven.

ALſoo die vande Gerechte deſer Stede kenniſſe bekomen hebben dat contrarie de jongſte Ampliatie van het xvj^e Artijckel vande Keuren vande Vleyſhalle deſer Stede/ verſcheyden Kalveren/ minder dan drie weecken out zijnde/ op de weeckelijcke kalveren ofte beeſtemarckt deſer Stede gheventeet ende verkoft werden/ daer uyt voortkomende dat geene peynen/ by de voorſz. Ampliatie/ tegens den overtreders vande ſelfde uytdruckelijck geſtatueert zijn/ Soo hebben de voornoemde Gerechte/ ten eynde de ſelfde Ampliatie in het toekomende beter mach werden naer ghekomen/ goet ghevonden by deſen te ordonneren/ Dat ſoo wie bevonden wert eenich Kalf ofte Kalveren te verkopen of kopen/ by den Vinder vande Vleyſ-halle/ ofte den Deecken en Hooftmans vande Vleyſhouwers alhier/ geoordeelt minder als drie weecken out te zijn/ ende ter dier oirſaeck vande Marckt gekeurt/ dat de ſelve verbeuren ſal/ ſo wel den verkooper als kooper/ telckens eene boete van drie guldens van xl. grooten 't ſtuck.

Ende alſoo mede bevonden wert dat de ſmackinge/ by die vande Gerechte toegeſtaen alle den genen die teghenwoordich zijn alſſer eenigh ...

Naer dien den voornoemde Gerechte mede klachten zijn ...

Aldus gedaen ende ghekeurt by die vande Gerechte der Stadt Leyden opten xxv^en. Maert des Iaers xvj^c negen-en-veertich, ende naer voorgaende klockegeſlach ter poeye van het Raethuys voor den volcke afgeleſen in preſentie van Daniel Symonſz. van Alphen Schepen, als geſurrogeert Schout, Burgemeeſteren en Schepenen der ſelver Stede, opten xxvij^en. vande ſelve Maent.

By my

*G. van Hooghevee*n.

Figure 6.7 *Nadere ampliatie van het xvje Artijckel vande keuren vande vleys-halle* ([Leiden]: s.n., [1649]). A Leiden broadsheet ordinance of 25 March 1649 featuring an amplification of the statutes of the butcher's guild, with very concise summations at the top concerning the details of the change in regulation. This is a particularly fine ordinance, but entirely characteristic of the quality of Leiden municipal broadsheets in the 17th century. Given Leiden's prominence as a typographical centre, there was additional pressure on its printers to produce elegant ordinances.

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KEURE,
Tegens het ter Marckt brengen, van
Vreemde
GRANEN.

DE Heeren Schout, Burgermeesteren ende Schepenen der Stad Alkmaer, hebben naer voorgaende Advijs vande Heeren Vroetschappen der selver Stad, Gekeurt / Geordonneert ende Gestatueert: Dat geen vreemde Granen van buyten inkomende / met de Sack op de Markt sullen mogen werden gepresenteert ofte verkogt / maer dat deselve door de Makelaers sullen moeten werden verkogt / ende door gesworen Meeters ende Dragers gewerckt en ende opgedragen; Dat oock deselve Granen in manieren als boven / in geen minder quantiteyt sullen mogen werden verkogt / als met een half Last te gelijck / ende dat op een tijd / ende aen een en de selfde Persoon.

Dat mede geen binnen Lands gewassen Granen / sullen ter Marckt mogen werden gebragt / in minder quantiteyt als een Sack / ende in yder Sack niet meer gedaen als drie Schepels / uytgenomen Lijn-Zaed, Canary-Zaed ende andere fijne Zaden / alles op een boete van twaelf Gulden / op yder Sack boven de verbeurte van het Graen / welcke boeten geappliceert sal werden / te weten een derde part voor den Heer Officier, een derde part voor den Armen / ende een derde part voor den Aenbrenger / ende het verbeurde Zaed ten behoeve van het Weeshuys deser Stad.

Aldus Gekeurt, Geordonneert ende Gestatueert, den den 25 Mey 1697. En vande Puye Gepubliceert den 8 Junij daer aen volgende.

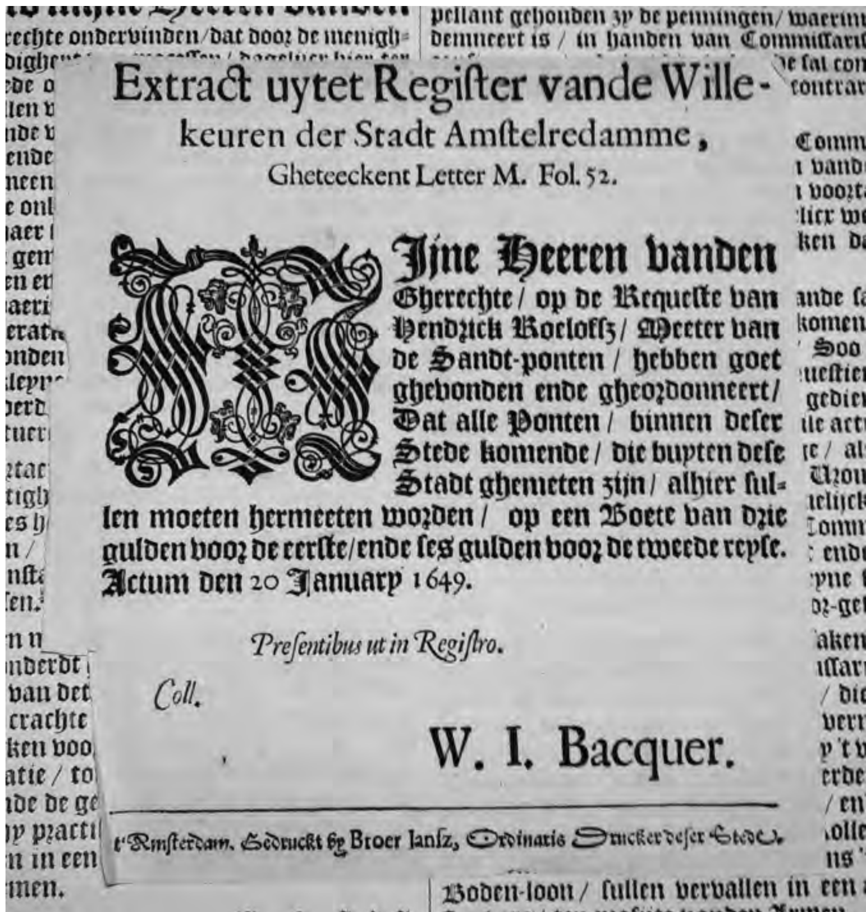
In kennisse van my SECRETARIS
ADRIAEN SEVENHUYSEN.

Sogget voort.

t'Alkmaer Gedruckt by Cornelis van Trier / Stads-Drucker inde Lange-straet, op de hoeck vande Houtil.

Figure 6.8 *Keure, tegens het ter marckt brengen, van vreemde granen* (Alkmaar: Cornelis van Trier, [1697]). An Alkmaar broadsheet ordinance of 25 May 1697. Note the large title and typographical differentiation to guide the eye.

civic officers. The convenience of the pamphlet format encouraged the publication of such ordinances as professional referencing tools: they might be issued on the orders of the magistrates, but also often on the initiative of the *stadsdrukker*, sensing a commercial opportunity. They were ideal to bind together with other municipal ordinances: most surviving copies are found in bound volumes of



Extract uytet Register vande Wille-
keuren der Stadt Amstelredamme,
Gheteeckent Letter M. Fol. 52.

Mijne Heeren vanden Gherechte / op de Requeste van Hendrick Roeloffsz / Meeter van de Sandt-ponten / hebben goet ghevonden ende gheordonneert / Dat alle Ponten / binnen deser Stede komende / die buyten dese Stadt ghemeten zijn / alhier sullen moeten hermeeten worden / op een Boete van drie gulden voor de eerste / ende ses gulden voor de tweede reyse. Actum den 20 Januarij 1649.

Presentibus ut in Registro.

Coll.

W. I. Bacquer.

t'Amsterdam, Gedruckt by Broer Jansz, Ordinaris Drucker deser Stede.

Figure 6.9 *Extract uytet register vande willekeuren der stadt Amstelredamme, gheteeckent letter M. Fol. 52. Mijne heeren, hebben goet ghevonden, dat alle ponten, binnen komende, hermeeten worden* (Amsterdam: Broer Jansz, [1649]). An Amsterdam handbill of 20 January 1649 on the measuring of incoming ships. Note the striking typographical sophistication of this little sheet (measuring 15×10 cm), as well as the presence of the imprint.

this sort or display signs of former binding.[42] But it seems that the majority of municipal ordinances were always issued first as broadsheets. The format was crucial to the public display of the law, by this point an inherent part of official communication. Numerous municipal ordinances survive in both broadsheet and pamphlet format: examples include a 1679 Haarlem ordinance on the butcher's guild, a 1675 Vlissingen ordinance on the wages of the carriers of beer of the town,

[42] See for example the dozens of volumes in the Royal Library in The Hague under class mark KW Plakk Q.

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and a 1657 Veere ordinance introducing measures against tax fraud in the sale and consumption of wine.[43]

The Veere ordinance was initially passed on 31 October 1654, but the magistrates considered three years later that fraudulent practices continued unimpeded; they therefore re-issued the ordinance, affixing a large four-sheet placard around town, but also published the regulation once more as a quarto pamphlet. Lengthy regulations of this sort (the Veere ordinance contained over 2,000 words) did not hinder magistrates from using broadsheets; rather, the publication of a massive four-sheet placard was an arresting declaration of intent, a claim to authority which would not have escaped the attention of the citizens of the town. The magistrates went to the expense of publishing a large broadsheet precisely because of its political symbolism in a public setting. Yet they realised too that the broadsheet did not make for convenient reading and ensured that the text of the regulation was available in an accessible pamphlet format. The Veere broadsheet is but one example of a common practice: large placards composed of multiple sheets were issued by municipalities all over the country, from Haarlem to Groningen and Alkmaar to Vlissingen.

One type of municipal publication which was published only as a quarto pamphlet was the municipal tax form. While the provincial States of the Dutch Republic administered the raising of excise duties required for the *gemene middelen*, magistrates maintained the right to raise multiple municipal excise taxes for their own coffers.[44] Like the provincial taxes, the rights to raise municipal excise were sold on an annual or bi-annual basis to tax farmers, who paid the municipality a single cash sum for the position. Before the sale of each position, the magistrates of Dutch cities printed and distributed short pamphlets, usually composed of two, four or eight pages in quarto, which detailed the conditions and terms of the sale. Such forms have rarely survived: their currency expired quickly, and they were superseded by new editions within twelve months. Secretariats rarely bothered to preserve a copy of each form, instead simply entering the name of the tax farmer and the sum paid in a municipal register. Luckily, the municipal archive of Leiden contains several volumes of early 17th-century municipal tax forms, many of which are annotated by the magistrates with the names of tax farmers or later amplifications (Figure 6.10).[45] In 1604, the magistrates required the printing of twenty-four different forms for the sale of municipal tax farming positions, a quantity which was required every single year in most large Dutch cities.

[43] *Ordonnantie ende keure voor het vleeshouders-gilt binnen dese stadt Haerlem* (Haarlem: Abraham Casteleyn, 1679), USTC 1815824; *Ordonnantie, en ampliatie op het loon van de groote bierdragers binnen Vlissinge* (Vlissingen: Abraham van Laren, 1675), USTC 1521924; *Waerschouwinge over de publicatie, van de heeren balliou, burgemeesters, schepenen ende raden der stadt Veere* (Middelburg: François Croock, 1657), USTC 1841106.
[44] See Chapter 3.
[45] EL, Stadsarchief II, 1574–1816, inv. 1947–9.

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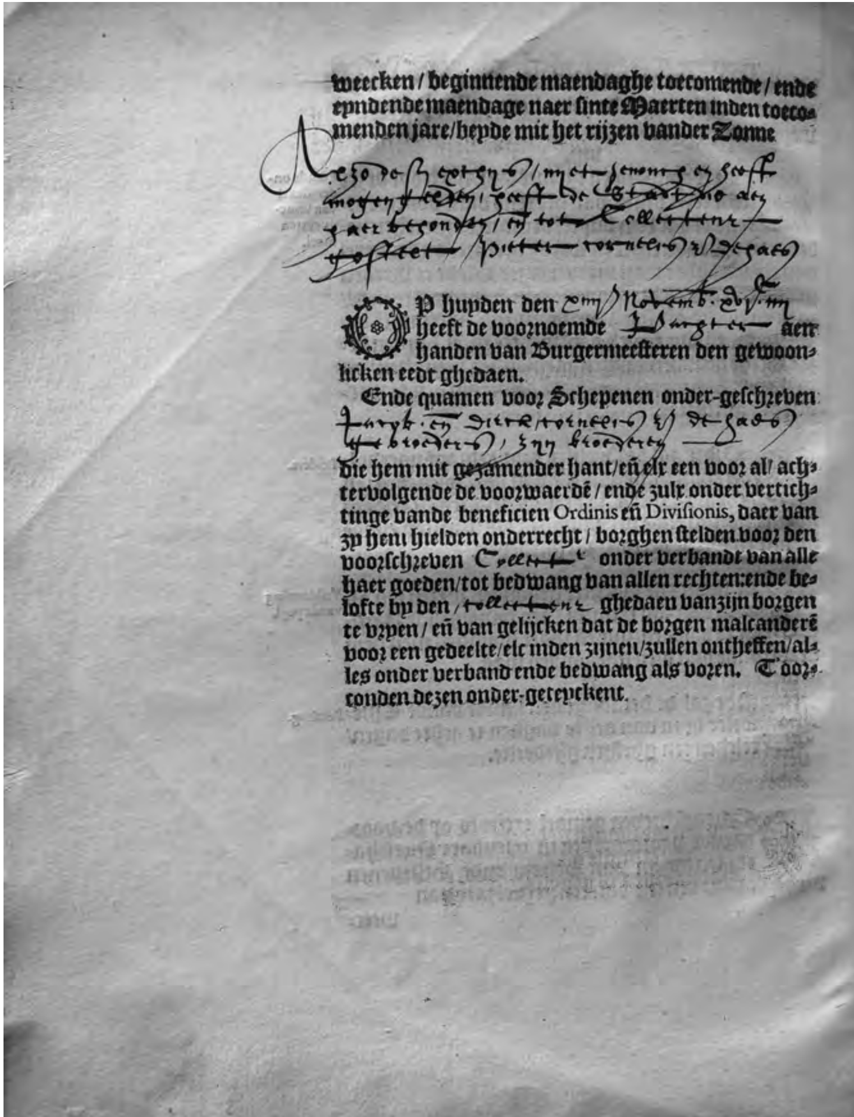
weecken / beginnende maendaghe toecomende / ende
eyndende maendage naer sinte Maerten inden toeco-
menden jare/beyde mit het rijzen vander Zonne

Op huyden den [illegible] heeft de voornoemde [illegible] aen
handen van Burgermeesteren den gewoon-
licken eedt ghedaen.

Ende quamen voor Schepenen onder-geschreven

die hem mit gezamender hant/en elx een voor al/ ach-
tervolgende de voorwaerdē / ende zulx onder verticht-
tinge vande beneficien Ordinis en Divisionis, daer van
zy hem hielden onderrecht / borghen stelden voor den
voorschreven [illegible] onder verbandt van alle
haer goeden/tot bedwang van allen rechten:ende be-
lofte by den [illegible] ghedaen van zijn borgen
te vryen / en van gelijcken dat de borgen malcanderē
voor een gedeelte/elc inden zijnen/zullen ontheffen/al-
les onder verband ende bedwang als voren. T'oor-
conden dezen onder-geteyckent.

Figure 6.10 *Byzondere voorwaerden daer nae burgermeesteren van wegen dezer stadt Leyden willen verpachten des stadts coorn-excijs* ([Leiden: Raadhuispers, 1604]). The final page of a municipal tax form on the grain excise issued in Leiden in 1604, completed by the secretary of the city.

The surviving Leiden tax forms comprise one example of a range of forms which must have been issued in huge quantities in the largest cities of the Dutch Republic. By the late 16th century, the magistrates of Antwerp employed printed forms for a variety of administrative processing, including permission to enter the city or transport goods, or to certify payments of tax or exemptions from civic duties. The magistrates also published forms handed out to vagrants ordering them to leave Antwerp within twenty-four hours, a practice that assumed a degree of literacy even among the indigent.[46]

The fashion for print in the daily administration of the Antwerp cityscape was adopted wholeheartedly by Dutch regents in the 17th century. It is difficult to arrive at any real estimates of the number of forms used, but the few surviving examples demonstrate that in cities such as Amsterdam, Haarlem, Gouda, Groningen, Rotterdam and Leiden, print was used for certificates of tax receipts, commercial licences, property valuations or inspections, shipping tolls, the sale of municipal land, municipal bonds, the oaths of civic officials, certificates for sufferers of leprosy, and for the regulation of prices, such as those of fish and cheese.[47] Certainly, one of the most ubiquitous printed forms used in Dutch cities was the *broodzetting*, the municipal regulation of bread prices (Figure 6.11).[48] By the end of the 17th century administrative forms were clearly common in smaller cities too. In Vlissingen, the sale of graves in local churches required printed forms, while in Deventer forms were also printed for the payment of road and barge tolls (Figure 6.12).[49] Print was at the heart of the social and economic framework of the urban community in the Dutch Republic.

To the treasury

The survival rate of municipal ordinances issued by a number of cities – including Arnhem, Enkhuizen, Schiedam and Zwolle – is much lower than that of the largest cities described previously. Thus far only five 17th-century printed ordinances issued by the magistrates of Enkhuizen have been traced; the survival of ordinances for the magistrates of Schiedam, Arnhem and Zwolle is a little better, but amounts to only twenty for Schiedam, thirty for Arnhem and fifty for Zwolle. These were cities of considerable size, comprising between 8,000 and 25,000 inhabitants. Crucially, the magistrates of these cities employed a local *stadsdrukker* for most if not all of

[46] Pettegree, 'Broadsheets', p. 21; Museum Plantin-Moretus, Antwerp: R 16.27 (55). Voet, *Plantin Press*, I, p. 85.
[47] Pettegree and Der Weduwen, 'Forms, Handbills and Affixed Posters', esp. 29–36, 39; Erik Ketelaar, 'Accountability Portrayed: Documents on Regents' Group Portraits in the Dutch Golden Age', *Archives and Museum Informatics*, 14 (2014), 69–93, here 76–9.
[48] Jan de Vries, 'The Political Economy of Bread in the Dutch Republic', in Gelderblom (ed.), *Political Economy*, pp. 85–114. See more broadly De Vries, *Price of Bread*, pp. 39–144.
[49] HCOD, Schepenen en raad van stad Deventer, periode Republiek (0691), inv. 49.

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De Settinge van 't Lande/ volgende Heeren Staten West-Vrieslandt Anno 1655.

Broodt ten Platten de resolutie van de van Hollandt ende in dato den xx. Mey

Het Roggen-broot/ wegende ses pont/ gelt stuyv. pen.
Beste gebuylt Tarru-broot/ van drie pont/ gelt stuyv. — pen.
Beste Tarru-broot/ van drie pont/ gelt - stuyv. pen.
Slechte/ gelt - - - - - - stuyv. pen.

Alles op de boeten ende penen daer toe gestatueert. Actum den 23 1692

Ter Ordonnantie van de Heeren Burgemeesteren ende Regeerders der Stadt GOUDA.

Figure 6.11 *De settinge van 't broodt ten platten lande, volgende de resolutie van de heeren Staten van Hollandt* ([Gouda]: s.n., [169X]). A surviving example of a *broodzetting* form, this one issued by the magistrates of Gouda in the early 1690s. Such forms are rarely preserved: they were soon rendered redundant by the frequent fluctuations in the price of bread.

the 17th century; Zwolle had already done so since the 1540s, as one of the first towns in the Northern Netherlands.[50] It is impossible to imagine that they would do so only to print ordinances on an occasional basis. Rather, we are faced in these instances by significant material loss: not a single ordinance printed by Zwolle's first two *stadsdrukkers*, Johan van Roermond and Albert Speldemaker, has survived.

Although it is impossible to reconstruct entirely the production of 17th-century official print, we can glean clues about the potential size of this market from municipal account books, where magistrates recorded payments to *stadsdrukkers* for the delivery of print to the city. In cities of moderate size, such as Kampen and Alkmaar (with 7,000–12,000 inhabitants), magistrates generally spent between one hundred and 200 guilders per year on deliveries of 'ordinances, newspapers, paper, ink and other stationery'.[51] In larger cities, such as Groningen, Haarlem or Leiden (with 30,000–45,000 inhabitants) these sums could be substantially higher. The *stadsdrukkers* of Haarlem received around 300 guilders annually for the delivery of ordinances, books and paper, but Hans Sas, *stadsdrukker* of Groningen for much of the early 17th century, was sometimes paid over 1,000 guilders a

[50] HCOZ, Stadsbestuur Zwolle (0700), inv. 66, pp. 451–2.
[51] SAK, Oud Archief Kampen, inv. 519.

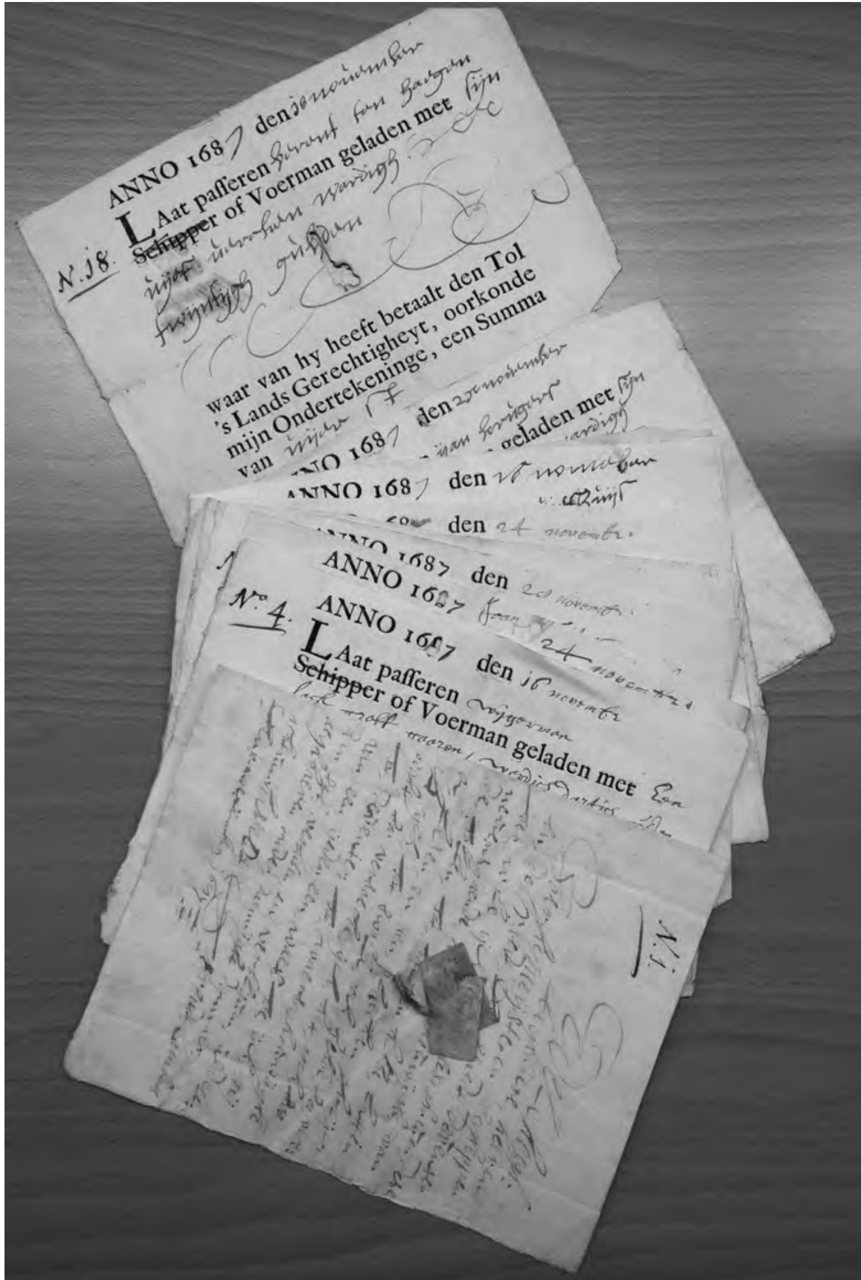

Figure 6.12 A selection of toll forms printed in Deventer in the 1680s.

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year for the same services.[52] The *stadsdrukker* of Gouda, one of the oldest cities of Holland, but home to no more than 15,000 inhabitants, received around 825 guilders a year by the end of the 17th century.[53]

In Amsterdam, annual sums for the delivery of print and other stationery increased steadily during the 17th century. In the 1610s and 1620s the magistrates spent between 300 and 400 guilders a year; by the 1640s and 1650s they spent closer to 2,000 guilders; and by the 1670s and 1680s they sometimes spent around 5,000 guilders.[54] Sadly most municipal account books provide us with opaque records, combining receipts for various services, which make it impossible to determine what proportion of the stated sum was spent on ordinances and other official print: consider the notice in the account books of Amsterdam covering 1680, stating that 4,155 guilders, nineteen stuivers and eight penningen was spent on the services of 'diverse persons for the deliveries of paper, ink, seals, as well as for the printing of statutes, ordinances, etc.'.[55]

On the rare occasions that detailed expenses concern the delivery of official print alone, we are in a position to compare the relevant payment to the survival of ordinances, giving a sense of the scope of loss. A payment to the Alkmaar *stadsdrukker* IJsbrant Jansz van Houten in 1642 of 113 guilders and fourteen stuivers was stated to relate specifically to the 'printing of various letters, namely statutes, ordinances and others'.[56] Only a single broadsheet ordinance issued by the magistrates of Alkmaar survives for 1642.[57] On 27 November 1631, the magistrates of Leiden paid the printer Jan Claesz van Dorp sixty-nine guilders and ten stuivers for the printing of placards and ordinances for the city.[58] Not a single Leiden ordinance printed in 1631 or 1630 survives. In 1646, again in November, the magistrates paid the heirs of Van Dorp 212 guilders as 'compensation for what they have printed for this city' from March 1645 until November 1646.[59] Only a single Leiden ordinance is extant for this twenty-one month period.[60] Even more extraordinarily, Johannes (III) van Ravesteyn, *stadsdrukker* of Amsterdam between 1658 and 1675, was paid 1,843 guilders and three stuivers for the printing of ordinances and forms for the city in 1659.[61] So far only two Amsterdam ordinances from 1659 have been documented.[62]

[52] NHAH, Stadsbestuur van Haarlem, 1573–1813, inv. 1660–1705; GAG, Archief van de stad, inv. 332, f. 397v.
[53] SMHG, Oud Archief Gouda, inv. 5038.
[54] SAA, Archief van de Burgemeesters: stadsrekeningen, inv. 88–130.
[55] SAA, Archief van de Burgemeesters: stadsrekeningen, inv. 127, f. 7v.
[56] RAA, Archief van de gemeente Alkmaar, 1325–1815, inv. 371, f. 360r.
[57] *Lyste vande wagen-vrachten. Van Alckmaer op Hoorn: Enckhuysen ende Huys-duynen* (Alkmaar: IJsbrant Jansz van Houten, 1642), USTC 1122330.
[58] EL, Stadsarchief II, inv. 9733, f. 212
[59] EL, Stadsarchief II, inv. 9761, f. 139.
[60] *Ambachts-brief, belangende de droochscheerders ende laken-bereyders der stadt Leyden* ([Leiden: s.n., 1646]), USTC 1027496.
[61] SAA, Archief van de Burgemeesters: stadsrekeningen, inv. 124, f. 26r.
[62] *Extract uyt het register van de willekeuren der stadt Amstelredamme, geteeckent met de letter N. Alsoo*

How many ordinances could the magistrates of Alkmaar, Leiden and Amsterdam have purchased for these sums? The account books do not refer to any print runs for particular ordinances. However, the resolutions of the treasurers of Amsterdam from the 1670s give us an indication of the preferred print run and payment rates for municipal print. By the end of 1674, after Van Ravesteyn had been employed as *stadsdrukker* for fifteen years, the treasurers of Amsterdam noted in their resolutions that he was demanding too much for his services.[63] In 1675, the magistrates dismissed him and appointed Jan (I) Rieuwertsz as his replacement; but before doing so, the treasurers drew up an instruction to the new *stadsdrukker* which detailed the rates he was to charge (see Table 6.3).[64]

The instruction provides an overview of the print jobs that the *stadsdrukker* was supposed to perform on a regular basis, including the format of publication and the type of paper which he was to use. The *stadsdrukker* would be required to supply various ordinances, published as broadsheets as well as quarto pamphlets, but also academic theses for the Illustrious School of the city, municipal bonds, certificates of citizenship, and a wealth of forms, produced in folio and quarto, or printed six or eight to a sheet. The instruction confirms that print had become the preferred medium for a large variety of administrative paperwork that would have been traditionally undertaken by hand. In a large metropolis such as Amsterdam, official print seems to have replaced manuscript receipts entirely. Ordinances would have been produced on high-quality printing paper, *Saxis Schilt*, but bonds and forms, which always required handwritten annotation, would be printed on writing paper, which was thicker and even more durable than *Saxis Schilt*.

Seventy copies of an Amsterdam broadsheet ordinance would cost two guilders and ten stuivers, the equivalent of fifty stuivers. A hundred copies would be charged at fifty-five stuivers. Each additional hundred copies would add another twenty stuivers; given that the compositor's cost was fixed, a large print run was proportionally cheaper than a small print run. Pamphlet ordinances in quarto, which required more printing and stitching costs, were charged at ninety-six stuivers for one hundred sheets. Forms, despite the use of superior-quality paper, were cheaper than ordinances because they were printed six or eight to a sheet.

There are some other documented instances of payments for official print in the 17th-century Dutch Republic for which we know the price and print run of the ordinances supplied. Gathering together payments from Dordrecht, Kampen,

het frauderen van den impost op de wijnen seer is toenemende (Amsterdam: Johannes van Ravesteyn, 1659), USTC 1525446; and *Extract uyt het Register van de willekeuren der stadt Amstelredamme, geteeckent met de letter N. Alsoo de beurse weder is geapproprieert* (Amsterdam: Johannes van Ravesteyn, 1659), USTC 1525447. Both are kept in SAA, Archief van de Burgemeesters: stadspublicaties, inv. 1.

[63] I. H. van Eeghen, *De Amsterdamse Boekhandel, 1680–1725*, 5 vols (Amsterdam: Scheltema & Holkema, 1960–78), IV, p. 63.

[64] SAA, Archief van de Thesaurieren Ordinaris, inv. 6, ff. 17v–19.

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Type	Format	Paper type	70 copies	100 copies	200 copies	500 copies	1,000 copies
Ordinances	Broadsheet	*Saxis schilt*	2–10	2–15	3–15	6–15	11–15
Lists of the *krijgsraad*	Broadsheet	*Post ruiter*		3–5	4–10	8–16	15–15
Tax forms	In folio	*Saxis schilt*		1–14	2–5	3–10	5–12
Tax forms	In quarto	*Saxis schilt*		1–8	1–14	2–10	4–0
Municipal bonds	In folio	Best writing paper		3–5	4–16	9–16	18–10
Insurance forms and similar forms	In folio	Writing paper		2–5	3–5	5–15	10–10
Insurance forms and similar forms	In quarto	Writing paper		1–16	2–2	3–0	6–0
Academic theses, ordinances, &c. printed on both sides (pamphlets)	In quarto	*Saxis schilt*		4–16 (100 sheets)			
Six forms on a sheet	Broadsheet	Writing paper		4–0			
Eight forms on a sheet	Broadsheet	Writing paper		4–0			
Citizen's certificates	In quarto	Parchment		7–10	13–10	32–0	62–0

Table 6.3 The payment rates for official print delivered by the Amsterdam *stadsdrukker*, as drawn up on 30 November 1674. The rates stated are in guilders and stuivers ('2–10' is two guilders and ten stuivers).

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The Hague, Gouda and Den Bosch, the average payment for one hundred copies of a broadsheet ordinance was around fifty to seventy stuivers; ordinances published as a quarto pamphlet of a single sheet (eight pages) tended to be a little more expensive, charged at around eighty to one hundred stuivers for one hundred copies.[65] This compares very closely to the Amsterdam rates from 1674, allowing us to generate a general standard of the rate of pay for official print in the 17th century.

The resolutions of the Amsterdam treasurers noted that the *stadsdrukker* would usually be required to print seventy copies of broadsheet ordinances, unless otherwise specified. The seventy copies were divided among a variety of officers.[66] Forty-four copies were destined for the secretariat, which supervised the affixing of the ordinances around town. The remaining copies were for the personal use of the magistrates and for recordkeeping. Each of the four burgomasters, nine aldermen, two pensionaries and three treasurers would receive a copy; so too would the two commissaries of the *kleine saken* (small claims court) and the chief of the militia, who received two copies at his office and one at his home; the final three copies were sent to the treasury. It is notable that all copies of these ordinances were distributed within the city. For ordinances that needed to be publicised further afield, a far larger number would have been required. The resolution also stated that all publications concerning the militia, the watch or the army were usually to be printed in 238 copies, to be distributed to all officers and drill sergeants of the city, in addition to the burgomasters and the treasury.[67]

The seventy copies of ordinances required in Amsterdam is comparable to what we know of the usual print run of Haarlem ordinances. The instruction of the Haarlem *stadsaanplakker* noted that the official was usually required to post up around forty copies of an ordinance around town. If the Haarlem magistrates desired the same number of copies for their own recordkeeping as their Amsterdam colleagues, then a print run of seventy or eighty copies seems reasonable. But the Haarlem *stadsaanplakker* was also regularly expected to affix more copies than his usual forty; and the Amsterdam *stadsdrukker* could evidently be required to print up to (and perhaps beyond) 1,000 copies of ordinances and other official publications.

Incidental references indicate that the print run of municipal ordinances in other cities could be higher than the seventy or eighty usually required in Amsterdam and Haarlem. In the 1690s, Johannes van Braam in Dordrecht could generally be expected to print anywhere between fifty and 500 copies of municipal placards.[68]

[65] RAD, Stadsarchieven, inv. 1953a; SAK, Oud Archief Kampen, inv. 518; Schneider, *Voorgeschiedenis*, pp. 48–9; Keblusek, *Boeken in de hofstad*, p. 119; Briels, *Zuidnederlandse boekdrukkers*, pp. 468–70; Van den Oord, *Twee Eeuwen Bosch' Boekbedrijf*, pp. 168–9, 209, 337, 348.

[66] SAA, Archief van de Thesaurieren Ordinaris, inv. 6, f. 18r.

[67] SAA, Archief van de Thesaurieren Ordinaris, inv. 6, f. 18v.

[68] RAD, Stadsarchieven, inv. 1953a.

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In Den Bosch, Jan (II) Scheffer and Jan van Turnhout usually printed between fifty and 200 copies of similar ordinances.[69] An ordinance on the watch from 1598 was printed in 500 copies, with an extract issued in another 200 copies.[70] In Antwerp, Christophe Plantin and his successor Jan Moretus would print anywhere between 300 and 500 copies of municipal ordinances.[71] In 1648, Hillebrant (II) van Wouw printed thirteen municipal ordinances for the magistrates of The Hague with an average print run of 128 copies.[72] Jacob van Biesen, *stadsdrukker* of Arnhem, regularly printed 250 copies of local ordinances in the second half of the 17th century.[73]

Keeping in mind this broad range, we can make some assumptions about what recorded annual payments for official print in towns such as Leiden, Alkmaar and Amsterdam indicate about the production of municipal publications. If we use the lower estimate of print runs for municipal ordinances (seventy copies) and consider the average rate of pay to be set around fifty-five stuivers, then an annual payment of 200 guilders (as was common in Leiden) would pay for seventy-two different broadsheet ordinances, totalling 5,000 copies a year. A smaller jurisdiction such as Alkmaar, paying just over one hundred guilders a year, could pay for a minimum of thirty-five similar broadsheets. In Amsterdam, the 1,843 guilders paid to Johannes van Ravesteyn in 1659 could have paid for more than 600 different broadsheet ordinances of seventy copies each. It is of course unlikely that the magistrates would have spent this annual sum on broadsheet ordinances alone; in reality the sum would be divided among various ordinances and forms, including at least a dozen different municipal tax forms, as well as a variety of other forms, as listed in the 1674 instruction. Instead of 600 different items, the 1,843 guilders would likely have purchased a couple of hundred items of various print runs, some clearly larger than seventy copies only.

While this is a hypothetical exercise, it does give a sense of the relative purchasing power of municipal authorities in the Dutch Republic. The magistrates of Leiden could clearly afford to issue between fifty and eighty different publications each year, with print runs between seventy and 200 copies each. If one extrapolates for each municipality a potential annual output of ordinances, based on the size of the community and known instances of expenditure, then it seems likely that the minimum output of printed municipal ordinances in the 17th-century Dutch Republic must have constituted at least 75,000 individual print jobs, of which we have surviving examples of less than a tenth.[74] This, however, is an absolute minimum: the likely production was probably much higher. It is a clear reminder

[69] Van den Oord, *Twee Eeuwen Bosch' Boekbedrijf*, pp. 160–70.
[70] Van den Oord, *Twee Eeuwen Bosch' Boekbedrijf*, p. 209.
[71] Voet, *Plantin Press*, I, p. 101; and Imhof, *Jan Moretus*, pp. lxxxiv, 745–880.
[72] Keblusek, *Boeken in de hofstad*, p. 119.
[73] Keblusek, *Boeken in de hofstad*, pp. 122–3.
[74] Pettegree and Der Weduwen, 'What Was Published', pp. 4–7, 22.

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that the surviving examples of 17th-century official print constitute only a tiny fraction of total contemporary production.

The profits of privilege

The extensive loss of ordinances and the incomplete nature of archival records means it is impossible to determine what percentage of the printed output of 17th-century Dutch towns was composed of official print. It is certain to have been substantial: based on surviving ordinances only, official print represents 25 per cent of the total print output by editions in Alkmaar in the second half of the 17th century, 30 per cent in Vlissingen, and around 40 per cent in Gouda and Nijmegen.[75] It is highly probable that in most towns where there was only a single press, the print trade could not have been sustained without the business generated by the local authorities. This would include several of the Holland towns and most towns with presses outside Holland, except for major cities such as Utrecht, Middelburg and Groningen.

Even in busier print centres, official print represented critical income for a variety of printers. Multiple printing houses received commissions from federal, regional and municipal authorities in Amsterdam, Groningen, Utrecht and The Hague. Printing for the authorities was gladly taken on because it was straightforward: printers had no need to concern themselves with issues of distribution or storage when delivering a batch of placards to the town hall. The steady work generated by ordinance printing encouraged cash flow and allowed these privileged printing houses to reinvest the proceeds in other segments of the print market and diversify their output. Furthermore, if one received a commission from a local authority, there was a very good chance that the same authority would return for other services too.

That privileged printers could generate income from a variety of sources is suggested by the fact that the official stipends given to *stadsdrukkers* were relatively low. As we have seen, many *stadsdrukkers* received helpful exemptions from local excise and militia duty and sometimes enjoyed free rent.[76] The additional pension received on top of this was handsome, but not enough to live on. In Alkmaar, the annual salary for the *stadsdrukker* amounted to seventy-five guilders between the 1610s and 1630s, but this was decreased to fifty guilders in the 1640s.[77] In Kampen, the *stadsdrukker* received a stipend of only seven guilders.[78] In Den Bosch, Jan van Dockum was supposed to receive thirty-six guilders a year from 1641

[75] Statistics are based on the developing data of the USTC.

[76] See Chapter 3.

[77] RAA, Archief van de gemeente Alkmaar, 1325–1815, inv. 351, f. 109v; inv. 361, f. 215v; inv. 371, f. 307r. See also Van Diepen, 'Jacob de Meester (?–1612)', 120.

[78] SAK, Oud Archief Kampen, inv. 519.

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onwards, but by 1662 the council had stopped paying his stipend.[79] In Dordrecht, Johannes van Braam would receive fifteen stuivers a day for every day that he printed ordinances for the city, to help compensate him for 'sending his apprentice to the town hall', and so that he would not charge additional costs for 'small things, such as glue and twine'.[80] These amounts were welcome, but they also make clear that privileged printers made most of their income through compensations for the printing of ordinances and the provision of other services.[81]

How much profit could printers generate from the production of placards? It seems that printing a single ordinance with a print run of one hundred copies was not going to make printers rich immediately. The prices paid by the authorities for such a job were fair but not remarkable, especially considering that printers would have to acquire high-quality printing paper for their commissions. In the second half of the 17th century, such paper might cost as much as five guilders per ream; if a printer received seventy stuivers for one hundred copies of a broadsheet ordinance, the printer would have to pay twenty stuivers for the paper.[82] This probably left some ten to fifteen stuivers profit once the wages of the compositor and pressmen were taken into account. Though the profit on each job was small in monetary terms, the rate of return was impressive, and the more they printed, the greater their profits. This conjecture is confirmed by Alastair Duke's analysis of the profits to be made on the production of political pamphlets. These were also works that were sold cheaply and thus made relatively little income per unit, but, as a market, they could become highly profitable if one sold enough of them.[83]

In early 17th-century England, royal printers could make serious profits from commissions for broadsheet ordinances. During the reign of King James VI and I, the royal printers made twenty or thirty shillings of profit on a single order of 1,000 copies of a proclamation.[84] Graham Rees and Maria Wakely nevertheless consider that proclamations were 'small beer' in the broader business profile of the royal printers.[85] While this seems an imprudent assumption, Rees and Wakely do point to the fact that privileged printers enjoyed many other opportunities

[79] Van den Oord, *Twee Eeuwen Bosch' Boekbedrijf*, pp. 361, 374.
[80] RAD, Stadsarchieven, inv. 1953a.
[81] By comparison, in the 1640s the Anthoine-Velpius firm in Brussels earned around 3,600 guilders a year from printing ordinances for the central government in the Habsburg Netherlands. Adam, 'Printing for Central Authorities', p. 81.
[82] For some statistics on paper prices and the cost of printing, see Arie Cornelis Kruseman, *Aanteekeningen betreffende den boekhandel van Noord-Nederland* (Amsterdam: P.N. van Kampen & zoon, 1893), pp. 492–3; Van Eeghen, *De Amsterdamse Boekhandel*, IV, p. 259; Jeroen Salman, *Populair drukwerk in de Gouden Eeuw: De almanak als lectuur en handelswaar* (Zutphen: De Walburg Pers, 1999), pp. 317–18; Jan Luiten van Zanden, 'The Prices of the Most Important Consumer Goods, and Indices of Wages and the Cost of Living in the Western Part of the Netherlands, 1450–1800', available at http://www.iisg.nl/hpw/brenv.php.
[83] Duke, 'Posters, Pamphlets and Prints', pp. 166–9.
[84] Graham Rees and Maria Wakely, *Publishing, Politics and Culture: The King's Printers in the Reign of James I and VI* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 63, 141.
[85] Rees and Wakely, *Publishing, Politics and Culture*, p. 142.

to supplement their income. A *Staten-* or *stadsdrukker* frequently received the exclusive right to deliver books, paper, ink and stationery to the authorities. What proportion of annual revenue these services could amount to is illustrated by the accounts of the States of Zeeland in the early 17th century. Between 1618 and 1646, the States employed the Moulert family in Middelburg as their *Statendrukkers*. During this period the Moulerts received commissions for printed ordinances totalling 12,396 guilders, but they also received 11,277 guilders for the delivery of paper, as well as 1,725 guilders for stationery, 1,278 guilders for the delivery of books and 603 guilders for binding.[86] Altogether the Moulerts could expect around 1,000 guilders per year in business from the States, almost half of which was generated by printing ordinances and forms.

Being a privileged printer in one of the great print centres of the Dutch Republic came with a rich array of opportunities, as these cities were often home to a variety of institutions requiring their services, including courts, Admiralties and the East and West India Companies. In 1632, the Admiralty of Zeeland commissioned the Moulerts to print ninety-five reams (almost 50,000 sheets) of passports, for which they paid 852 guilders.[87] In The Hague, Hillebrant van Wouw, the printer of the States General and the States of Holland in the early 17th century, supplied the High Court of Holland with 873 guilders worth of paper, parchment, placards and almanacs.[88] Even in the small town of Amersfoort, having a privilege for the delivery of paper, books and newspapers to the local town council could generate a steady one hundred guilders per year in the second half of the 17th century.[89] Privileged printers also regularly received commissions to print dissertations and academic ephemera for the universities and Illustrious Schools of the Republic, or to supply books and prize bindings to the Latin grammar schools.[90]

The potential of these additional opportunities helps explains why Dutch printers were so proud, and fiercely protective, of their status as *Staten-* or *stadsdrukker*.[91] The title was lucrative, but it was also a measure of status: the appointment was a reputational asset, clear proof of a printer's reliability and the sophistication of one's work. This is also the reason why so many *stadsdrukkers* included their name and address on the imprint of municipal broadsheets, which were not destined for sale but distributed by the authorities. The presence of their imprint ensured that all local citizens, and potentially those further afield, knew the identity of the *stadsdrukker* and where to find them.

[86] Weststrate, '"Drucker ordinaris der Heeren Staten van Zeelandt"', appendix, p. 9.
[87] Weststrate, '"Drucker ordinaris der Heeren Staten van Zeelandt"', appendix, p. 65.
[88] Schneider, *Voorgeschiedenis*, p. 40.
[89] Bert Stamkot, '"Voor een civile prijs": De Amersfoortse stadsdrukkers, ca. 1670–1853', *Jaarboek Flehite* (2015), 80–97.
[90] Pettegree and Der Weduwen, *Bookshop of the World*, chs 6 and 7.
[91] For a similar perspective on royal printers in France, see Henri-Jean Martin, *Print, Power, and People in 17th-Century France* (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1993), pp. 165, 465–6.

The privileged printer was naturally closely associated with the authorities, and this brought further advantages when it came to commercial opportunities. A good relationship with the authorities was useful if the printer required intervention from their paymasters in a trade dispute, or if the printer sought the publication rights for a valuable title.[92] The greatest commercial coup by a privileged printer in the Dutch Republic was undoubtedly that of Machteld van Leuningen, widow and successor of Hillebrant van Wouw as printer to the States General and States of Holland. In the 1630s, the widow van Wouw (as she was always referred to on her ordinances) was able to secure the coveted rights to the new translation of the Dutch Bible (the *Statenbijbel*) by paying 3,000 guilders to the burgomasters of Leiden, who had been granted the rights by the States.[93] This was a significant sum, but it was paltry compared with the profits the widow would make over the next several decades. Although her exclusive right was successfully contested by a consortium of Amsterdam printers, her Bibles supplied most of the churches and households of the Dutch Republic deep into the 17th century. In 1627, five years after the death of her husband, Machteld van Leuningen's net worth was estimated at 52,000 guilders: in 1654, she was worth four times as much, with capital of 225,000 guilders.[94] This made her one of the richest inhabitants of The Hague, as wealthy as some of the greatest regents.

In the broader Dutch book world, Machteld van Leuningen's capital was rivalled only by the likes of Joan Blaeu and Johannes Janssonius, the foremost publishers of the Dutch Golden Age. Blaeu and Janssonius had established their market position through risky publications, including a series of exquisite atlases, and equally speculative trading in foreign markets. While Blaeu and Janssonius kept a stock of 20,000 titles in their bookshop and maintained branches across the Holy Roman Empire and the Baltic, Machteld van Leuningen's success rested on a far simpler business model. Printing for the state was profitable because it consisted of simple, repetitive jobs which could be produced in one day, for which the printer could expect to be paid in cash. States printers would not be required to keep large stock and experienced no difficulties with distribution: the whole consignment would generally be delivered into the hands of the secretariat of the States. While Blaeu and Janssonius would have to invest thousands of guilders in a

[92] Salman, *Populair drukwerk*, p. 247.

[93] Herman de la Fontaine Verwey, 'De Nederlandse drukkers en de Bijbel', in Herman de la Fontaine Verwey, *Uit de wereld van het boek*, II (Amsterdam: Nico Israel, 1976), pp. 77–102; Pettegree and Der Weduwen, *Bookshop of the World*, pp. 127–9. See Rees and Wakely, *Publishing, Politics and Culture*, chs 1 and 4, for the equally lucrative privileges on Bible printing in Jacobean England.

[94] Schneider, *Voorgeschiedenis*, p. 45. Agnes Campbell, royal printer in Edinburgh between 1676 and 1716, with her wealth of £78,000 Scots, was also by far the wealthiest book merchant in the kingdom of Scotland. Alastair Mann, 'Embroidery to Enterprise: The Role of Women in the Book Trade of Early Modern Scotland', in Elizabeth Ewan and Maureen Meikle (eds), *Women in Scotland, c. 1100–c. 1750* (Edinburgh: Tuckwell, 1999), pp. 137–51, here p. 144.

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publication which might take ten years to turn a profit, the widow van Wouw and her fellow *Statendrukkers* could expect an immediate return.

Machteld van Leuningen was succeeded in 1661, a year before her death, by her son Hillebrant (II) van Wouw. Hillebrant became so unfathomably wealthy that he resigned his post eight years later, in 1669. For the rest of his life he lived on the income from his numerous country estates.[95] He lived in such comfort that he could afford to ignore a 60,000 guilder debt owed to him by the States General. It was an enviable luxury. A colleague of Van Wouw, the Arnhem *stadsdrukker* Jacob van Biesen, grumbled in 1670 that it was 'shameful' that Van Wouw could buy 'several mansions' and maintain a 'noble state', retiring in the middle of his career, while other printers had to survive on more meagre pickings.[96]

The successor of Hillebrant (II) van Wouw was a young printer of humble origins, Jacobus Scheltus. The son of a basket maker from The Hague, Scheltus had already amassed 7,000 guilders by 1674, only five years after becoming *Statendrukker*. Twelve years later he could afford to pay 10,000 guilders, in cash, to buy a lavish country estate in nearby Voorburg.[97] When he posed for a family portrait with his wife and five children in 1690, painted by Jan Vollevens, the son of the basket maker had been transformed into a patrician of considerable standing.[98] Yet unlike Van Wouw, who was born rich and did not care much for the toils of printing and publishing, the Scheltus family valued their privileged status. Up to the political convulsions of the late 18th century, the Scheltus family retained the title of printer to the States General and States of Holland.

One can well understand Jacob van Biesen's irritation at the fabulous wealth amassed by his colleagues in The Hague, but in truth, the regents of Holland were not the only authorities who paid well. In 1679, when the States of Zeeland appointed Bartholomeus de Later as their new printer, the regents announced that they would pay De Later one hundred stuivers for one hundred copies of a broadsheet, with half a stuiver for every copy delivered in addition to this.[99] Pamphlet tax forms for the *gemene middelen*, printed on both sides, were to be delivered at 200 stuivers for one hundred copies, with another one hundred stuivers for each additional one hundred copies. This was, as the States pointed out in their memorandum to De Later, more than was paid in Holland. Indeed, it was a third more than the rate Hillebrant (II) van Wouw charged the States of Holland, and almost double the rate of the States General. To keep a talented printer in Zeeland, the regents were willing to spend beyond the standard rates.

[95] Schneider, *Voorgeschiedenis*, pp. 50–2.
[96] Keblusek, *Boeken in de hofstad*, p. 122.
[97] Schneider, *Voorgeschiedenis*, p. 69.
[98] Nederlands Instituut voor Kunstgeschiedenis, The Hague, https://rkd.nl/nl/explore/images/66152; last accessed 25 September 2022.
[99] ZAM, Staten van Zeeland en Gecommitteerde Raden, inv. 1671, f. 55.

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The commerce of state

When Hillebrant (II) van Wouw resigned his position as printer of the States General and States of Holland, he held a public auction to clear out the contents of his workshop. An advertisement placed in the *Oprechte Haerlemse Courant* described a rich variety of stock for sale:

> On Wednesday 26 March [1670], Hillebrant van Wouw will auction in his house in The Hague, a large quantity of Bibles, Testaments, psalm books, *Placaet-boecken* and various other printed items, including placards, ordinances, deductions, instructions, as well as matrices, punches, black letter and roman typefaces, maps of the siege of Den Bosch and six copperplates of these maps, as well as various other copperplates, woodcuts, and a large quantity of woodcuts of gold and silver coinage, as is all specified further in the catalogue, available with the booksellers in various cities. If anyone is interested to purchase various items directly before the sale, then they can address Hillebrant van Wouw at his house, where they will be treated to a civil price.[100]

This advertisement demonstrates one final highly profitable aspect of printing for the authorities: the commercial market for official print. *Staten*- and *stadsdrukkers* enjoyed the exclusive right to print the placards and ordinances of the authorities, and they did so on their own initiative as much as on the commission of their paymasters. In the Dutch Republic, most ordinances issued by the authorities would be published in broadsheet form, yet today most surviving examples (over 6,000 editions) are quarto pamphlets. These were generally printed by the likes of Van Wouw to sell to a large clientele of jurists, merchants and government officials, as well as to their colleagues in the book trade.

There were various ways in which privileged printers could profit from the commercial trade in official print. The production of large legal compendia, the *keurboeken* and *placcaet-boeken* we have encountered previously, represented a highly profitable upper end of the market.[101] Printers also regularly produced pamphlet versions of new by-laws and regulations, especially those concerning particular trades, guilds, the duties of the civic watch or instructions to civic officials. Many of these were regularly reprinted when stocks ran low (Figure 6.13). The reprinting of regulations concerning the Court of Holland, originally issued by Charles V and Philip II in the 16th century, was a staple of the business of the Van Wouw family in The Hague deep into the 17th century. The *Statendrukkers* of Utrecht, the Van Paddenburghs, amassed a great stock of old ordinances, some of them reprinted, which they sold as customised compendia. They produced

[100] *Oprechte Haerlemse Saterdaegse Courant*, no. 10 (Haarlem: Abraham Casteleyn, 8 March 1670). The same was also placed in no. 12, 22 March 1670. Der Weduwen and Pettegree, *News, Business and Public Information*, pp. 373–4.

[101] See Chapter 4. Afonso has also identified the *costumiers* as one of the most profitable aspects of the trade in official print: Afonso, 'L'imprimé officiel', pp. 60–1.

ORDONNANTIE
ENDE
LYSTE
ONS HEEREN DES CONINCX,
Op het lichten ende ontfanck van sijnen Thol/ op het inne-commen ende uytvoeren van Coopmanschappen in sijnen Landen ende Graefschappen van Vlaenderen.

Te CAMPEN,
Gedruckt by CASPARUS COTIUS, Boeckdrucker en Boeckverkoper/ wonende in de Broederstraet in de Boeckdruckerije. Anno 1687.
Na de COPIE van Brussel/ in't Jaer 1622. gedruckt door 's Konings ordre.

Figure 6.13 *Ordonnantie ende lyste ons heeren des conincx, op het lichten ende ontfanck van sijnen thol* (Kampen: Caspar Cotius, 1687). This toll ordinance, originally issued by King Philip IV of Spain for the Habsburg Netherlands in 1622, was reprinted in Kampen in 1687. The market for reprints of old ordinances was considerable and, as this example attests, widespread throughout the Dutch Republic.

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a collective title page and then, depending on the customer, bound together whichever regulations the buyer was interested in.[102]

Catalogues published by various Dutch booksellers reveal that ordinances would have been a staple of many bookshops. In his stock catalogue of 1660, the Utrecht publisher Johannes Janssonius van Waesberghe had 'various ordinances' and 'various placards' available for sale.[103] In The Hague, Gerard Ameling had similar placards in his stock in 1670.[104] Jacob Elzevier, also in The Hague, had 'many various bundles of placards' for sale at auction in 1628.[105] It is noteworthy that none of these three booksellers were privileged printers themselves, suggesting that they acquired them from other *Staten*- and *stadsdrukkers*. While we have no commercial accounts of any producers of official print in the Dutch Republic, the sales ledgers of the Plantin-Moretus firm demonstrate how regularly pamphlet ordinances were sold to other booksellers throughout the Habsburg Netherlands. In early 1596, Jan Moretus sold 725 copies of a new ordinance to booksellers in Brussels, Mons and Ghent.[106] In 1599, 411 copies of an ordinance forbidding trade with Holland were sold to eight booksellers in Brussels, Bruges, Mons, Louvain and Arras.[107]

Many of the pamphlet ordinances bought by booksellers would be sold on to the members of local town councils and government institutions. In the late 16th century, the magistrates of Den Bosch regularly ordered copies of ordinances printed in Antwerp or Brussels, ranging in the number of copies from twelve to 256.[108] The city archive of Bruges indicates that the council acquired ordinances from Antwerp, Ghent, Brussels, Louvain, Douai, The Hague, Utrecht, Lille, London, Ypres, Ostend, Dunkirk, Dordrecht, Middelburg, Mechelen, Paris and Rotterdam.[109]

Ordinances would rarely make it to institutional libraries in the 17th century (Thomas Bodley considered proclamations to belong to the category of printed 'riffe raffe' that was unfit for accession to a library), but personal libraries of the same era often contained bound volumes of ordinances.[110] The auction catalogues

[102] *Placaten ende ordonnantien, midsgaders publicatien, waerschouwingen, en extracten uyt de resolutien, van Utrecht* (Utrecht: Willem van Paddenburgh, 1680), USTC 1815916.
[103] *Catalogus Variorum, Insigniorum & Rariorum in omni Facultate & Lingua Librorum Officinae Johannis à Waesberge* (Utrecht: Johannes Janssonius van Waesberge, 1609 [=1660]), USTC 1846340, p. 282.
[104] *Catalogus in quavis facultatum & lingua rarissimorum librorum* (The Hague: Gerard Ameling, 1670), USTC 1846592, pp. 7–8.
[105] *Catalogus variorum & insignium librorum, praesertim medicorum* (Leiden: ex officina Elzeviriana, 1628), USTC 1509578, p. 27.
[106] Museum Plantin-Moretus, Antwerp, Arch. 73, ff. 18r, 23r.
[107] Museum Plantin-Moretus, Antwerp, Arch. 171, ff. 38v–39r.
[108] Van den Oord, *Twee Eeuwen Bosch' Boekbedrijf*, p. 231.
[109] Stadsarchief Brugge, Oud Archief van Brugge, inv. 122.
[110] Mary Clapinson, *A Brief History of the Bodleian Library* (Oxford: Bodleian Library, 2015), p. 14. More broadly, see Andrew Pettegree and Arthur der Weduwen, *The Library, a Fragile History* (London: Profile, 2021), ch. 8.

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of libraries of jurists in the Dutch Republic frequently record lots of 'various placards' bound together in this form.[111] The jurist Dirck Graswinckel owned eight volumes of 'various ordinances, placards, statutes, [and] privileges of the States General, the States of Holland, and of various cities, all carefully assembled'.[112] Gaspar Fagel had twenty volumes of bound 'placards, ordinances and resolutions' in his personal library, a fine collection that sold for sixty-three guilders at auction in 1689.[113] Volumes of placards and ordinances can also be found in the collections of numerous Reformed ministers from the 17th century.[114] These private collecting habits offer further evidence that many scholars, jurists and statesmen would collect and compile their own volumes of placards and ordinances, mostly for use as reference or study guides. The historian, schoolmaster and polemicist Willem Baudartius wrote that 'placards, edicts, remonstrances, &c. are especially useful to document historical events'.[115] Merchants, such as the exiled Antwerp trader Daniel van der Meulen, would also keep ordinances as part of their business archive.[116]

With such an extensive commercial market for official print, it was no surprise that the *Staten*- and *stadsdrukkers* of the Dutch Republic tried to protect their exclusive right to print ordinances.[117] It is also unsurprising that they struggled to do so: as in any part of the print trade, as soon as a monopoly became so lucrative that it was deemed inequitable, rival printers generally ignored it. More than 300 ordinances survive from the 17th-century Dutch Republic which were produced by non-privileged printers 'after the original copy'. Around half of these were copies of placards issued by the States General and the States of Holland, produced on the presses of printers in Amsterdam, Haarlem, Leiden, Rotterdam, Delft, Middelburg, Utrecht and Groningen.

Many reprinted ordinances concerned sensational events or controversial rulings: declarations of war, peace treaties, criminal sentences or the introduction of unpopular or new taxation. Most had a high news value, which meant that non-privileged printers were usually quick to fill a commercial vacuum, while the respective *Staten*- or *stadsdrukker* had to gamble on the potential size of the news

[111] See for example *Catalogus Variorum & Insignium Librorum, Praecipue Juridicorum, Nobilissimi Dom. Guilhelmi Ploos ab Amtsel [sic]* (Utrecht: Dirck van Ackersdijck, 1667), USTC 1846537, ff. B2v–B4v.

[112] *Catalogus insignium librorum, amplissimi viri D. Theodori Graswinckel* (The Hague: Theodore Duurcant, 1667), USTC 1803845, p. 90.

[113] *Catalogus instructissimae & exquisitissimae Bibliothecae Illustrissimi Viri Gasparis Fagel*, pp. 46–7.

[114] See Forrest C. Strickland, *Protestant Ministers and Their Books in the Dutch Republic, 1607–1700* (Leiden: Brill, forthcoming 2023).

[115] Willem Baudartius, *Afbeeldinghe, ende beschrijvinghe van alle de veld-slagen ghevallen in de Nederlanden, geduerende d'oorloghe teghens den coningh van Spaengien* (Amsterdam: Michiel Colijn, 1616), USTC 1016492, p. viii.

[116] Lamal, 'Commerce and Good Governance'.

[117] Evers, 'Gegevens betreffende Utrechtsche Staten-, Stads- en Akademiedrukkers', pp. 36–7; Afonso, 'L'imprimé officiel', p. 66.

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demand. In 1616, the sentencing by the Court of Holland of the two murderers of Jan van Wely, an Amsterdam jeweller, prompted Hillebrant van Wouw to produce three editions, but Broer Jansz in Amsterdam and Jan Claesz van Dorp in Leiden nevertheless printed their own versions in addition to this.[118] Broer Jansz even provided a chilling woodcut of the murder on the title page (Figure 6.14).

In 1666, the death sentence of Henri de Fleury de Coulan, Sleur de Buat on the charge of treason during the Second Anglo-Dutch War prompted no fewer than nine reprints of the two original editions produced by Hillebrant (II) van Wouw in The Hague.[119] One of the reprints had been produced rather carelessly by Adriaen Vlacq, a colleague of Van Wouw in The Hague, who had incorrectly used a woodcut of the coat of arms of the States General rather than the States of Holland on the title page. When interrogated about this by the Court of Holland, he defended his conduct by saying that he was forced to reprint the ordinance because Van Wouw would not distribute copies fairly among the booksellers, 'as is customary'.[120] Two other printers in The Hague had also reprinted the sentence, perhaps vindicating Vlacq's sentiment, and reinforcing the notion that ordinances were regularly distributed throughout the book trade for commercial sale.

As the investigation into Vlacq suggests, the authorities could take the issue of the illicit reprinting of ordinances very seriously. Machteld van Leuningen also took complaints to the States General whenever she knew of the identity of her rivals, and they followed up diligently with the perpetrators.[121] The authorities did so to stay on good terms with their privileged printers, but also because they were concerned about inaccurate reprints of the law. On 2 October 1649, the magistrates of Amsterdam complained that numerous printed 'resolutions, missives, acts' and other official publications were 'hung up and sold' throughout the city.[122] They noted sourly that the printers of their city produced copies of ordinances without the sanction of the regents. A 1657 ordinance of the Court of Holland likewise targeted the reprinting of official 'propositions, resolutions and missives'.[123] Yet at the same time, the authorities decided to exploit the commercial demand for their

[118] USTC 1032101, 1019704, 1435765 (Van Wouw); 1016950 (Broer Jansz); 1027699 (Jan Claesz van Dorp). See also Marie-Charlotte Le Bailly, 'Een rechtshistorische vingerafdruk: Gedrukte sententies in de Habsburgse Nederlanden en de Republiek, 1515–1700', in Mario Damen and Louis Sicking (eds), *Bourgondië voorbij: De Nederlanden, 1250–1650* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2010), pp. 389–408, here p. 389.
[119] *Sententie, vanden Hove van Hollandt, Zeelandt ende Vrieslandt, jegens den ritmeester Buat. Gepronuncieert den elfden october anno 1666* (The Hague: heirs Hillebrant Jacobsz van Wouw, 1666), USTC 1803486. One of the reprints was produced in Leeuwarden by Sake Sibema; the other eight were produced anonymously, 'after the copy of Van Wouw'.
[120] ARA, Archief Hof van Holland, inv. 5276.23. See also Keblusek, *Boeken in de hofstad*, p. 123.
[121] Keblusek, *Boeken in de hofstad*, p. 123.
[122] *Extract uytet register vande willekeuren der stadt Amstelredamme, gheteeckent mette letter M. Gepubliceert den 2 October 1649. Alsoo mijne heeren bemercken dat dagelijcx in druck gebracht ende te koop worden gehouden* (Amsterdam: [Broer Jansz, 1649]), USTC 1122446.
[123] *Publicatie van 't hof, jegens het drucken ende spargeren van pasquillen, resolutien, missiven, &c.* (The Hague: widow and heirs Hillebrant van Wouw, 1657), USTC 1836167.

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SENTENTIE
By den Hove van Hollandt
ghewesen/
Over de grouvvelijcke Moort begaen aenden Perſoon van
IAN VAN VVELY,
Coopman ende Juwelier van Amstelredam.
Ghepronunchieert ende gheexecuteert den sesthiensten Mey
1616, in s'Graven-Haghe in Hollandt.

IN s'GRAVEN-HAGHE,
By Hillebrant Jacobssen / Ordinaris ende ghesworen Drucker
vande Ed. Mo. Heeren Staten van Hollant ende West-Vrieslant.
Ende nu by Broer Ianssz op de nieuzijds Kolck.

Figure 6.14 *Sententie by den Hove van Hollandt ghewesen, over de grouwelijcke moort begaen aenden persoon van Jan van Wely* ([Amsterdam]: Broer Jansz, [1616]). Broer Jansz's reprint of the sentence of the murderers of Jan van Wely (1616). Note that the imprint credits Hillebrant Jacobsz van Wouw prominently as the original printer of the sentence.

regulations. In 1674, the States of Holland announced an excise duty on printed paper, which included a duty of four penningen for each half sheet of 'printed government placards', with 'the exception of those ordered by the authorities and delivered to them'.[124] This suggests that the regents were fully aware that the commercial market for ordinances was substantial enough to be worth taxing.

Finally, the regents also enjoyed welcome additional publicity from reprints of their ordinances. A States General placard of 4 August 1653, which announced financial incentives for the capture of enemy ships and flags in the First Anglo-Dutch War, was reprinted in Amsterdam by Johannes Colom, under the prominent headline 'Rewards for all loyal naval heroes'.[125] In the 17th century, there existed a mutually supportive relationship between the print industry and government. To printers, the authorities represented the best sort of customer: a regular client who demanded few risks on the part of the industry. To Dutch regents, the printers had come to play a critical role in the smooth functioning of daily administration and the maintenance of the delicate political bond between the regents and their citizens.

[124] *Ordonnantie, na de welcke in den lande van Hollandt en West-Vrieslandt sal werden geheven een impost op eenige gedruckte soo inlantsche als uytlantsche papieren* (The Hague: Jacobus Scheltus, 1674), USTC 1811190, f. A2r.
[125] *Geschencken aen alle getrouwe zee-helden* (Amsterdam: Johannes Colom, 1653), USTC 1566706.

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III

The Paradox of Print

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7

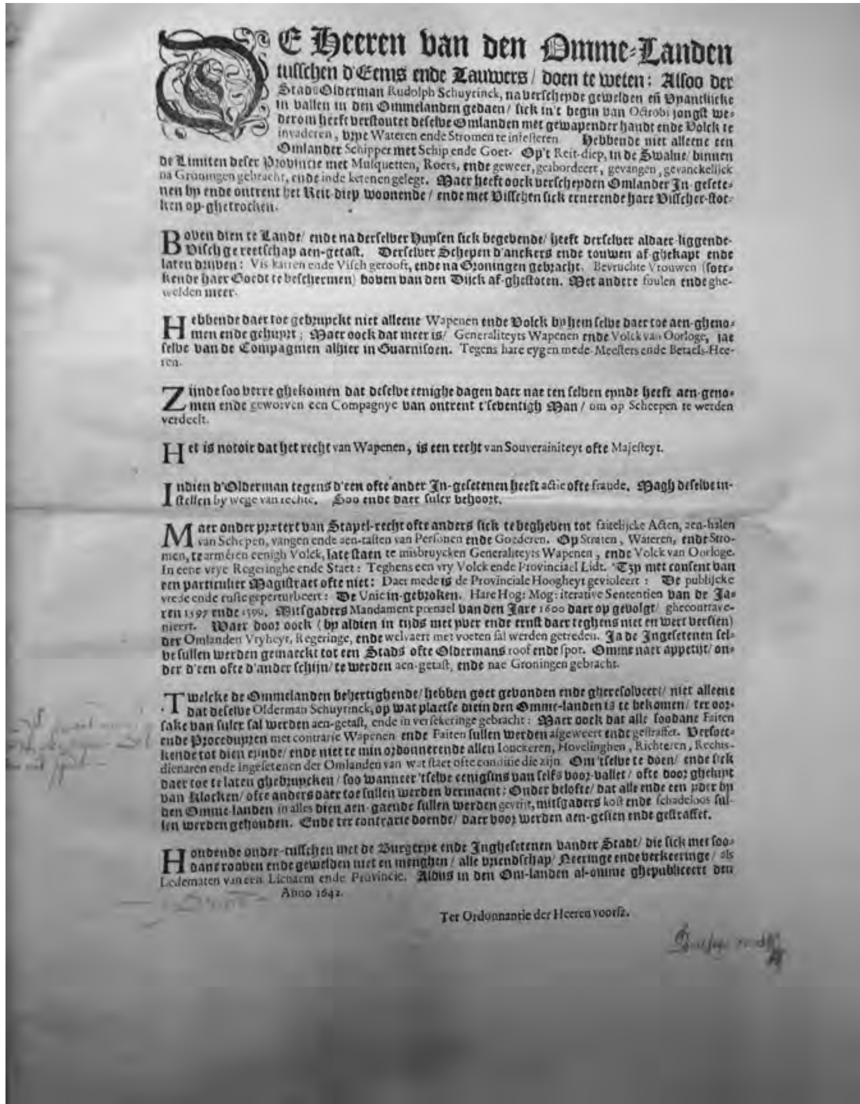
Print and the Ommelander Troubles

In December 1642, alarming reports spread through the Dutch Republic. A military incursion into Groningen, in the northeast of the country, had ravaged the countryside. A small but ferocious band of soldiers, some seventy in total, tore through villages and farms, plundering, raping and taking hostages. Some soldiers were even reported to have thrown pregnant women off a dyke. Although the Dutch Republic was a state that depended on commerce, it was also a country that was almost continually at war throughout the 17th century. However, this episode of warfare was not part of a conflict between the Dutch and a foreign power, but a battle between contesting political factions within the Dutch state. The December raid in Groningen was an account not of a foreign invasion, but of an instance of violence committed by Dutch soldiers against Dutch citizens. This was a sad but recurring outrage that took place as part of the Ommelander Troubles.

This particular instance of violence has come down to us thanks to a publication by the Council of Ommelanden, the representative assembly of nobles and landholders of the Groningen countryside. On 9 December 1642, they published a placard against the city of Groningen, accusing the magistrates of that city of sponsoring the vicious raid. In eight short paragraphs the Ommelanders claimed that Rudolph Schuringh, one of the regents of the city, had led the excursions into Ommelanden territory, and that he had employed a company of garrisoned soldiers in the pay of the States General, thereby using 'weapons of the generality . . . against their own lords and paymasters'.[1] At the end of the placard, the Council of Ommelanden called upon their citizens to capture Schuringh and to answer the call to arms to protect their 'fatherland' whenever church bells were rung (Figure 7.1).

The Ommelanden broadsheet is a chilling text, portraying some of the horrors inflicted upon the Groningen countryside by this band of marauding troops. It is also a remarkable piece of official print, representing a public attack by one Dutch

[1] *De Heeren van den Omme-Landen tusschen d'Eems ende Lauwers, doen te weten: alsoo Rudolph Schuyrinck heeft verstoutet deselve Omlanden te invaderen* ([Groningen: s.n., 1642]), USTC 1122292.



DE Heeren van den Omme-Landen tusschen d'Eems ende Lauwers / doen te weten: Alsoo der Stads-Olderman Rudolph Schuyrinck, na verschеyde gewelden en Vyandtlicke in vallen in den Ommelanden gedaen / sick in't begin van Octobr jongst wederom heeft verstoutet deselve Omlanden met gewapender handt ende Volck te invaderen, vrye Wateren ende Stromen te infesteren. Hebbende niet alleene een Omlander Schipper met Schip ende Goet. Op't Reit-diep, in de Swalue / binnen de Limiten deser Provincie met Musquetten, Roers, ende geweer, geabordeert, gevangen, gevanckelijck na Groningen gebracht, ende inde ketenen gelegt. Maer heeft oock verschеyden Omlander In-geseten by ende ontrent het Reit-diep woonende / ende met Visschen sick generende haer Visscher-stocken op-ghetrocken.

Boven dien te Lande / ende na derselver Huysen sick begevende / heeft derselver aldaer liggende Visch gereetschap aen-getast. Derselver Schepen d'anckers ende touwen af-ghekapt ende laten drijven: Vis-katten ende Visch gerooft, ende na Groningen gebracht. Bevruchte Vrouwen (soeckende haer Goedt te beschermen) boven van den Dijck af-ghestoten. Met andere foulen ende ghewelden meer.

Hebbende daer toe gebruyckt niet alleene Wapenen ende Volck by hem selve daer toe aen-ghenomen ende gehuyrt; Maer oock dat meer is / Generaliteyts Wapenen ende Volck van Oorloge, jae selve van de Compagnien alhier in Guarnisoen. Tegens hare eygen mede-Meesters ende Betaels-Heeren.

Zijnde soo verre ghekomen dat deselve eenighe dagen daer nae ten selven eynde heeft aen-genomen ende geworven een Compagnye van ontrent t'sebentigh Man / om op Scheepen te werden verdeelt.

Het is notoir dat het recht van Wapenen, is een recht van Souverainiteyt ofte Majesteyt.

Indien d'Olderman tegens d'een ofte ander In-gesetenen heeft actie ofte fraude, Magh deselve instellen by wege van rechte. Soo ende daer sulcx behoort.

Maer onder pretext van Stapel-recht ofte anders sick te begheven tot feitelijcke Acten, aen-halen van Schepen, vangen ende aen-tasten van Personen ende Goederen. Op Straten, Wateren, ende Stromen, te arméren eenigh Volck, late staen te misbruycken Generaliteyts Wapenen, ende Volck van Oorloge. In eene vrye Regeringhe ende Staet: Teghens een vry Volck ende Provinciael Lidt. 'T zy met consent van een particulier Magistraet ofte niet: Daer mede is de Provinciale Hoogheyt gevioleert: De publijcke vrede ende ruste geperturbeert: De Unie in-gebroken. Hare Hog: Mog: iterative Sententien van de Jaren 1597 ende 1599. Mitsgaders Mandament pœnael van den Jare 1600 daer op gevolgt / ghecontraveniеert. Waer door oock (by aldien in tijds met yver ende ernst daer teghens niet en wert versien) der Omlanden Vryheyt, Regeringe, ende welvaert met voeten sal werden getreden. Ja de Ingesetenen selve sullen werden gemaeckt tot een Stads ofte Oldermans roof ende spot. Omme naer appetijt / onder d'een ofte d'ander schijn / te werden aen-getast, ende nae Groningen gebracht.

Twelcke de Ommelanden behertighende / hebben goet gevonden ende ghe-resolveert / niet alleene dat deselve Olderman Schuyrinck, op wat plaetse die in den Omme-landen is te bekomen / ter oorsake van sulcx sal werden aen-getast, ende in versekeringe gebracht: Maer oock dat alle soodane Faiten ende Proceduyren met contrarie Wapenen ende Faiten sullen werden afgeweert ende gestraffet. Versoeckende tot dien eynde / ende niet te min ordonnerende allen Ionckeren, Hovelinghen, Richteren, Rechtsdienaren ende Ingesetenen der Omlanden van wat staet ofte conditie die zijn. Om 't selve te doen / ende sick daer toe te laten ghebruycken / soo wanneer 't selve eenighsins van selfs voor-vallet / ofte door ghelupt van Klocken / ofte anders daer toe sullen werden vermaent: Onder belofte / dat alle ende een yder by den Omme-landen in alles dien aen-gaende sullen werden gevrijt, mitsgaders kost ende schadeloos sullen werden gehouden. Ende ter contrarie doende / daer voor werden aen-gesien ende gestraffet.

Houdende onder-tusschen met de Burgerye ende Inghesetenen vander Stadt / die sick met soodane rooven ende gewelden niet en menghen / alle vriendschap / Neeringe ende verkeeringe / als Ledematen van een Lichaem ende Provincie. Aldus in den Om-landen al-omme ghepubliceert den Anno 1642.

Ter Ordonnantie der Heeren voorsz.

Figure 7.1 *De Heeren van den Omme-Landen tusschen d'Eems ende Lauwers, doen te weten: alsoo Rudolph Schuyrinck heeft verstoutet deselve Omlanden te invaderen* ([Groningen: s.n., 1642]). The Ommelander broadsheet of 9 December 1642, condemning the military incursion of the Groningen regent Rudolf Schuringh.

jurisdiction upon another. For much of the 17th century the northern province of Groningen was consumed by a turbulent conflict between the two constituent parts of the provincial States. The two authorities – the magistrates of Groningen and the rural Council of Ommelanden – regularly plunged their province into

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civil war. This struggle was violent, fought by arms and unlawful arrests; but it was also a war of words, dominated by repeated volleys of printed declarations, resolutions and ordinances. Far from appealing only to their own supporters, both sides continually addressed their opponents' citizens and made concerted efforts to dominate the public sphere. Printed declarations were proclaimed and affixed provocatively at contended political spaces. Printers producing official ordinances were intimidated, and their equipment was confiscated. Both the magistrates and the Ommelanders claimed indignantly (and repeatedly) that their authority was being undermined by printed libels and placards issued by their opponents; and both authorities adopted the same public strategy to air their grievances. Every stage of the conflict involved a renewed round of declarations and counter-declarations, as neither side was willing to grant their opponent the last word.

Thus far, this study has considered state communication as an exchange between authorities and their citizens. Authorities proclaimed ordinances to inform their citizens of changes in policies that affected their daily lives: they announced tax rates, commercial regulations, employment opportunities or public order offences. They employed town criers and *stadsaanplakkers* to disseminate the law, orally and in print. The parties in these rituals of communication were clearly defined: state communication was part of a continuous dialogue between the rulers and the ruled. This chapter, and the two that follow, consider how the authorities sought to inform and persuade their citizens through indirect means. This involved the manipulation of news supply, but also the publication and dissemination of official letters, declarations, resolutions and ordinances which did not directly address their citizens but rather attacked or insulted their political opponents. This involved an exchange between two opposing legal authorities, an act of communication that had traditionally taken place in the closed circuit of political decision making that excluded the average Dutch citizen.

It was, in fact, common for Dutch regents to attack their domestic rivals through the publication of official placards and resolutions. Although this is a strategy of communication that has never before been studied as a specific phenomenon, there are a variety of examples from the 17th-century Dutch Republic. In 1600, Frisian magistrates from two rural districts set up their own rival States assembly in Franeker after disagreements on new taxation measures. To support their position they published numerous declarations against their opponents in Leeuwarden over the next two years.[2] During the Remonstrant crisis of the 1610s, the magistrates of several Holland towns published in print their objections to the unorthodox course of action taken by the States of Holland, in

[2] Duyck, *Journaal van Anthonis Duyck*, pp. 589–90, 716–17; *Alzoo eenen yderen bekent is dat die ghedeputeerde van Oostergoe ende Westergoe* ([Franeker: Gillis van den Rade], 1600), USTC 427245; and *Oversettinghe vanden recusatie der Hove ofte Rade Provinciael van weghen den Ghedeputeerde Staten van Oostergoe ende Westergoe overghesonden* ([Franeker: Gillis van den Rade], 1600), USTC 427246.

an attempt to expose their fellow regents to the anger of their inhabitants.[3] In 1668, the magistrates of Zierikzee publicly denounced their opponents in the States of Zeeland for recruiting additional companies of soldiers despite the disagreement of Zierikzee and Goes, two members of the States, and for this they also relied on the publication of printed resolutions and letters.[4]

The publicity strategies employed by Dutch authorities in their domestic quarrels were realised through established channels of political communication. Legally registered ordinances, formal proclamations and printed placards were essential facets of the daily communication practices of the state. This openness, so far from the dignified aristocratic secrecy of the regents, was an essential feature of political conflict in the Dutch Republic. This was especially the case in Groningen, where the protracted struggle between the magistrates and the Council of Ommelanden lasted for the better part of the 17th century. Of course, bitter political rivalry was known elsewhere in the Dutch Republic, but it was usually more dynamic: in Holland, with its eighteen voting towns, factions shifted regularly, whereas in Groningen, there were only ever two sides to choose from.[5]

The municipal and provincial archives of Groningen hold a surviving corpus of over two hundred printed placards and pamphlets, issued by the magistrates and the Ommelanders, that allows us to investigate their political conflict in great detail.[6] This remarkable body of material stands at the centre of this chapter. It attests to the fact that the two competing authorities devoted considerable effort (and expense) to encouraging the public to rally behind their cause. In doing so, the magistrates of the city and the Ommelanders revealed more about their political process than the cultivated republican ideal of regent rule would suggest.

A province divided

The geopolitical characteristics of Groningen were unlike those of any other province in the Dutch Republic. It was known to most metropolitan Hollanders at the time as a strange, distant and stubborn place; the province was, in many ways, characterised by 'cultural isolation'.[7] It was furthest removed from the

[3] *Verclaringe vande heeren burgermeesteren van Amstelredam, Enckhuysen, Edam, eñ Purmereynde, Waer by hare E.E. verthoonen hoe verre d'authoriteyt van een christelijcke hooge overicheyt geexerceert behoort te werden* (Amsterdam: Marten Jansz Brandt, 1618), USTC 1007138.

[4] *Gravamina, ofte 17 pointen van bezwaernis, by de heeren regeerders der stadt Ziericzee; tegens de heeren Staten van Zeelant gemoveert, op den 24. november 1668* (Rotterdam: Johannis Redelijckhuysen [=s.l.: s.n.], 1669), USTC 1806522.

[5] On this phenomenon, see more broadly Marjolein 't Hart, 'De democratische paradox en de Opstand in Vlaanderen, Brabant en Holland', in Mario Damen and Louis Sicking (eds), *Bourgondië voorbij. De Nederlanden, 1250–1650* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2010), pp. 375–88.

[6] GAG, Ommelander Archieven, inv. 374, 758–888; Staten Archief, inv. 475, 866–7; Archief van de stad, inv. 298–313.

[7] Jan van den Broek, *Groningen, een stad apart: Over het verleden van een eigenzinnige stad (1000–1600)* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 2007); A. Th. van Deursen, 'Cultuur in het isolement: Groningen', in A. Th. van

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urbanised heart of Holland, Zeeland and Utrecht. Its eastern and southern borders (connecting Groningen with East Frisia and the Dutch province of Drenthe) were mostly composed of peat bogs and marshlands; in the west, the province shared only a limited passable land border with Friesland. Although it was a maritime province, Groningen did not possess an Admiralty, and it played a minor role in the rich shipping trade of the Dutch Republic.

Groningen was one of the least urbanised provinces of the country: its single eponymous city, located at the heart of the province, was home to around 20,000 inhabitants.[8] The city towered above the surrounding villages and boroughs that made up the rest of the province; but unlike in Holland or Zeeland, the urban community did not dominate a voiceless countryside. The politics of the States of Groningen was balanced between the city of Groningen and the three surrounding rural districts of the Ommelanden (Hunsingo, Fivelingo and Westerkwartier).

The Council of Ommelanden was composed of representatives of the landholders of the three districts: the *jonkeren* (low nobility), *hoofdelingen* (chieftains), *eigenerfden* (landowners) and *volmachten* (representatives of multiple small landowners).[9] Although the delegates of the Ommelanden sent to represent the Council at the States of Groningen or the States General were predominantly from the *jonker* class, any man with at least twelve hectares of land could present himself at the Ommelanden assembly, the *Landdag*, and cast their vote. In contrast to the city of Groningen, ruled by a traditional oligarchic council, the Ommelanden *Landdag* could be influenced by hundreds of people. Nevertheless, by the second half of the 17th century, Ommelander politics was dominated by the great landowners.[10] These included men such as Reinoldus Alberda, whose titles included *hoofdeling* in Eenum and *jonker* in 't Zandt, Leermens, Eenum, Zeerijp, Eestrum, Ten Post, Ter Laan, Reijland and Vierburen. Alberda was also one of the province's delegates to the States General, and a keen book collector, whose library, when sold at auction in 1692, numbered almost 5,000 titles.[11]

Coming together at the States of Groningen, the Ommelanden and the city each had one vote on all matters of provincial government. But the priorities of the two parties were divergent in many economic and political affairs. Matters of taxation, tolls, fishing and hunting rights, as well as other financial privileges, were

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Deursen, *Hartslag van het Leven: Studies over de Republiek der Verenigde Nederlanden* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 1996), pp. 153–80.

[8] Meindert Schroor, *Rurale metropool: bevolking, migratie en financiën van de stad Groningen ten tijde van de Republiek (1595–1795)* (Groningen: Nederlands Agronomisch Historisch Instituut, 2014).

[9] Meindert Schroor, 'Interne staatkundige verhoudingen in Stad en Lande', in M. G. J. Duijvendak et al. (eds), *Geschiedenis van Groningen II: Nieuwe Tijd* (Zwolle: Waanders, 2008), pp. 211–29, here pp. 218–20.

[10] Johan de Haan, 'Ommelander jonkers', in IJnte Botke (ed.), *Het grote geschiedenisboek van de Ommelanden* (Zwolle: Waanders, 2011), pp. 54–75.

[11] *Catalogus Bibliothecae Insignis Quam Magno Studio Et Sumptu Sibi Comparavit Praenobilis ac Generosus Vir, Dn. Reinoldus Alberda* (Groningen: Cornelis Barlinckhof, 1692), USTC 1823037.

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hotly disputed by the two sides. To the irritation of the Ommelanders, the city of Groningen took immense pride in its history as a Free Imperial city of the Holy Roman Empire; the more radical Groningers even claimed absolute sovereignty over the entire province, calling their rivals the 'Ommelanden of Groningen'. In defiance, the Ommelanders entitled themselves the 'Ommelanden between Ems and Lauwers' (the two rivers delineating their territory).[12] Most contentious was the *stapelrecht*, the right by which the city claimed tax on all goods passing through the province. Imposed since the late 15th century, the staple right was maintained with the enthusiastic support of the merchants and guilds of the city, which had a special 'staple right committee'. In the later 1630s and 1640s, Rudolph Schuringh, the regent accused by the Ommelanders of leading a military incursion into their territory in 1642, was the chair of this committee and evidently carried out his duties of enforcing its privileges ruthlessly.[13]

The struggle between the city and Ommelanden was complicated by the encroachment of the magistrates of Groningen into the countryside. The bourgeois elite of the city bought up estates in the country, acquired landed titles, invested in the drainage of marshlands, and subsequently raised dues and tolls from reclaimed territories.[14] In 1621, the city bought from Willem van den Hove, an Amsterdam merchant who had wanted to acquire a landed title, the seigneury of Wedde and Westerwoldingerland, Bellingwolde and Blijham.[15] Such purchases meant that the city of Groningen exercised jurisdiction over large swathes of land beyond their walls: the substantial districts of the Oldambt, Gorecht and Westerwolde (located to the south and east of the city) all fell under the rule of the city (Figure 7.2). By the middle of the 17th century, the city, in effect, governed half the Groningen countryside. But this infiltration could go both ways. Most *jonkers* owned properties in the city of Groningen: while the Ommelander aristocracy took great pride in their country manors (*borgen*), many were wealthy individuals, some worth as much as 100,000 guilders, and they retained a substantial urban presence.[16] The city provided a means to spend and be seen.

Furthermore, because the city was situated at the centre of the province, the Council of Ommelanden maintained their official assembly (the Ommelander House) on the Schoolstraat in Groningen, a minute's walk from the town hall occupied by their rivals (Figure 7.3). While the Ommelanders sometimes convened outside Groningen – in the small towns of Aduard, Appingedam or

[12] Van den Broek, *Groningen, een stad apart*, p. 99.
[13] GAG, Stadsbestuur van Groningen (1605), inv. 6920 and 7014.
[14] Hidde Feenstra, *Spinnen in het web: Groningse regenten in relatie tot het omringende platteland tijdens de republiek* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 2007).
[15] Oddens, 'You Can Leave Your Hat On', pp. 827–8.
[16] De Haan, 'Ommelander jonkers', pp. 54–75; W. J. Formsma, R. A. Luitjens-Dijkveld Stol and A. Pathuis, *De Ommelander borgen en steenhuizen* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1973), pp. 30–5; Hidde Feenstra, *De bloeitijd en het verval van de Ommelander adel (1600–1800)* (PhD thesis: University of Groningen, 1981).

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Figure 7.2 Theodorus Beckeringh, *Nova Totius Provinciae Groningo-Omlandiae*, 1781. The province of Groningen, with the three Ommelander districts of Hunsingo, Fivelingo and Westerkwartier surrounding the city of Groningen on the west, north and northeast. The considerable districts to the south and southeast of Groningen (the Gorecht, Oldambt and Westerwolde) fell under the jurisdiction of the city. In the cartouches around the map, one sees illustrations of notable country manors, the pride of rural Groningen.

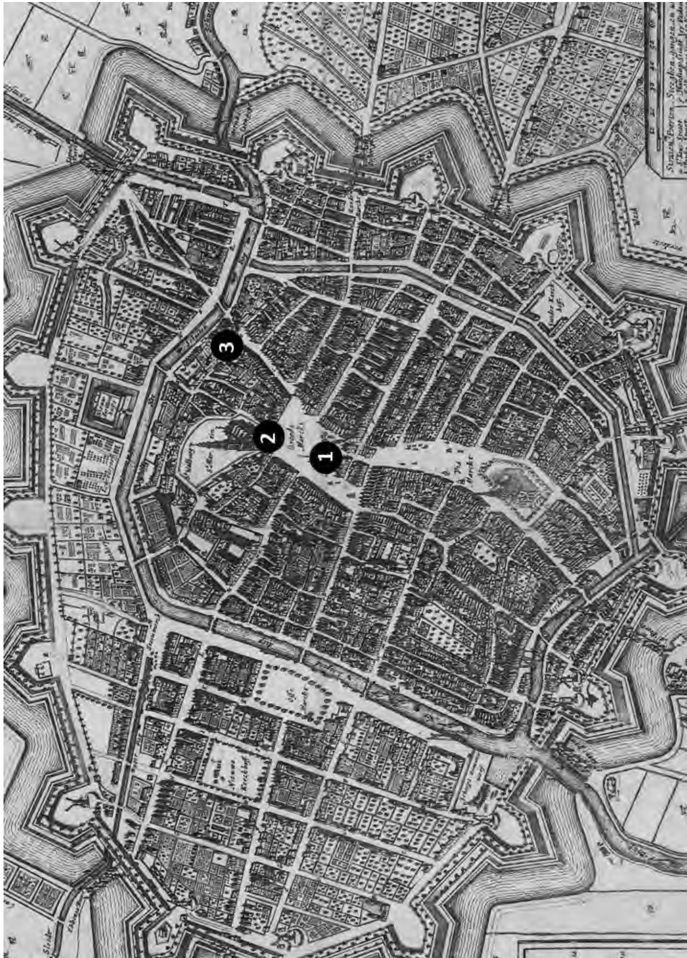

Figure 7.3 Salomon Savery, after Egbert Haubois, *Afbeeldinge der Stadt Groningen met de omliggende Fortressen*, 1652. The city of Groningen, depicted on a map by Salomon Savery (1652), with the locations of the Groningen town hall (1), the *Provinciehuis* of the States of Groningen (2) and the *Ommelanderhuis* (3).

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Winsum – they could generally be found at the heart of opposition territory. The magistrates of Groningen frequently disrupted the Ommelander *Landdag* in the city. In 1676, they went so far as to arrest a leading Ommelander *jonker*, Osebrant Jan Rengers van Slochteren, as he came out of a States of Groningen meeting in the city, accusing him of treason. This intervention sparked yet another outburst of violence across the province.

Groningen was an isolated province, but it did boast a sophisticated internal infrastructure. By the end of the 17th century Groningen had a network of canal barges to rival that of Holland, with a major route stretching across the province from west to east, and numerous offshoots flowing north, connecting many peripheral towns to central Groningen.[17] The ease with which citizens in Groningen could travel through the province, and the inevitable encounters between rival city burghers and Ommelanders, would only increase tension between the two camps.

Although the persistent conflict emphasised their differences, in reality the Groningers and Ommelanders were not so different. Their respective leaderships were wealthy, cultured and fiercely protective of their possessions. They were not always stubborn ideologues and were able to switch sides if an opportunity arose to better their station. The Ommelander Johan Huninga, an *eigenerfde* and therefore not an aristocrat, became a professor at Groningen, then used that position to become a councillor of the city, and finally leveraged this title to become a *jonker* in the Ommelanden.[18] The two sides knew each other intimately and regularly exploited one another's internal conflicts. In 1662, the magistrates of the city supported a group of disenfranchised *eigenerfden* and *hoofdelingen* in their struggle against their fellow Ommelander *jonkers*, while in 1657, several leading Ommelanders riled up the guilds of the city against the regents, leading to riotous plundering that left the houses of some Groningen magistrates ransacked.[19] While they liked to present their struggle in simple black-and-white terms, the border that divided the parties in the Ommelander Troubles was sometimes hard to distinguish. Family ties, financial opportunities, slighted honour and factional grudges all influenced this protracted conflict.

Troublesome history and a turbulent conflict

How did this peculiar political imbroglio come into being? For much of the 17th century, the Ommelanders did not even wish to share their provincial

[17] Jan de Vries, *Barges and Capitalism: Passenger Transportation in the Dutch Economy (1632–1839)* (Utrecht: H&S, 1981), pp. 30–5.
[18] Formsma, Luitjens-Dijkveld Stol and Pathuis, *Ommelander borgen en steenhuizen*, p. 30.
[19] De Haan, 'Ommelander jonkers', p. 66; Meindert Schroor, 'Ontwrichting en oligarchisering: het midden van de zeventiende eeuw', in M. G. J. Duijvendak et al. (eds), *Geschiedenis van Groningen II: Nieuwe Tijd* (Zwolle: Waanders, 2008), pp. 230–43, here pp. 236–7.

government with the urban Groningers. Their grievances stemmed from the 15th and the 16th centuries, when the city expanded aggressively into the countryside, subjugating most of the surrounding Ommelanden and imposing their hated staple right. The city observed closely the divisions within the Ommelanden, exploiting the differences between the nobility and landowners. The tables turned when the Ommelanders declared themselves for the Dutch Revolt against Habsburg authority, while the city, under the leadership of Stadtholder Count Rennenberg, declared for the King. Groningen remained under Habsburg control until 1594, when the city was taken by the forces of the States General. The gleeful Ommelanders, instrumental in the siege of the city, hoped for significant concessions and a diminution of the commercial privileges of the city; they advocated for a separate province, with Groningen itself to be ruled as a military enclave by the States General.

The proud Ommelanders were disappointed. The States General wished to maintain a bulwark against Habsburg aggression in the north and required the goodwill of the powerful city and its defences to do so. The terms of the Reduction of 1594 were extremely lenient: all past injuries were to be forgotten (article 1), and the city was 'to be and remain undiminished in its privileges, liberties, customs and freedoms' (article 3).[20] The terms also shaped the constitution of the States of Groningen, establishing the equality between the city and the Ommelanders. Because of its function as a constitutional charter, the terms of the Reduction became a rallying point for any future conflict in the province. The text was reprinted in Groningen in three different editions in 1646, and again in 1660 and 1678.[21] The terms of the Reduction were frequently contested, as were many other economic privileges, including toll rates and fishing rights.[22] Aside from the welcome additional income that these privileges brought in, these claims became battlegrounds because they represented a struggle for authority, fought on the part of the Ommelanders for greater autonomy, and by the Groningers for the maintenance of their power over the countryside.

Authority is inextricably tied to public demonstrations of power. With each major outbreak of conflict in Groningen both sides articulated their claims to authority to a wider public. By the 1640s, printed broadsheets, pamphlets and

[20] *Articulen ende conditien vant verdrach gesloten by Graef Wilhelm van Nassau uyt naeme der heeren Staten Generael der vereenichde Nederlanden: mette stadt Groeninghen ende tgarnisoen opt overgeven vander selver stadt* (The Hague: Albrecht Hendricksz, 1594), USTC 415489, f. A2.

[21] The 1646 editions are USTC 1010769, 1021674 and 1026000 (all printed by Jan Claessen). The 1660 edition is *Poincten ende conditien gemaeckt tusschen zijne Excellentie den here Prince Mauritz van Orangien ende de Stadt Groeningen ter andere sijden* (Groningen: widow Edzard Huysman, 1660), USTC 1845959 and the 1678 edition, identical to this in title, was printed by Rembertus Huisman (USTC 1814453).

[22] See especially the numerous cases covered in GAG, Ommelander Archieven, inv. 758–888. See also Meindert Schroor, 'Heroriëntatie op de unie en op Holland', in M. G. J. Duijvendak et al. (eds), *Geschiedenis van Groningen II: Nieuwe Tijd* (Zwolle: Waanders, 2008), pp. 152–209, here pp. 159–61.

fliers had come to play a fundamental role in the development of the struggle. The most violent bout of the conflict opened on 22 November 1639, when the magistrates of Groningen published an ordinance against *jonker* Sebo Huninga (Figure 7.4).[23] Huninga was a *jonker* of the Oldambt, one of the rural territories under the sovereignty of the city. With Huninga's urging, the Oldambt declared itself independent and elected representatives to attend the Ommelander *Landdag* in Appingedam. The magistrates distributed the printed sentence condemning and banishing Huninga throughout the province and tried in vain to arrest him in the Oldambt. Huninga fled to Ommelander territory while the landowners of the Oldambt began to arm themselves. Desperate for allies, they appealed to the Ommelanders for assistance. On 11 December, the Council of Ommelanden published a broadsheet that declared that Huninga was under their protection; they also announced that they considered the Oldambt a land of 'free people', whom they would gladly incorporate into Ommelander territory (Figure 7.5).[24]

This public provocation established a norm of political communication that would dominate the conflict in Groningen for the remainder of the 17th century. Every sentence, declaration or ordinance published by one of the authorities would be followed by a response by their opponent. It was imperative that the rival authorities of Groningen responded to one another in kind. The secretary of Groningen, Bernard Alting, highlighted the importance of proclamations when he claimed that Groninger sovereignty over the Oldambt was proven 'by the fact that for the last hundred years no ordinance, constitution, law, edict, decree or placard has been issued and published in the Oldambt except for those by the city of Groningen'.[25] As soon as one of the parties staked their claim in a public space, their opponent was required to issue a response or relinquish their claim.

Ordinances were usually published and affixed only in the jurisdiction where the respective authority exercised their right; but these back-and-forths ignored all legal boundaries between the Groningers and the Ommelanders. Both sides appealed to their own citizens and those of their opponents: messengers from the city proclaimed ordinances outside the city's jurisdiction, while their Ommelander colleagues affixed broadsheets across the Oldambt and the Groninger cityscape.[26]

[23] *Sententie van borgemeesteren eñ raedt in Groningen, tegens Sebo Huninga* (Groningen: Hans Sas, [1639]), USTC 1021672. On this episode of the conflict see Schroor, 'Ontwrichting en oligarchisering', pp. 231–5; and Marjolein 't Hart, 'Rules and Repertories: The Revolt of a Farmer's Republic in the Early Modern Netherlands', in Michael P. Hanagan, Leslie Page Moch and Wayne te Brake (eds), *Challenging Authority: The Historical Study of Contentious Politics* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), pp. 197–212.

[24] *De Heeren Gecommitteerde Raden der Omlanden doen te weten: alsoo ons is geremonstreert hoe dat borgemeesteren den E.E. Sebo Huninga deden vervolgen; soo ist, dat wy protesteren, nemende de selve Huninga in onse protectie* ([Groningen: s.n., 1639]), USTC 1122316.

[25] Bernard Alting, *Der Old-ambten dependentie, van de stadt Groningen* (Groningen: Hans Sas, 1643), USTC 1026102, p. 43.

[26] See for example *Placcaet van borgemesteren ende raadt in Groningen tegens twee onbevougde placcaten van den Ommelanden* (Groningen: Hans Sas, [1646]), USTC 1021731; and *Borgemesteren*

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SENTENTIE
van
Borgemeesteren eñ Raedt
In
GRONINGEN,
Tegens
SEBO HVNINGA Ut de Geerte in den
Oldambte.

Tot GRONINGEN
Gedruckt by HANS SAS Boeck-drucker Ordinaris.

Figure 7.4 *Sententie van borgemeesteren eñ raedt in Groningen, tegens Sebo Huninga* (Groningen: Hans Sas, [1639]). The magistrates unleashed the worst round of conflict with their condemnation of Sebo Huninga in 1639.

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De Heeren Gecommitteerde

Raden der Omlanden, tusschen d' Eems ende Lauwers, soo Ordinaris als Extra-ordinaris, in desen expresse gelastet: DOEN TE WETEN:

O. TAMMINGA.

Ter Ordonnantie der Heeren voorschreven.

S. GOCKINGA.

Figure 7.5 *De Heeren Gecommitteerde Raden der Omlanden doen te weten: alsoo ons is geremonstreert hoe dat borgemeesteren den E.E. Sebo Huninga deden vervolgen; soo ist, dat wy protesteren, nemende de selve Huninga in onse protectie* ([Groningen: s.n., 1639]). The Ommelanders immediately came to Huninga's rescue and took up the fight for a free Oldampt in a series of placards such as this one, published on 11 December 1639.

A Groninger placard of 5 January 1643, prohibiting the implementation of an extraordinary tax enacted by the Ommelanden on 9 December 1642, was directed firstly to all subjects of the Ommelanden, and secondly to all citizens of Groningen. Invariably these cross-jurisdictional proclamations were rapidly denounced by the opposite side. On 26 August 1646, the Council of Ommelanden issued an ordinance against a Groninger placard of 8 August and urged Ommelander officers to prosecute all individuals who 'distribute, affix or try to affix' the Groninger placard as 'disturbers of the common peace and defilers of Ommelander freedoms and rights'. The officers were then to destroy the broadsheets.[27] On other occasions, the magistrates of Groningen retaliated in similar fashion, burning in public a contested Ommelander placard.[28]

Pasted up, distributed and read out all around the province, the competing broadsheets presented the authorities with the means to attract attention to their cause and justify their policies. The citizens of Groningen received illuminating insights into the nominally secretive political debates between the two authorities. On 18 August 1647, the Ommelanders published a lengthy two-sheet placard, entitled *The origins and present state of the provincial unrest, portraying: 1. The injustice of the magistrates of Groningen, with which they mislead their own citizens, and insult the country. 2. What serpent lies under the magistrates' efforts*, in which they revealed in some detail the arguments advanced in the meetings of the States of Groningen.[29] The Ommelanders closed with a reminder to all inhabitants of the province that, during the Dutch Revolt, the magistrates had colluded with the King of Spain, while the Ommelanders had fought for liberty.

The solemn decorum normally associated with the publication of law was largely abandoned in the chaos of the Groningen conflict. Instead, the public was exposed to the internal divisions of their ruling class and the relentless struggles for dominance between different factions. On 26 February 1657, the Council of Ommelanden published a placard against the magistrates of Groningen, denouncing their opponents and accusing them of disrupting the assembly of the States of Groningen.[30] This was followed two weeks later by another Ommelander broadsheet that claimed that the last placard was produced by 'restless people' who

ende raedt in Groningen: alsoo eenige weynige jonckeren, buyten onse kennis te doen affigeren seecker placcaet ([Groningen: s.n., 1651]), USTC 1571004.

[27] *De Heeren raaden der Ommelanden soo ordinaris als Extraordinaris gecommiteert. Gesien hebbende een placcaet by borgemeesteren der stadt Groeningen den 8. Lopendes maents Augusti geemaneert* ([Groningen: s.n., 1646]), USTC 1532080.

[28] *Op het verbranden van het nieuwe Omlander reglement* (Groningen: Jan Collen, 1671), USTC 1528916.

[29] *Oorsaecke ende toestant onser provintie on-ruste* (s.l.: s.n., [1647]), USTC 1036013.

[30] *De heeren van den Ommelanden tusschen d'Eems ende Lauwers doen te wieten: alsoo wy met groot leedtwesen moeten aensien, dat de provinciale regieringe van justitie ende politie is onbestelt gebleven tot schaede ende ondienst der provincie* ([Groningen: s.n., 1657]), USTC 1519448.

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did not have the authority to speak on their behalf.[31] This public misstep by the divided Ommelanders was eagerly exploited by the magistrates: on 17 March they issued an ordinance in which they announced:

> We have received two different placards or manifests issued by the Council of the Ommelanden dated 26 February and 14 March . . . which demonstrate the notorious divisions and dissent in the Ommelanden . . . and so we have been forced to note in the register of provincial resolutions that it is impossible to deliberate with the Ommelanders when they are so divided and disunited.[32]

The repeated cycle of conflict in Groningen reverberated throughout the Dutch Republic. An important clause in the terms of the Reduction of 1594 was that all future differences between the Ommelanden and the city were to be resolved 'through determination and judgement of the gentlemen of the States General, or their commissaries' (article 5). Public opinion in The Hague was therefore crucial to the success of the Ommelander or Groninger cause, and both parties endeavoured to rally supporters to their banner. Both sides sent frequent delegations to the States General, but also to their neighbours at the States of Friesland, or to the Stadtholder, urging them to support their position. In the later 1630s, the magistrates of Groningen maintained a permanent agent in The Hague, Willem van der Gracht, who was paid a pension of 200 guilders a year to represent his paymasters and report on the mood in The Hague.[33]

Agents such as Van der Gracht were crucial to the lobbying process in The Hague. The delegates from the city of Groningen and the Ommelanden formally submitted supplications to the meetings of the States General, presenting their cause verbally before providing copies of their propositions for discussion.[34] To make clear the urgency of their petitions, agents and delegates could also press their missives and pamphlets into the hands of regents in the Binnenhof. This publicity campaign was sustained by further copies of their ordinances and remonstrances reprinted in The Hague. In November 1677, the Ommelanders paid an unspecified sum to Roeland van Kinschot, a councillor of the High Court of Holland, for the publication of declarations and tracts.[35] Such reprints were generally broadsheet or pamphlet ordinances, copied faithfully from the originals

[31] *D [sic] Heeren van de Ommelanden tusschen den Eems ende Lauwers. Doen te wieten. Also ons is ter handt gekomen seker seditieus placcaet by die name van het corpus der Ommelanden uytgegeven* ([Groningen: s.n., 1657]), USTC 1571005.

[32] *Borgemeesteren ende raedt in Groningen doen te wieten. Alsoo ons zijn ter hant gekomen twee verschillende placcaten ofte manifesten, by d'heeren van d'Ommelanden geemaneert* ([Groningen: s.n., 1657]), USTC 1571003.

[33] GAG, Archief van de stad, inv. 332, f. 388v.

[34] See for example *Verscheyden resolutien van de Heeren Staten Generael der Vereenigde Nederlanden* (s.l.: s.n., 1652), USTC 1845565: 'on Wednesday 8 May 1652, there was presented and read at the assembly of the States General the written proposition of the gentlemen commissaries of the Ommelanden'.

[35] GAG, Ommelander Archieven, inv. 411, f. 22v.

printed in Groningen.[36] Some were distributed for free, while others made their way into the hands of booksellers in Amsterdam, The Hague and Utrecht. Leading booksellers Hendrick Laurensz and Johannes Verhoeve stocked ordinances and pamphlets published by both sides, as well as the interventions of the States General.[37]

The published ordinances were reinforced (and sometimes explained) by lengthy justifications: in 1640 Sebo Huninga's *Bewys vande vryheyt ende independentie der vrije Oldampten* (Evidence of the liberty and independence of the free Oldampt), a 150-page tract in quarto, was published in Rotterdam. In 1643, this was refuted by Bernard Alting, the *syndicus* (pensionary) of Groningen, in his *Der Old-ambten dependentie, van de stadt Groningen* (The dependence of the Oldambt on the city of Groningen), a substantial work in folio printed in Groningen.[38] Both were undoubtedly produced to bolster the steadfastness of their own parties, as much as to persuade jurists and regents outside Groningen of the righteousness of their cause. Ironically, Alting was fired the year after the publication of his work because his fellow Groningers considered that he had been too lenient towards the Ommelanders.[39] He tried to restore his reputation by writing two panegyric accounts of Groningen, the *Pilaren ende peerlen van Groningen* (Pillars and pearls of Groningen) and the *Historische lof-rede, ter eere van Groningen* (Historical ode in honour of Groningen).[40]

All too often, the conflict placed the regents of Holland and the other provinces in a difficult position. Due to the equal balance between the Ommelanders and the city, it was rarely possible to please both, as the States General had found when they negotiated the Reduction of 1594. Furthermore, the conflict in the northeast of the country provided an ideal means for disgruntled statesmen to fight altogether different battles. In 1676 and 1677, when a new bout of warfare broke out, the States of Friesland and the Stadtholder of Friesland and Groningen, Hendrik Casimir II, came to the rescue of the magistrates of Groningen, who had been reprimanded by the States General and Stadtholder William III. The Frisians and Hendrik Casimir had a bone to pick with the States General and William III, and

[36] An example is *Die Heeren van den Omlanden, doen te weten: Alsoo het door hem selve is bekendt, dat het recht van tollen die souverainiteyt, dat is d'eenparige provinciale hoogheyt en[de] regeringe van Stadt ende Landt toekomt* (The Hague: Isaac Burchoorn, 1642), USTC 1122317.

[37] *Catalogus variorum & insignium librorum Hendrici Laurentii P.M. bibliopolæ Amsterodamensis* ([Amsterdam]: heirs Hendrick Laurensz, [1649]), USTC 1022549; *Catalogus variorum, insigniorum librorum officinae Johannis à Waesberge* (Utrecht: Johannes Janssonius van Waesberge, 1609 [=1660]), USTC 1846340; *Catalogus variorum insignium librorum incompactorum officinae Johannis Verhoeve* (The Hague: Johannes Steucker, 1662), USTC 1846390; *Verzeichnus vieler schönen ungebundenen in Teutsch und Niederländischen Sprache Bucher* (Amsterdam: heirs Johannes Janssonius, 1665), USTC 1846229.

[38] Alting, *Der Old-ambten dependentie.*

[39] P. C. Molhuysen and P. J. Blok, *Nieuw Nederlandsch Biografisch Woordenboek, Eerste Deel* (Leiden: A.W. Sijthoff, 1911), p. 93.

[40] USTC 1010782 and 1025980.

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they published several letters and resolutions declaring their indignation towards their colleagues; Hendrik Casimir also affixed placards across the Ommelanden invalidating the ordinances of the States General. The Ommelanders had the placards ripped down and printed a furious letter to Hendrik Casimir (their own Stadtholder), accusing him of making the Ommelanders 'slaves' of Groningen and of deriding the memory of his ancestors. Hendrik Casimir, somewhat shaken by the audacity of the Ommelander letter and its violent imagery, published a response in which he questioned whether it had been produced by a rogue delegate of the Council. Braced by the threat that William III would send troops to the province, Hendrik Casimir and the Frisians retreated, perhaps sobered by the distant memory of exactly such a military occupation of Groningen by the States General between 1600 and 1607 to force the province to pay its contributions to the federal budget.[41]

The conflict in Groningen has scarcely been noticed by scholars of the Dutch Republic, but in its time there was significant national interest in the conflict. In 1677, the bi-weekly French-language newspaper of Amsterdam was even suppressed by the burgomasters of Amsterdam because it had reported so extensively on the conflict (and came down decisively in favour of the Ommelanders).[42] In 1678, a quarter of the content of the *Hollandse Mercurius*, a hugely popular annual review, was devoted to the conflict between the city of Groningen and the Ommelanders.[43] The fact that the *Hollandse Mercurius* usually limited itself largely to international political affairs demonstrates the impact of the struggle on the national media. The literature of the conflict has survived very well because contemporaries collected it diligently. 17th-century auction catalogues reveal several libraries that featured bound volumes of 'political tracts of the city of Groningen and Ommelanden', or other publications on the struggle.[44] Some of these bound volumes survive in library collections today.[45]

The terms of the Reduction of 1594 ensured that the States General was bound to be involved in the provincial rivalries of Groningen. But there was another reason for the national interest in the conflict. The nature of the Dutch union ensured that each of the seven provinces held one vote at the States General concerning

[41] Schroor, 'Heroriëntatie op de unie en op Holland', pp. 159–61.

[42] Jason Peacey, '"My Friend the Gazetier": Diplomacy and News in Seventeenth-Century Europe', in Joad Raymond and Noah Moxham (eds), *News Networks in Early Modern Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 2016), pp. 420–42, here p. 437.

[43] *De nieuwe Hollantse Mercurius, verhalende van oorlog en vrede 'tgeen in en omtrent de Vereenigde Nederlanden, en by gevolge in geheel Europa, in't jaer 1677 is voorgevallen. Acht-en-twintigste deel* (Haarlem: Abraham Casteleyn, 1678), USTC 1814298, pp. 98–154.

[44] *Bibliotheca Oizeliana* (Leiden: Jacobus Hackius, 1687), USTC 1828400, pp. 183–4; *Catalogus Bibliothecae Reinoldus Alberda*, pp. 31–4, 42–3, 50–1; *Catalogus Variorum & Insignium Librorum, Praecipue Juridicorum, Nobilissimi Dom. Guilhelmi Ploos ab Amtsel [sic]* (Utrecht: Dirck van Ackersdijck, 1667), USTC 1846537, f. B2v; *Gatalogus [sic], Variorum & Insignium Librorum, Clarissimi Viri, D. Marci Boeraven* (Leiden: Franciscus Hackius, 1645), USTC 1122152, p. [21].

[45] See for example Universiteitsbibliotheek, Groningen, vol. Backer 297.

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all matters pertaining to foreign policy and the national defence budget. When the two authorities of Groningen were at loggerheads (often over what must have seemed trivial matters to the regents in The Hague), the other provinces could not rely on Groningen to offer a coherent opinion on federal policy. In a letter of 22 May 1677, Stadtholder William III wrote:

> It causes us much grief to have seen for the last two years the province of Groningen in such a state, that it can present no help or assistance to the general union, and even obstructs [the union], leaving the contributions to the *gemene middelen* for the maintenance of the army to be carried by the other provinces, to the detriment of the generality.[46]

William was frustrated because what were in his eyes an eccentric collection of lowly noblemen in the Ommelanden and the bourgeois peat merchants of Groningen could easily undermine his international political designs. What was especially frustrating was that William, like everyone in the Dutch Republic, knew that the city and the Ommelanden could work together very efficiently, as the recent events of the Disaster Year of 1672 had proved.[47] In March 1672, before war had formally broken out, the two sides had come together to appoint a special commission to oversee military preparations in the province, composed of nine Ommelanders and nine representative from the city. Throughout the year, the committee played a major part in ensuring the successful defence of the province against the troops of the Bishop of Münster, leading to the first great Dutch triumph of the Franco-Dutch War.[48] That the Ommelanders and the magistrates could put aside their differences made the constant renewal of the conflict an especially uncomfortable reminder of the fragility and disunity of the Dutch Republic.

Pragmatism and profit

The printers and booksellers of Groningen had fewer complaints about the turbulent situation in their province. They secured significant business from the conflict, and they played an important role in its development. In the 1630s, only three printers (Hans Sas, Nathanael Roman and Augustijn Eissens) plied their trade in Groningen.[49] Around 1650, not coincidentally around the height of the Ommelander conflict, there were no fewer than nine print shops in the city. The authorities of Groningen were some of their most important customers.

[46] Cited in *De nieuwe Hollantse Mercurius*, p. 130.
[47] See Chapter 10.
[48] J. S. Theissen, *'Voor Vrijheydt ende Vaderlandt': Stad en Lande in 1672* (Groningen/The Hague: J.B. Wolters, 1922), esp. pp. 27, 38.
[49] Harry van der Laan, *Het Groninger Boekbedrijf: Drukkers, uitgevers en boekhandelaren in Groningen tot het eind van de negentiende eeuw* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 2005), pp. 33–51.

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Groningen publishers were some distance removed from the great centres of the international book trade and rarely took on significant projects that could rival their competitors in Amsterdam, Leiden or Frankfurt. Instead, they looked to the professors and students of the local university and the secular authorities for most of their business: more than 80 per cent of the known output of Groningen printers in the 17th century is composed of political or academic print. In years of heightened conflict, such as 1677, almost every single book published in Groningen concerned the political crisis between the magistrates and the Ommelanden.[50] The largest portion consisted of broadsheets and pamphlets, delivered directly to the authorities for distribution.

Because the conflict was often a debate concerning privilege and custom, publishers also provided reprints of historic ordinances and compendia of placards on the conflict.[51] When arguing for the Ommelander cause in 1677, the secretary of the Council of Ommelanden, Henric Piccardt, cited interventions of the States General of 1599, 1660, 1662, 1663, 1667, 1610, 1615, 1628, 1640, 1645, 1649 and 1650 (in that order).[52] A Groninger placard of 5 January 1643 was accompanied by an annotated reprint of the 1599 States General ruling in order to reinforce the argument that the Ommelanders had not fulfilled their financial obligations to the province. The contending parties (and the bewildered regents throughout the rest of the country) had to keep track of the ever-extending precedents, and their need for reference copies was satisfied by the grateful printers of Groningen.

During the first half of the 17th century, Hans Sas was the most important printer-publisher active in the city. He opened a print shop in 1607 and remained in Groningen until his death in 1651. He was appointed *stadsdrukker* by the magistrates, *Statendrukker* by the States of Groningen, and he became the first academy printer of the University of Groningen. When he died, he was honoured by a funeral service directed by the university.[53] For the better part of a decade, until the arrival of Nathanael Roman in 1628, Sas was the only printer in Groningen; as a valued and respected member of the community, he was also paid well. The magistrates usually paid him around 1,000 guilders a year for the delivery of placards, books and stationery.[54] When the magistrates of Groningen published

[50] Out of thirty-eight works known to have been printed in Groningen in 1677, thirty-four concerned the political crisis.

[51] *Copulaten van remonstrantien, memorien, acten, resolutien, missiven, protesten, en andere stucken gedient hebbende in het different tusschen beyde leden van stadt Groningen ende Ommelanden* (Groningen: Cornelis Barlinckhof, 1677), USTC 1813848 and the *Verzameling van missiven, copulaten e.d. van de Staten Generaal aan de burgemeester en raad van Groningen, 1677* ([Groningen]: s.n., 1677), USTC 1813189.

[52] Cited in *De nieuwe Hollantse Mercurius*, p. 127.

[53] *Rector Academiae* [funeral oration for Johannes Sas, 29.09.1651] (Groningen: s.n., 1651), USTC 1519604.

[54] GAG, Archief van de stad, inv. 332, f. 397v.

their first volley of declarations against the Ommelanders in 1639, they naturally turned to Sas for his services.

Until the end of the 18th century, no printers established themselves in the rural Ommelanden. It is therefore even more remarkable that the Ommelanders were so quick to respond to their opponent's declarations in print. Although the study of Dutch print culture is so often situated within the urban culture of Holland, this case study offers an important reminder that print had infiltrated other parts of the Republic very successfully. The Ommelanders were as capable a group of polemicists as their opponents in the city of Groningen.

The absence of a printing press in the Ommelanden meant that all Ommelander placards, ordinances and resolutions had to be printed right under the noses of the magistrates of Groningen. During the 1640s, it was Hans Sas, the esteemed printer of the town, who also provided the Ommelanders with their ordinances. While he was happy to receive Ommelander cash, it is no surprise that neither Sas, nor any other Groningen printer after him, ever placed their imprint on the publications of the Council of Ommelanden. That might have been one provocation too many for the magistrates.

After the death of Hans Sas, the printer Jan Claessen became the new *stadsdrukker*, while Edzard Huisman received the privilege of *Statendrukker* and academy printer. The Ommelanders maintained their habit of having their ordinances printed with the *Statendrukker*. Judging by the sums paid by the Ommelanders, only a fraction of their declarations and ordinances have survived. The Council of Ommelanden paid Edzard Huisman close to 400 guilders in 1651, and over 1,000 guilders in 1652. The widow of Edzard Huisman, who took over his positions in 1654, received no less than 7,000 guilders from the Ommelanders between 1659 and 1666.[55] While they clearly preferred the Huismans, the Ommelanders did not restrict themselves to their services. On 17 November 1677, the Ommelanders paid out 1,000 guilders to 'several printers' for the publication of declarations and tracts.[56] Other statements in their account books reveal that these 'several printers' included Samuel Pieman, as well as the *stadsdrukker* Cornelis Barlinckhof.[57] Typographical analysis suggests that Frans Bronchorst, the *stadsdrukker* who succeeded Jan Claessen, also printed for the Ommelanders.[58]

[55] GAG, Ommelander Archieven, inv. 397, f. 19r; inv. 398, f. 16v; inv. 399, f. 18r; inv. 401, f. 18v; inv. 402, p. 20v; inv. 403, f. 20r.

[56] GAG, Ommelander Archieven, inv. 411, f. 22v.

[57] GAG, Ommelander Archieven, inv. 390, f. 23v; inv. 411, f. 24r.

[58] Compare, for example, the typography and woodcut initials of a 26 April 1662 Groningen ordinance with a 13 September 1656 Ommelanden broadsheet: *De heeren borgemeesteren ende raedt in Groningen, sijnde in ervaeringe gekoomen, hoe dat jonckeren uyt den Omlanden onlanghs in Den Haeghe, aen haere Ho: Mog: hebben voorgedraegen seecker concept nopende d'ampliatie van het Omlander reglement* ([Groningen: Frans Bronchorst, 1662]), USTC 1519450; and *Sententie der heeren gecommitteerde richteren ende arbiters der Ommelanden tusschen d'Eems ende Lauwers, gepronuncieert tegens Roeleff Fockens* ([Groningen: Frans Bronchorst, 1656]), USTC 1519447.

The Ommelanders had no qualms about approaching printers who usually published their opponent's declarations; this strategy may have been a deliberate attempt to spread their patronage and undermine the magistrates' confidence in their own printers. The magistrates of Groningen, fighting on home turf within the safety of their walls, were more consistent in their choice of *stadsdrukker*; but even they sometimes called upon Rembertus Huisman, the *Statendrukker* after the death of his mother, for the printing of ordinances in the 1670s.

To the printers of Groningen, the Ommelander conflict was a welcome financial windfall. As the Groningen account books reveal, the authorities rewarded them generously. Yet the print shop could also become a site of the struggle, or worse, a bargaining chip in the conflict. On 8 September 1660, the magistrates of Groningen published an ordinance in which they accused the regents of the Ommelanden of obstructing a recent ruling of the provincial States, aimed at curbing rural (Ommelander) taxation.[59] The Ommelanders had visited the printer of the States (the widow of Edzard Huisman) and told her not to print any copies of the placard. Given that the widow was also the printer of the Council of Ommelanden, one can imagine that she was easily persuaded. As usual, however, the Groningers played the same game. On 30 July 1677, the Ommelanders complained to the States General that the magistrates of the city had assaulted a printer who produced a placard for them. They wrote that

> [a] certain individual, a Frisian of birth, but resident in Groningen, who was recently appointed official printer of the Ommelanden, was arrested [by the magistrates] for printing an Ommelander placard, and his equipment and furnishings were confiscated and taken to the town hall, to ruin his livelihood and family.[60]

Rembertus Huisman, the printer thus affected, must have been shaken by the whole affair. The arrest was a political retaliation, one of the many blows inflicted by the Groningers and Ommelanders upon their opponent. But the magistrates quickly released Huisman and returned his possessions. He was, after all, the printer of the States of Groningen as well as the Ommelanden. When the conflict subsided, the magistrates would require his services too. When the two parties had come to an informal peace, they once again presented themselves as the united States of Groningen, exercising sovereign rule over all the inhabitants of the province. Their solemn placards and ordinances, printed by Huisman, betrayed nothing of their divisions. This thin veneer of dignity, covering decades of public strife, fooled few in Groningen.

[59] *De heeren borgemeesteren ende raadt in Groningen, doen te weten [Reactie van het bestuur van de stad Groningen op beschuldigingen in een door de Ommelanden uitgevaardigd plakkaat]* ([Groningen: s.n., 1660]), USTC 1845113.
[60] *De nieuwe Hollantse Mercurius*, p. 147.

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Strife in print

States across early modern Europe frequently attacked one another publicly through placards. From the emergence of the Dutch state in the late 16th century, the States General had issued ordinances denouncing the Spanish crown, contesting their territorial claims or appealing to citizens in the Southern Netherlands for assistance in the liberation of their homeland.[61] The Habsburg governors generally responded to such provocations in kind. The proclamation of declarations of war, an essential element of early modern politics, also offered authorities opportunities to justify their conduct and highlight the wrongdoings of their enemy. As Helmer Helmers has demonstrated, early modern states and diplomats had ample means available to protect their own public reputation and subvert that of their opponents.[62] The statesmen of the Dutch Republic, brought up in a decentralised republican state with a contested political constitution, were certainly not averse to such tactics: they were 'among the first to develop what we might call an institutionalised public diplomacy', a form of communication which inevitably relied on the services of the printing press.[63]

In the confederal Dutch Republic, with its plethora of competing jurisdictions, authorities employed similar strategies of communication to resolve their domestic conflicts. By publishing in print their nominally secret deliberations, letters and resolutions, Dutch authorities offered the public a glimpse into the closed chambers of the States or the town hall. Through this they hoped to embarrass their opponents publicly, forcing them to issue a response or be left with a blemish on their reputation; at the same time, they sought to defend their own honour, a task greatly complicated by the appropriation of similar tactics by their opponents. Each confrontation could be exploited for gains elsewhere: the demotion of a political rival, concessions of economic privileges or simply public humiliation. Throughout the 17th century, alliances and patronage networks in the Dutch Republic were constantly shifting and never solidified into defined political parties.[64] For this reason, the magistrates of Groningen and the Council of Ommelanden battled in public for the attention of their peers throughout the Dutch Republic as much as that of their own citizens.

These communication strategies provided a further opportunity for a burgeoning print trade. The printers, publishers and booksellers of Groningen

[61] For some examples see *Placcaet, ende ordonnantie van retorsie, der hoogh ende moghende heeren Staten Generael daer by alle commercien met den vyandt werden verboden* (The Hague: widow and heirs Hillebrant van Wouw, 1625), USTC 1032818; and *Placaet van retorsie, teghen de ongefondeerde pretensien vanden koningh van Spaignen, op het Quartier ende Meyerije van 'sHertogen-bosch* (The Hague: widow and heirs Hillebrant van Wouw, 1636), USTC 1019944. See also Chapter 3.
[62] Helmer Helmers, 'Public Diplomacy in Early Modern Europe: Towards a New History of News', *Media History*, 22 (2016), 401–20.
[63] Helmers, 'Public Diplomacy', 407.
[64] Roorda, *Partij en Factie*.

were grateful for the patronage of the local authorities and were happy, in many instances, to cater to both sides of the conflict. Although it was uncomfortable when political conflict spread to the printing shop itself, the print trade benefited hugely from the communication strategies employed by the regents. The role of printers was also crucial to the amplification of the conflict throughout the Dutch Republic. The circulation of printed declarations from Groningen to The Hague and beyond extended the sense of participation to citizens beyond the immediate confines of the province. This was a battle that was fought not only in the Groningen countryside or market square, but also in the bookshops of The Hague, Amsterdam and other cities. In the 17th-century Dutch Republic, the conduct of politics had become inseparably tied to the business of print.

8

The Public Struggles of True Freedom

Willem Breeckevelt should never have gone drinking in Amsterdam. On 30 November 1650, after a long and festive night, Breeckevelt, a twenty-five-year-old printer from The Hague, was arrested in Amsterdam for petty theft. He and his friends had stolen linen from two taverns they had frequented. But the *schout* of Amsterdam soon realised that Breeckevelt was not an ordinary thieving tourist: it came to light that he had played a significant role in Amsterdam's humiliating surrender to Prince William II of Orange that summer.[1]

The city had been embroiled in a bitter conflict with the Stadtholder over the reduction of the Dutch army. The regents of Holland, responsible for most of the defence budget of the Dutch Republic, had planned to slash the army's size in the wake of the long-awaited Peace of Münster. The young, ambitious William, Stadtholder since the death of his father in 1647, could see that his influence as Captain-General would be seriously undermined. For a year the prince tried to persuade Holland's merchant oligarchs to abandon their proposed cuts. Some bowed to this pressure, but Amsterdam, supported by several other cities, was defiant. They would not finance a large peace-time standing army. Enraged by the obstinate regents, William adopted another strategy to bring Amsterdam to heel. In December 1649, he had confided in his cousin William Frederick, the Stadtholder of Friesland, that he would have his advisors 'make pamphlets and pasquilles against those who endanger the country and seek to return it to Spain, which will excite and stir the public'.[2] This was where Willem Breeckevelt

[1] NADH, Archief Hof van Holland, inv. 5243.37, 5246.1, 5247.19 and 5247.20; Groenveld, '"Een enckel valsch ende lasterlijck verdichtsel"'. Also mentioned in part in S. Groenveld, *De prins voor Amsterdam: reacties uit pamfletten op de aanslag van 1650* (Bussum: Fibula-Van Dishoeck, 1967), pp. 24–6; Keblusek, *Boeken in de hofstad*, pp. 130–2; Olga van Marion, 'Verboden in de Gouden Eeuw: Schrijvers, drukkers en hun strategieën', in Marita Mathijsen (ed.), *Boeken onder druk: Censuur en pers-onvrijheid in Nederland sinds de boekdrukkunst* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2011), pp. 31–44, here pp. 32–3, 36; Harms, *Pamfletten en publieke opinie*, pp. 101–5. An extensive contemporary overview of the conflict is provided in Lieuwe van Aitzema, *Herstelde Leeuw, of discours, over 't gepasseerde inde Vereenighde Nederlanden* (The Hague: Jan Vely, 1652), USTC 1803392.

[2] Groenveld, '"Een enckel valsch ende lasterlijck verdichtsel"', p. 113.

made himself useful: the prince's confidants supplied Breeckevelt and his brother Johannes, also a printer, with material to tarnish Amsterdam.

In The Hague, the Breeckevelts produced numerous tracts supposedly revealing the deceitfulness of Amsterdam and its most prominent regents, the brothers Andries and Cornelis Bicker.[3] The most virulent of these publications presented the articles of a fictitious alliance between Amsterdam and the English Commonwealth, signed 'in secret conferences' in London (Figure 8.1).[4] According to this tract, the Commonwealth promised Amsterdam 10,000 soldiers and twenty-five warships to subjugate its opponents in the Dutch Republic and depose William as Stadtholder, whose father-in-law, King Charles I, had been executed by the Commonwealth the year before.

On 30 July 1650, the Stadtholder took his chance: his bailiffs arrested the six leading regents of Haarlem, Dordrecht, Hoorn, Delft and Medemblik, the last cities holding out against him; and in collusion with William Frederick, William made a surprise attack on Amsterdam. While the Grand Pensionary of Holland, the meek and elderly Jacob Cats, informed the States of Holland in The Hague of the Stadtholder's intentions, William's troops got lost during a fierce thunderstorm on their way to Amsterdam. By chance, a messenger travelling to the city from Hamburg passed by a detachment of disorientated soldiers, made all the haste he could, and warned the Amsterdam regents. When the first troops arrived the next morning, the gates of the city were shut and its defences prepared. Although the element of surprise was lost, Amsterdam's position was untenable, and after a short siege the city came to an understanding with William that saw the Bickers removed from power.

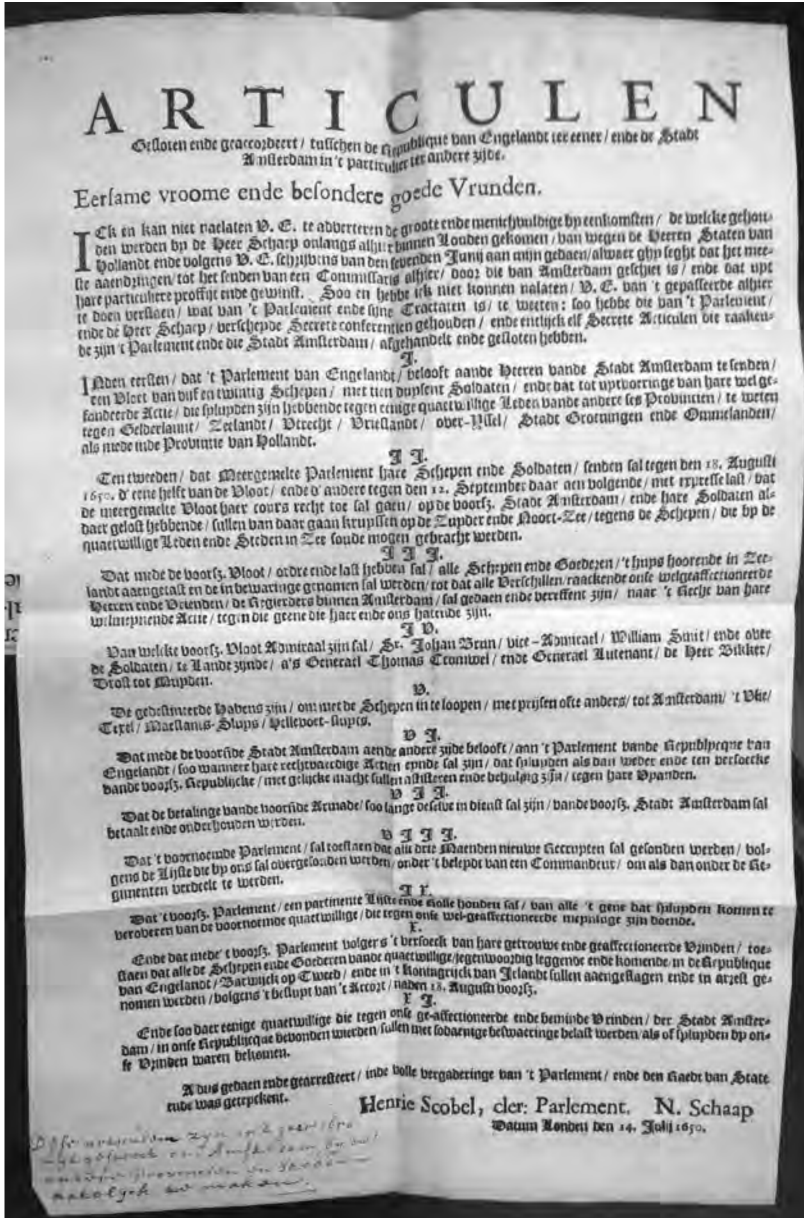
The triumphant prince made his way back to The Hague: even though he had not been able to surprise Amsterdam, his demands had been met and civil war had been averted. The magistrates of Amsterdam were left licking their wounds: on 16 August they proclaimed an ordinance against the false *Articulen* printed by Breeckevelt, promising a 1,200-guilder reward for the identification of the author and 400 guilders for the printer.[5] Unusually, the magistrates also placed the proclamation in one of the local weekly newspapers, the *Courante uyt Italien, Duytslandt, &c.*[6] Three months later, in a providential twist of fate, the Stadtholder

[3] Groenveld, '"Een enckel valsch ende lasterlijck verdichtsel"', p. 113. This included the pamphlets *Bikkers val* and *Borgemeester Bickers Laurecrans*. On the Bicker family, see Simone van der Vlugt, *Wij zijn de Bickers!* (Amsterdam: Prometheus, 2019).

[4] *Articulen, gesloten, ende geaccordeert, tusschen de republique van Engelandt ende de stadt Amsterdam* (s.l.: s.n. [=The Hague: Willem Breeckevelt], 1650), USTC 1031160. See USTC 1505286, 1505292 and 1516461 for other editions of the same.

[5] *Extract uyttet register vande willekeuren der stadt Amstelredamme, gheteeckent mette letter M. Gepubliceert den 16 augusty 1650* (Amsterdam: Broer Jansz, 1650), USTC 1505287. For the sentence of 1651 see *Extract uyttet justitie-boeck der stadt Amstelredam. Alsoo Willem Breeckevelt onderwonden heeft eenighe pasquillen te drucken* ([Amsterdam: Broer Jansz], 1651), USTC 1520209.

[6] *Courante uyt Italien ende Duytschlant, &c*, no. 34 (Amsterdam: Jan van Hilten, 20 August 1650); Der Weduwen and Pettegree, *News, Business and Public Information*, p. 137.



ARTICULEN

Gesloten ende geaccordeert / tusschen de Republique van Engelandt ter eener / ende de Stadt Amsterdam in 't particulier ter andere zijde.

Eersame vroome ende besondere goede Vrunden.

ICk en kan niet naelaten V. E. te adverteren de groote ende menichvuldige byeenkomsten / de welcke gehouden werden by de Heer Schaep onlangs alhier binnen Londen gekomen / van wegen de Heeren Staten van Hollandt ende volgens V. E. schrijvens van den sevenden Junij aan mijn gedaen / alwaer ghy seght dat het meeste aendringen / tot het senden van een Commissaris alhier / door die van Amsterdam geschiet is / ende dat upt hare particuliere proffijt ende gewinst. Soo en hebbe ick niet konnen nalaten / V. E. van 't gepasseerde alhier te doen verstaen / wat van 't Parlement ende sijne Tractaten is / te weeten: soo hebbe die van 't Parlement / ende de Heer Schaep / verscheyde Secrete conferentien gehouden / ende eyntlijck elf Secrete Articulen die raakende zijn 't Parlement ende die Stadt Amsterdam / afgehandelt ende gesloten hebben.

I.

IN den eersten / dat 't Parlement van Engelandt / belooft aande Heeren vande Stadt Amsterdam te senden / een Vloot van vijf en twintig Schepen / met tien duysent Soldaten / ende dat tot uytvoeringe van hare wel gefondeerde Actie / die sy luyden zijn hebbende tegen eenige quaetwillige Leden vande andere ses Provincien / te weten tegen Gelderlant / Zeelandt / Utrecht / Vrieslandt / over-Yssel / Stadt Groeningen ende Ommelanden / als mede inde Provintie van Hollandt.

II.

Ten tweeden / dat Meergemelte Parlement hare Schepen ende Soldaten / senden sal tegen den 18. Augusti 1650. d' eene helft van de Vloot / ende d' andere tegen den 12. September daar aen volgende / met expresse last / dat de meergemelte Vloot haer cours recht toe sal gaen / op de voorsz. Stadt Amsterdam / ende hare Soldaten aldaer gelost hebbende / sullen van daar gaan kruyssen op de Zuyder ende Noort-Zee / tegens de Schepen / die by de quaetwillige Leden ende Steden in Zee soude mogen gebracht werden.

III.

Dat mede de voorsz. Vloot / ordre ende last hebben sal / alle Schepen ende Goederen / 't huys hoorende in Zeelandt aengetast en de in bewaringe genomen sal werden / tot dat alle Verschillen / raackende onse welgeaffectioneerde Heeren ende Vrienden / de Regierders binnen Amsterdam / sal gedaen ende vereffent zijn / naar 't Rechte van hare wel-meynende Actie / tegen die geene die haer ende ons hatende zijn.

IV.

Van welcke voorsz. Vloot Admiraal zijn sal / Sr. Johan Brun / vice-Admirael / William Smit / ende over de Soldaten / te Lande zijnde / als Generael Thomas Cromwel / ende Generael Lutenant / de Heer Bikker / Drost tot Muyden.

V.

De gedesineerde Havens zijn / om met de Schepen in te loopen / met prijsen ofte anders / tot Amsterdam / 't Vlie / Texel / Maeslants-Sluys / Hellevoet-sluys.

VI.

Dat mede de voorsz. Stadt Amsterdam aende andere zijde belooft / aan 't Parlement vande Republycque van Engelandt / soo wanneer hare rechtvaerdige Actien eynde sal zijn / dat sy luyden als dan weder ende ten versoecke vande voorsz. Republijcke / met gelijcke macht sullen assisteren ende behulpig zijn / tegen hare Vyanden.

VII.

Dat de betalinge vande voorsz. Armade / soo lange deselve in dienst sal zijn / vande voorsz. Stadt Amsterdam sal betaalt ende onderhouden werden.

VIII.

Dat 't voornoemde Parlement / sal toestaen dat alle drie Maenden nieuwe Recruyten sal gesonden werden / volgens de Lijste die by ons sal overgesonden werden / onder 't beleydt van een Commandeur / om als dan onder de Regimenten verdeelt te werden.

IX.

Dat 't voorsz. Parlement / een pertinente Lijste ende Rolle houden sal / van alle 't gene dat sy luyden konnen te veroveren van de voornoemde quaetwillige / die tegen onse wel-geaffectioneerde meyninge zijn doende.

X.

Ende dat mede 't voorsz. Parlement volgens 't versoeck van hare getrouwe ende geaffectioneerde Vrinden / toestaen dat alle de Schepen ende Goederen vande quaetwillige / jegenwoordig leggende ende komende in de Republique van Engelandt / Barwijck op Tweed / ende in 't Koningrijck van Yrlandt sullen aengeslagen ende in arrest genomen werden / volgens 't besluyt van 't Accort / naden 18. Augusti voorsz.

XI.

Ende soo daer eenige quaetwillige die tegen onse ge-affectioneerde ende beminde Vrinden / der Stadt Amsterdam / in onse Republijcque bevonden werden / sullen met sodanige beswaeringe belast werden / als of sy luyden by onse Vyanden waren bekomen.

Aldus gedaen ende gearresteert / inde volle vergaderinge van 't Parlement / ende den Raedt van State ende was geteyckent.

Henrie Scobel, cler: Parlement. N. Schaap

Datum Londen den 14. Julij 1650.

Figure 8.1 *Articulen gesloten ende geaccordeert, tusschen de Republique van Engelandt ter eener, ende de Stadt Amsterdam in 't particulier ter andere zijde* ([The Hague: Willem Breeckevelt, 1650]). The fictitious *Articulen* printed by Breeckevelt in The Hague in 1650. This copy, from the collection of the Fagel family, contains a 17th-century annotation in the bottom-left corner that states that the broadsheet was disseminated to 'make Amsterdam hated by the other provinces and cities'.

was dead of smallpox. Soon afterwards, Willem Breeckevelt was in an Amsterdam cell, where he was examined under torture to reveal his full involvement in William's publicity campaign.

This episode underscores the grisly intensity with which federal politics was conducted in the Dutch Republic. The Stadtholders, although they served to act as mediators of conflict and unifiers between the provinces, regularly ended up dividing them further in their attempts to boost the size of the army (and their own public profile). This episode also highlights how far the authorities in the Dutch Republic were willing to go in the pursuit of power. William II had no qualms about distributing deliberately false news. His anonymous pamphlet campaign was more inflammatory than many regents would ever have dared themselves. The established scholarship suggests that Dutch authorities made more efforts to withhold political information from the public than to share it.[7] Their aversion to the publication of political pamphlets, as evidenced by numerous placards and ordinances targeting seditious print, has also been frequently noted.[8] But the reverse has not yet been fully appreciated: that the regents were very finely attuned to the benefit of involving their citizens in the affairs of state, whenever it suited them to do so.[9]

An important work that has recently delved into this issue is Jan Haverkate's study of political conflict in the province of Overijssel.[10] In the middle of the 17th century, Overijssel was sharply divided between two factions: one composed of the towns of Kampen and Zwolle, and the other headed by the town of Deventer. Between 1654 and 1675, these factions were frequently at loggerheads, which degenerated into civil war, including a bloody siege of the town of Hasselt, which had allied itself with Deventer to spite its neighbour Zwolle. Both factions claimed to represent the authentic provincial States of Overijssel, and each accused the other of sowing discord. During this conflict, regents on each side of the struggle printed several dozen letters, resolutions and declarations denouncing their opponents, in similar fashion to their colleagues in Groningen and the Ommelanden.[11] In Overijssel, the regents also published at least forty anonymous pamphlets, purportedly written by neutral observers, designed to insult, scandalise and spread false information.

This chapter will explore the issue of public politics in the Dutch Republic in the Stadtholderless period that followed the assault on Amsterdam in 1650. This

[7] De Bruin, *Geheimhouding en verraad*, esp. pp. 14–15.
[8] Eric Platt, *Britain and the Bestandstwisten: The Causes, Course and Consequences of British Involvement in the Dutch Religious and Political Disputes of the Early Seventeenth Century* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht GmbH & Co., 2015), p. 158; De Bruin, *Geheimhouding en verraad*, pp. 355–443; Groenveld, 'The Mecca of Authors?', p. 74; Weekhout, *Boekencensuur*, esp. pp. 23–86.
[9] Hinted at in De Bruin, 'Political Pamphleteering', p. 94.
[10] Jan Haverkate, *Spindoctors van de Gouden Eeuw: Een vergeten pamfletoorlog (1654–1675)* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2020).
[11] See Chapter 7.

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fractious period challenged the authorities more than ever: now that the Republic had won its existential war against Habsburg Spain, the forced unity of war was eroded and replaced by a political restlessness, as the regents began to question the nature of the Dutch union, the role of the House of Orange and the foreign alliances of the Republic. By examining the assault on Amsterdam and the struggles of the 'True Freedom' (*Ware Vrijheid*) regime in the 1650s and early 1660s, it becomes clear that the authorities could not afford to ignore public engagement with high politics, and indeed that they often decided to steer this engagement for their own benefit. They were not afraid to use means that were formally beyond the pale of dignified politics, such as the publication of anonymous pamphlets or the leaking of resolutions. They were also astutely aware of the powers of their supporters – the ministers, scholars, publishers and writers who could bolster their cause with their own pamphleteering. This chapter further reinforces the notion that one cannot study early modern pamphleteering without considering the role of official print. Official declarations and ordinances did not circulate in their own public sphere, detached from that of anonymous polemical pamphlets. State communication did not operate separately from popular politics: it was instrumental to it.

'When everyone is spoken to, everyone may respond'

The political struggle between William and the Holland regents in the summer of 1650 was unquestionably a public conflict. For a few months, the citizens of the Dutch Republic had little else to talk about: the failed surprise attack on Amsterdam and the seizing of six prominent regents created an unprecedented constitutional crisis. For the first time in a generation, the Dutch Republic faced the danger that factional politics might lead to a divisive political rift. The obstinacy of the Holland regents was nothing new; they had all too frequently obstructed the will of the Stadtholder or the States General.[12] But Prince Frederick Henry, Stadtholder between 1625 and 1647, had managed them with a soft hand, playing off rival cities against one another and manipulating political rivalries to his own advantage. William II had not inherited his father's prudence: he was inexperienced and single-minded, too impatient for the byzantine politics of the regents and disinclined to listen to any opinion but his own.[13] He could count on widespread support throughout the country, partly because of his title and ancestry, but also because his belligerent attitude appealed to those who had been snubbed by the Peace of Münster, including the States of Zeeland and the city of Leiden, who had opposed the peace treaty and were overruled by their fellow regents. The Reformed Church, wary of the unorthodox sympathies of Holland's

[12] Israel, 'The Holland Towns and the Dutch–Spanish Conflict'.
[13] G. W. Kernkamp, *Prins Willem II* (Amsterdam: P.N. van Kampen en zoon, 1943); Rowen, *The Princes of Orange*, pp. 77–94.

elite and dismayed by the peace with Catholic Spain, also looked to the Stadtholder as their champion.

The underlying political tensions erupted after William's intervention on 30 July. An outpouring of pamphlets, songs and libels circulated around the country, with each writer choosing a side in the conflict.[14] Some sprang to Amsterdam's defence; others mocked its deposed leaders and the imprisoned regents held at Loevestein Castle. Printers and booksellers were all too happy to stoke the crisis. Although he printed some of the most polemical pieces against Amsterdam, Willem Breeckevelt also printed the *Blydschap over de verlossing van Amsterdam*, a piece aimed against the Stadtholder; William considered it so offensive that he issued a proclamation against this tract on 29 August.[15] Soon pamphlets responded to pamphlets, and popular titles such as the anti-Orangist *Hollands Praatje* (Hollandish Chat) appeared in numerous editions and multiple instalments, reiterating the same vitriolic polemic under different guises.[16] The deluge of cheap political print published in the summer and autumn of 1650 eclipsed that of the last great political crisis of 1617–18. In the 1610s, Contra-Remonstrant opinion had held the upper hand, and much of the output of print poured scorn on Johan van Oldenbarnevelt and his associates.[17] In 1650, the balance of opinion was rather more equal, but no less violent in tone. Towards the end of the year, an anonymous pamphleteer produced a historical account of the conflict, concentrating on the tumultuous events surrounding the siege of Amsterdam (30 July–3 August). At the end of his narrative, the author paused to reflect on the extraordinary number of pamphlets that had been produced that year:

> We do not judge it worthless . . . to consider the variety of opinions, of so many heads, printed on paper by the fury of their souls, and published for the world thanks to the labour and art of the press . . . Today we experience an age that wishes to be learned without knowledge . . . It has come so far already, that one can call the printing of books a bad habit. Pens, formerly reserved for scholars, are now in the hands of the illiterate and brainless. O time, O manners![18]

[14] Harms, *Pamfletten en publieke opinie*, pp. 91–128; and Ingmar Vroomen, *Taal van de Republiek: Het gebruik van vaderlandretoriek in Nederlandse pamfletten, 1618–1672* (PhD thesis: Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam, 2012), pp. 119–68.

[15] Harms, *Pamfletten en publieke opinie*, p. 105; *Wilhem by der gratie Godts prince van Orangie. Alsoo ons ter handen gecomen is seecker gedruckt gedicht, dragende den tytel van Blyschap over de verlossinge van Amsterdam* (The Hague: s.n., 1650), USTC 1505299.

[16] *Hollants praatjen, tusschen vier personen aangaande de souverainiteyt van syn hoogheyt* (Antwerp: Hieronymus II Verdussen, 1650), USTC 1015153. See also USTC 1015173, 1015160, 1015163, 1015166, 1015175, 1021214, 1015188, 1001350, 1015189, 1015183, 1015185, 1015186, 1015182, 1015179, 1450040, 1015180 and 1015181.

[17] Harms, *Pamfletten en publieke opinie*, pp. 33–89.

[18] *Amsterdams journael. Vervatende kortelijk van dag tot dag, alles watter gepasseert is van den 30 Julij, tot den 4 Augusti des jaers 1650* (s.l.: s.n., 1650), USTC 1017096, p. 25.

With some irony the same author then offered a list of the most notable pamphlets and poems which had circulated around the time of the crisis, in effect a wish list of the greatest hits of the conflict.[19]

In the autumn of 1650, the authorities in Amsterdam and The Hague looked on with similar disdain. Multiple ordinances denouncing seditious literature were republished and reprinted, and the worst offending titles were singled out by the States General, the Prince of Orange and the States of Holland in additional prohibitions. But we should not take these regulations at face value: the unfortunate Breeckevelt was the only printer or bookseller to be sentenced.[20]

While the authorities gave the impression that the anonymous authors behind the numerous poems, pamphlets and libels were snooping citizens who had no business commenting on the affairs of government, it was the authorities themselves who had been instrumental in opening the floodgates of pamphleteering.[21] The prince himself had unleashed his campaign with the distribution of the 'pamphlets and pasquilles', designed to incite suspicion against Amsterdam's faithfulness to the union. In this he was assisted by his allies, including the substitute *Griffier* of the States General, Johan Spronssen, who had given Breeckevelt the text of the *Articulen*. William's secretary, Johan Heilersieg, had also offered Breeckevelt texts against the Bickers, some of which even the printer (according to his confession) deemed too radical to put to the press.[22] But William's campaign was not restricted to anonymous polemics. Instrumental to the political crisis of 1650 was the publication in print of official letters, declarations and ordinances.

William and his allies in the States General opened the first salvo in June, by publishing in print several propositions made in the States of Holland.[23] William and the States General accused the regents of Holland of endangering the Dutch Republic and the Reformed faith with their insistent demands for a reduction in the size of the army, and of insulting the office of Stadtholder, who had, according to the articles of the Union of Utrecht, the right to mediate in the affairs of the States General when there was a significant division between the seven provinces. William, in a tract of 30 June, singled out the city of Amsterdam as the chief perpetrator of discord in the union.[24] The States of Holland and Amsterdam responded indignantly with their own published declarations, the States addressing the other six provinces of the union directly in a letter of 27 July.[25] The

[19] See also Harms, *Pamfletten en publieke opinie*, pp. 123–4.
[20] Groenveld, 'The Mecca of Authors?', p. 71; Harms, *Pamfletten en publieke opinie*, pp. 104–6.
[21] Harms, *Pamfletten en publieke opinie*, pp. 101–4.
[22] Groenveld, '"Een enckel valsch ende lasterlijck verdichtsel"'.
[23] *Propositie van syn hoogheyt ende de heeren gedeputeerden van de Staten Generael, gedaen inde respective steden van Hollandt* (The Hague: s.n., 1650), USTC 1012918; *Propositie gedaen by syne hoocheyt inde vergaderinghe vande ed. mog. heeren Staten van Hollandt ende West-Vrieslandt* (Amsterdam: Simon de Vries, 1650), USTC 1029973.
[24] *Propositie gedaen by syne Hoocheyt*, f. A4.
[25] *Brief vande groot-mog: heeren Staten van Hollandt ende West-Vrieslandt aen de respective provinçien*

States also published a resolution on 26 July which confirmed that they remained unpersuaded by their opponents and would push through a significant reduction of the armed forces.[26]

By this point William had formulated his plan for the assault on Amsterdam and the arrest of his opponents in Holland. This attack was justified in two further publications. William published a letter (dated 29 July) directed to the magistrates of Amsterdam in which he declared his intentions to 'restore order' in the city – in effect, a declaration of war.[27] On 31 July, the day of the attack, William despatched copies of a printed letter around the country, formally addressed to the provinces of Gelderland, Zeeland, Utrecht, Friesland, Overijssel and Groningen. In this he explained that he had arrested six members of the States of Holland, blaming them and the city of Amsterdam for encouraging a rift in the union. Again, William emphasised that he had taken this action 'in order to maintain calm, unity and peace in our country', and 'that we, in this course of action, have no other intention or design than the conservation of the true Reformed Christian religion, for which we are prepared to offer our blood and life, and the state of the generality'.[28] Copies of the printed letter were also sent to the magistrates of the cities of Holland (Figure 8.2).[29]

In the aftermath of the assault, the States of Gelderland, Zeeland, Utrecht, Friesland and Overijssel all thanked William for his interventions. They made a point of publishing their letters of appreciation in print, demonstrating their loyalty to the prince and their pleasure at the turn of events. On 16 August, the regents of Zeeland congratulated the prince for his efforts and requested him 'to continue with the same will' in all future affairs.[30] The States of Friesland and Gelderland lauded William in similar fashion in their declarations of 27 August.[31]

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nopende de cassatie van de militie (The Hague: s.n., 1650), USTC 1034990; *Deductie ofte verantwoordinge van de heeren burgermeesteren ende 36. Raden, op ende teghens de propositie by zijn Prince van Orangien overgelevert* (Amsterdam: s.n., 1650), USTC 1034938.

[26] *Resolutie, genomen by de ed: mog: heeren de Staten van Hollant den 26. July 1650* ([The Hague: s.n., 1650]), USTC 1505278.

[27] *Copye van een missive gesonden by syn hoogheyt, aen de E.E. Heeren Burgemeesteren en Regeerders der Stadt Amsterdam* (s.l.: s.n., 1650), USTC 1505279.

[28] *Missive by sijn hoogheyt geschreveu [sic] aen de respective provintien van Gelderlandt, Zeelandt Uytrecht, Vrieslandt, Over-Yssel, Stadt Groeninghen, ende Ommelanden* (s.l.: s.n., [1650]), USTC 1514202. See also USTC 1034989, 1514201, 1122724, 1516075, 1516459, 1034984, 1034983, 1505282, 1516460, 1527714, 1516458 and 1527713.

[29] A copy of an otherwise unknown edition survives in the archive of the magistrates of Leiden: EL, Stadsarchief II, inv. 3145.

[30] *Extract uyt de resolutie van de Ed: Mo: Heeren Staten van de Provintie van Zeelandt. Den 16 Augustij 1650* (s.l.: s.n., 1650), USTC 1450042.

[31] *Extract wt een brief van den heere Kelfken Raedt des Vorstendoms Gelre, ende Graef-schap Zutphen. Geschreven tot Aernem den 27/17 Augustij anno 1650* (s.l.: s.n., 1650), USTC 1450043; *Extract uyt de resolutie van de Ed: Mo: Heeren Staten van de Provintie van Vrieslandt den 27.17. Augusty 1650* (s.l.: s.n., [1650]), USTC 1509414.

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Mistive HOOG by sijn HEYT

Geschreveu aen de respective Provintien van Gelderlandt, Zeelandt Uytrecht, Vrieslandt, Over-Yssel, Stadt Groeninghen, ende Ommelanden.

Edele Mog: Heeren, bysonder Goede Vrunden.

Figure 8.2 *Missive by sijn hoogheyt geschreveu [sic] aen de respective provintien van Gelderlandt, Zeelandt Uytrecht, Vrieslandt, Over-Yssel, Stadt Groeninghen, ende Ommelanden* (s.l.: s.n., [1650]). William II's letter of 31 July 1650 to six of the provinces of the union justifying his attempt on Amsterdam and the seizing of six notable regents of Holland. Note the large woodcut coat of arms of the prince at the head of the broadsheet.

The strategies of state communication employed by the authorities in the summer of 1650 were directly responsible for the ensuing public debate on the legitimacy of William's attack on Amsterdam. By publicising their differences and providing identifiable scapegoats the authorities opened the way for their supporters to satirise, lampoon and abuse their opponents, but also for the other parties to use the same weapons. One anti-Orangist pamphleteer remarked in a response to William's printed proposition to the States of Holland of 30 June that William had deemed it 'insufficient to deliver a proposition to the city councils [in manuscript]; it was instead decided to have it printed, by which the same was presented to the whole community, indeed to the whole world; and when everyone is spoken to, everyone may respond'.[32]

The pamphleteer was right to identify the important role that the dissemination of official publications could play in shaping popular opinion. The declarations issued by the Prince of Orange, the States General, the States of Holland and the city of Amsterdam circulated in numerous editions, more than most political pamphlets. The deduction of Amsterdam survives in eleven editions, the letter of the States of Holland of 27 July survives in six editions, and William's letter of 31 July survives in nine editions. Even the declarations of the States of Zeeland and Friesland were printed in at least three or four editions. For those who wished to establish their position with historical sources in hand, they could also avail themselves of the articles of the Union of Utrecht (1579), reprinted no fewer than eight times in 1650 for consultation in the divisive debates that summer.[33]

It was apparent to all that the legal wording of the Union of Utrecht was inconsistent and insufficient in times of crisis. This helps explain why appeals for unity were a persistent theme in the public conflict waged by the competing authorities of the seven provinces.[34] Each side claimed that they were the protectors of unity and thereby ensured the prosperity of the state. Prince William II argued that his actions would restore the unity of the Republic; at the same time an anti-Orangist pamphleteer, defending the sovereignty of Holland, argued that the autonomy of the provinces allowed harmony to flourish throughout the seven provinces. For good measure he added that 'it is known, that unity makes force, and discord makes impotence', citing in loose translation a part of the motto of the States General (*Concordia res parvae crescunt*, small things flourish in concord).[35]

[32] *Noodige aenmerckingen op seeckere propositie. In junio 1650. gedaen inde Hollantsche steden* (Amsterdam: Pieter Rombouts, 1650), USTC 1029423, f. A2r.

[33] Thrice in The Hague and Amsterdam, once in Groningen and once anonymously. See USTC 1027588, 1030184, 1032235, 1021224, 1030185, 1032233, 1032232 and 1025995.

[34] A. Th. van Deursen, 'Tussen eenheid en zelfstandigheid: De toepassing van de Unie als fundamentele wet', in A. Th. van Deursen, *Hartslag van het Leven: Studies over de Republiek der Verenigde Nederlanden* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 1996), pp. 307–21.

[35] *Het recht der souverainiteyt van Hollandt, ende daer tegens de welgefundeerde redenen; by de heeren Staten Generael by-gebracht* (s.l.: s.n., 1650), USTC 1034852, f. C3v.

The principles invoked by William and his opponents were of immense importance. The authority of the magistrates of the city councils and the regents of the provincial States was inextricably tied to perceptions of their performance as guardians of the confederal union and protectors of stability. The authorities recognised the power of public pressure and popular discontent as tools of political influence. Above all, the dramatic episode of 1650 suggests that even the martial William II knew that brute force alone could not hold the union together. In times of crisis, public political engagement was required on a national scale.

Selling True Freedom

In the wake of William II's death, five of the seven provinces of the Dutch Republic did not appoint a new Stadtholder. This unprecedented move heralded an era of 'True Freedom' that would last until 1672, in which the regents governed, for the first time, in unfettered republican liberty. The States of Holland, led by Grand Pensionary Johan de Witt, would be the staunchest enthusiasts for their newfound freedom (they coined the term themselves), and this propelled them into public and dogmatic quarrels with the supporters of William's son, William III, born eight days after the death of the Prince of Orange.[36]

The central problem of the True Freedom regime was that William III did not die as an infant. As long as the young prince was alive, the Orangist cause was indestructible.[37] By the end of the 1650s it was becoming clear that William would grow up to be a bright and resolute young man, despite his frequent bouts of ill health. It was inevitable that he would become a powerful force in Dutch politics. Even if the regents of True Freedom guaranteed their citizens prosperity, they could not prevent people from adoring the young prince. The birthday of William, 14 November, was celebrated each year throughout the country in taverns, market squares and homes as a joyous communal occasion. William's baptism on 15 January 1651 in The Hague was attended by a packed church, including members of the States General, the States of Holland, the States of Zeeland and delegates from Delft, Leiden and Amsterdam.[38] Wherever the prince travelled, crowds flocked to see him, cannon shot and rifle volleys were fired in his honour, and local militia companies escorted him, decked out in orange and blue uniforms. When William visited Utrecht in 1661, the Dom church chimed the

[36] On the period of True Freedom see Pieter Geyl, *Orange and Stuart, 1641–1672* (London: Phoenix Press, 2001); Herbert H. Rowen, *John de Witt, Grand Pensionary of Holland, 1625–1672* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1978); Jonathan I. Israel, *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness and Fall 1477–1806* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 700–95; Luc Panhuysen, *De ware vrijheid: de levens van Johan en Cornelis de Witt* (Amsterdam: Atlas, 2005).
[37] Herbert H. Rowen, *John de Witt, Statesman of the True Freedom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 72.
[38] Panhuysen, *De ware vrijheid*, p. 110.

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popular *Wilhelmus* (now the Dutch national anthem). Unlike that of the regents of the True Freedom, William's was a personal cause. Portraits, prints and engravings of the prince hung on the walls of houses and inns; pipes, tiles and glassware bore Orangist symbols and mottos.[39]

Orangism was a powerful sentiment, shared by many members of Dutch society. Although foreign observers often detected hints of monarchism in the influence of the Princes of Orange in the Republic, Orangism was not incompatible with the Republic but an intrinsic part of it.[40] William III enjoyed the most widespread support among Reformed ministers, desperate for a champion like Stadtholder Maurice, and the Dutch nobility and armed forces, bereft of their traditional patron in the Stadtholderless regime.[41] But affection for the prince was shared too by artisans, merchants, scholars and regents, by people who saw in William's cause personal advancement, who considered the Stadtholder's office an important political position in the Dutch constitution, or who regarded the prince with passionate adoration. The supporters of the prince were not a homogeneous group: the Amsterdam poet Jan Zoet, an ardent Orangist who published numerous laudatory poems to mark important occasions in the prince's life, vehemently opposed the Reformed Church.[42] Yet all supporters of the prince could agree that William deserved a political role, preferably that of Stadtholder and Captain-General, positions which had been held by his family since the emergence of the Dutch state.

Confronted by the survival of the young prince, the adherents of True Freedom (often known as *Staatsgezinden*, 'adherents of the States'), gradually developed a political philosophy of Stadtholderless government over the course of the 1650s and 1660s. This was based on ideals of provincial sovereignty, free trade, a Reformed church fully subservient to secular authority and the rule of a select class of regents.[43] These principles had long been ideals of Dutch republican government, but True Freedom emphasised and exaggerated them further. This philosophy was not clearly defined, and it is impossible to speak of a distinct political party of radical statesmen who stood for True Freedom;

[39] Jill Stern, *Orangism in the Dutch Republic in Word and Image, 1650–75* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010), pp. 48–52.
[40] A point made most effectively in Jonathan I. Israel, *Monarchy, Orangism, and Republicanism in the Later Dutch Golden Age: Second Golden Age Lecture* (Amsterdam: University of Amsterdam, 2004), esp. p. 13.
[41] On the importance of Reformed ministers to the Orangist cause, see M. Th. Uit den Bogaard, *De Gereformeerden en Oranje tijdens het Eerste Stadhouderloze Tijdperk* (Groningen: J.B. Wolters, 1954).
[42] Uit den Bogaard, *De Gereformeerden en Oranje*, pp. 131–52; Rudolf Cordes, *Jan Zoet, Amsterdammer, 1609–1674: Leven en werk van een kleurrijk schrijver* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2008).
[43] P. Geyl, *Het Stadhouderschap in de partij-literatuur onder De Witt* (Amsterdam: Noord-Hollandsche Uitgevers Maatschappij, 1947); Arthur Weststeijn, *Commercial Republicanism in the Dutch Golden Age: The Political Thought of Johan & Pieter de la Court* (Leiden: Brill, 2012); H. W. Blom and I. W. Wildenberg (eds), *Pieter de la Court in zijn tijd: Aspecten van een veelzijdig publicist (1618–1685)* (Amsterdam: APA – Holland University Press, 1986).

instead the *Staatsgezinden* can be regarded as political enthusiasts who identified themselves with principles of Stadtholderless government. The loyalties of regents and other public officers could waver and shift, and alliances between cities and States had to be nurtured. To this end Johan de Witt and his closest allies in the States of Holland were required to make significant personal efforts of persuasion through committee meetings, official visitations and occasional subterfuge.[44] The longevity of De Witt's tenure as Grand Pensionary was especially reliant on his close cooperation with the regents of Amsterdam, an alliance solidified by his marriage to Wendela Bicker in 1655.

The True Freedom regime faced persistent opposition from allies of the House of Orange. But the government also attracted its fair share of supporters, eager to prove their loyalty. Intellectual justifications of Holland's policies, some sponsored by anti-Orangist regents, others the result of the ideological enthusiasm of their followers, provided the True Freedom with a political vocabulary. But in pamphlet battles between enemies and proponents of True Freedom, the intellectual agenda of some writers pushed the regime further than was politically expedient.[45] The political writings of the Leiden cloth merchants Johan and Pieter de la Court, some of the most fervent *Staatsgezinden* of their time, were a case in point. The De la Courts provided Holland's regents with a conveniently malicious reinterpretation of the history of Holland's Counts and Stadtholder*s* (1662), and a powerful rallying cry for True Freedom in Pieter de la Court's controversial *Interest van Holland* (1662).[46] Johan de Witt edited the first draft of the *Interest van Holland*, excising some of its crude anti-Orangist insults and provocative political proposals, including the bizarre suggestion that a canal should be dug to separate Holland from the other provinces of the union. In the second edition, De la Court reinstated these proposals, and by the end of the 1660s the new edition was banned throughout the country, even in Holland.[47] The publications of the De la Courts became inextricably associated with the True Freedom regime, even if many regents tried to distance themselves from the De La Courts's unwavering hostility to the Prince of Orange and the Reformed Church. The Grand Pensionary especially struggled to dissociate his name from that of Pieter de la Court: the *Interest van Holland* was translated into English and French as *The true interest and political maxims of the Republick of Holland* (1702) and *Mémoires de Jean de Wit* (1709).[48]

[44] Rowen, *John de Witt, Grand Pensionary*, pp. 133–69, 238–56.
[45] Uit den Bogaard, *De Gereformeerden en Oranje*, p. 213.
[46] [Johan and/or Pieter de la Court], *Historie der gravelicke regeringe* (Amsterdam: Abraham de Wees, 1662), USTC 1842620; Pieter de la Court, *Interest van Holland, ofte Gronden van Hollands-welvaren* (Amsterdam: J.C. van der Graft, 1662), USTC 1844070.
[47] Rowen, *John de Witt, Grand Pensionary*, pp. 395–6.
[48] Johan de Witt [=Pieter de la Court], *The true interest and political maxims of the Republick of Holland* (London: s.n., 1702) and [Pieter de la Court], *Mémoires de Jean de Wit* (Ratisbone: Kinkius [=The Hague, s.n.], 1709).

The Stadtholderless regime has never been praised for its attempts to popularise its political agenda. The political writings of the De la Courts, although printed in over twenty-five editions between 1661 and 1671, are noted more for the controversy they stirred among Dutch ministers and Orangists than for the widespread support they found among the Dutch public: Pieter de la Court himself was 'more infamous than famous'.[49] Many of the pamphlets defending the cause of True Freedom were lengthy, ponderous texts, works of political theory aimed at a select circle of scholars and statesmen rather than the artisans who made up the bulk of the civic guilds. The oligarchic ideals of True Freedom disavowed any hint of popular democracy, and the regents did not attempt to cultivate public profiles as heads of state. Johan de Witt was noted for his simple attire and a detached, sober demeanour that could demand respect, but which did not inspire devotion.[50]

The charge has been raised that the regents of Holland's government disdained their social inferiors, and many certainly feared the effects of a potentially murderous crowd rampaging through the city streets.[51] The powers of the unchecked mob – the tyranny of populism – was an ever-present threat, one instilled in every statesman as the dangerous expression of democracy. Nevertheless, the Stadtholderless regime and their opponents both recognised the importance of the public as a political body. The engagement of ordinary citizens in the political drama of the 1650s and 1660s could be exploited as a powerful tool by the government and its adversaries. While the regents of True Freedom did not display a close personal interest in the lives of their inferiors, the political conflict generated by their policies involved many citizens in the affairs of state.

The importance of public communication was evident as soon as William II died from smallpox on 6 November 1650. The political vacuum was occupied by the States of Holland, whose regents called on the other provinces to attend a special deliberation of the States General in The Hague. The *Grote Vergadering* (Great Assembly), which took place between January and August 1651, established the foundation of the True Freedom regime. Over the course of the assembly most of the provinces came to an understanding that they would not, for the time being, appoint a Stadtholder in succession to William II. Grand Pensionary Jacob Cats, having recovered from the shock of William's assault on Amsterdam, proclaimed to the assembly that there was no need for a Stadtholder because the Republic was at peace; in support of his case he referred the delegates to the ancient state of the Hebrews, as well as classical Athens, Rome, and present-day Venice and Genoa, who only appointed a 'captain-general' for campaigns, rather than for

[49] G. O. van de Klashorst, '"Metten schijn van monarchie getempert": De verdediging van het stadhouderschap in de partijliteratuur', in H. W. Blom and I. W. Wildenberg (eds), *Pieter de la Court in zijn tijd: Aspecten van een veelzijdig publicist (1618–1685)* (Amsterdam: APA – Holland University Press, 1986), pp. 93–136, here p. 93.

[50] Rowen, *John de Witt, Statesman*, pp. 52–63, 220–6.

[51] See, for instance, Panhuysen, *De ware vrijheid*, pp. 70–3.

life.[52] Bolstered by such republican precedents, Holland's position was widely supported by the other provinces. Only Groningen objected and announced William Frederick, Stadtholder of Friesland and William's conspirator in the attack on Amsterdam, as their Stadtholder. The provinces also agreed that they would maintain the privileged status of the Reformed Church, but that they would not establish it as the public church of the Republic.

The period of the *Grote Vergadering* was a time of great uncertainty. Lieuwe van Aitzema, an astute news writer and diplomat in The Hague, wrote that everyone spoke of the assembly ('the great work'), not only in elite political circles but also in every barge and wagon he frequented.[53] It was crucial that the provinces presented a united front to legitimise their new political course. The divisions of 1650 had to be healed publicly. On 19 August, at the end of the *Grote Vergadering*, the States General issued a remarkable placard in which they announced that the conflicts of 1650 were to be forgotten; that all States General resolutions related to the army passed under William II were annulled; and that the seven provinces would maintain their indissoluble bonds of 'harmony, unity, love, trust and affection' with one another (Figure 8.3).[54] Blame for all 'unrest in government' was put squarely on the shoulders of the late Stadtholder.

The communication of political unity was strengthened by the announcement of a national prayer day on 13 September to thank God for the successful end of the *Grote Vergadering*.[55] The return of harmony was celebrated in engravings, while poets praised the wisdom of the regents and the unity of the country. One illustrated broadsheet, published by Franciscus van der Enden, portrays the virgin of Holland surrounded and supported by the six other provinces, while personifications of unity, prosperity and liberty descend from heaven, and figures of war and discord flee the scene (Figure 8.4).[56] A thanksgiving sermon by Caspar Streso, minister in The Hague, preached on 21 August, soon circulated in print in multiple editions.[57]

Peace, harmony and unity were short-lived, and so was the public image cultivated by the States in the wake of the *Grote Vergadering*. War broke out with Oliver Cromwell's Commonwealth in the summer of 1652, and the Dutch navy

[52] Uit den Bogaard, *De Gereformeerden en Oranje*, pp. 82–3.
[53] Lieuwe van Aitzema, *Saken van Staet en Oorlogh*, 7 vols (The Hague: Jan Vely, Johannes Tongerloo and Jasper Doll, 1669–72), USTC 1806266, III, p. 496.
[54] *Alsoo inden beginne vanden jare 1650. eenige onlusten inde regeeringe zijn ontstaen* (The Hague: widows and heirs Hillebrant van Wouw, 1651), USTC 1520771.
[55] N. C. Kist, *Neêrland's Bededagen en Biddagsbrieven*, 2 vols (Leiden: Luchtmans, 1848–9), II, p. 186. See also Chapter 9.
[56] *Blydschap, over d'eenigheid der zeven vrye Nederlanden* (Amsterdam: Franciscus van der Enden, 1651), USTC 1568737. See also *De grootste macht, is de eendracht. Daer tweedracht heert, 't rijck haest verkeert* (Amsterdam: Rombout vanden Hoeyen, 1651), USTC 1568738.
[57] Caspar Streso, *Danck-predicatie, uyt den CXXII. psalm* (The Hague: Jasper Doll, 1651), USTC 1839122; and Caspar Streso, *Danck-predicatie. Wt den CXXII. psalm* (Amsterdam: Gillis Joosten Saeghman, 1651), USTC 1840518.

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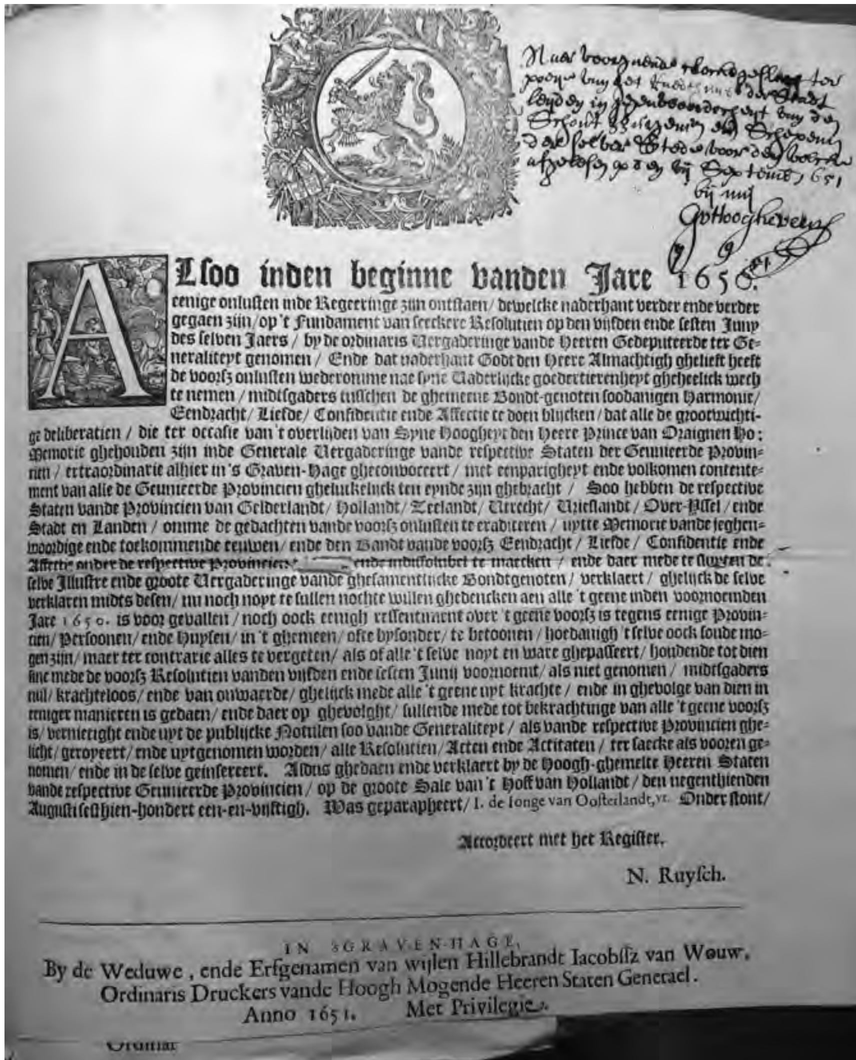
Alsoo inden beginne vanden Jare 1650.
eenige onlusten inde Regeeringe zijn ontstaen / dewelcke naderhant verder ende verder gegaen zijn / op 't Fundament van seeckere Resolutien op den vijfden ende sesten Juny des selven Jaers / by de ordinaris Vergaderinge vande Heeren Gedeputeerde ter Generaliteyt genomen / Ende dat naderhant Godt den Heere Almachtigh ghelieft heeft de voorsz onlusten wederomme nae syne Vaderlijcke goedertierenheyt gheheelick wech te nemen / midtsgaders tusschen de ghemeene Bondt-genoten soodanigen Harmonie / Eendracht / Liefde / Confidentie ende Affectie te doen blijcken / dat alle de grootwichtige deliberatien / die ter occasie van 't overlijden van Syne Hoogheyt den Heere Prince van Oraignen Ho: Memorie ghehouden zijn inde Generale Vergaderinge vande respective Staten der Geunieerde Provincien / extraordinarie alhier in 's Graven-Hage gheconvoceert / met eenparigheyt ende volkomen contentement van alle de Geunieerde Provincien ghelucklelijck ten eynde zijn ghebracht / Soo hebben de respective Staten vande Provincien van Gelderlandt / Hollandt / Zeelandt / Utrecht / Vrieslandt / Over-Yssel / ende Stadt en Landen / omme de gedachten vande voorsz onlusten te eradiceren / uytte Memorie vande jeghenwoordige ende toekommende eeuwen / ende den Bandt vande voorsz Eendracht / Liefde / Confidentie ende Affectie onder de respective Provincien [illegible] ende indissolubel te maecken / ende daer mede te sluyten de selve Illustre ende groote Vergaderinge vande ghesamentlicke Bondtgenoten / verklaert / ghelijck de selve verklaren midts desen / nu noch noyt te sullen nochte willen ghedencken aen alle 't geene inden voornoemden Jare 1650. is voor gevallen / noch oock eenigh ressentiment over 't geene voorsz is tegens eenige Provincien / Persoonen / ende Huysen / in 't ghemeen / ofte bysonder / te betoonen / hoedanigh 't selve oock soude mogen zijn / maer ter contrarie alles te vergeten / als of alle 't selve noyt en ware ghepasseert / houdende tot dien fine mede de voorsz Resolutien vanden vijfden ende sesten Junij voornoemt / als niet genomen / midtsgaders nul / krachteloos / ende van onwaerde / ghelijck mede alle 't geene uyt krachte / ende in ghevolge van dien in eeniger manieren is gedaen / ende daer op ghevolght / sullende mede tot bekrachtinge van alle 't geene voorsz is / vernietight ende uyt de publijcke Notulen soo vande Generaliteyt / als vande respective Provincien ghelicht / geroyeert / ende uytgenomen worden / alle Resolutien / Acten ende Actitaten / ter saecke als vooren genomen / ende in de selve geinsereert. Aldus ghedaen ende verklaert by de Hoogh-ghemelte Heeren Staten vande respective Geunieerde Provincien / op de groote Sale van 't Hoff van Hollandt / den negenthienden Augusti sesthien-hondert een-en-vijftigh. Was geparapheert / I. de Jonge van Oosterlandt, vt. Onder stont /

Accordeert met het Register.

N. Ruysch.

IN 'SGRAVEN-HAGE,
By de Weduwe, ende Erfgenamen van wijlen Hillebrandt Iacobsz van Wouw, Ordinaris Druckers vande Hoogh Mogende Heeren Staten Generael.
Anno 1651. Met Privilegie.

Figure 8.3 *Alsoo inden beginne vanden jare 1650. eenige onlusten inde regeeringe zijn ontstaen* (The Hague: widows and heirs Hillebrant van Wouw, 1651). This copy of the States General broadsheet of 19 August 1651 was sent to the magistrates of Leiden, who proclaimed its contents twice, on 10 and 17 September.

proved no match for their English enemies. Already in 1652, the States of Zeeland and Gelderland, backed by Friesland and Groningen, proposed the promotion of the infant William III as Stadtholder, but they were obstructed by Holland, which reminded the other provinces of the agreements made during the *Grote*

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BLYSCHAP,

Over d'Eenigheid der Zeven Vrye

NEDERLANDEN.

Do, capioque Fidem.

DEn Luſthof van den Haag, den Thuin der Nederlanden,
Die nu bevredight zijn door Eendrachts vaſte banden,
Verquikt den dageraat, die onzen nacht verdrijft,
En roept: dat Hollandt juigh, terwijl de Vryheid blijft,
En eeuwig groey en bloey, tot heil der Vrye Staten.
Hier komt nu (a) d'Eenigheid, die Neêrlandt had verlaten,
En leidt de (b) Welvaart aan voor ons gezeegent Landt,
En d'oude (c) Vryigheidt, die met haar t'zamen ſpant,
Om (d) Hollandt in haar vreê, en in haar ruſt te groeten;
Zoo treet de Deugt haar leet, en wrok, en wraak met voeten.
De Welvaart lacht, terwijl de (e) Vryheid ſpreeken derft.
De (f) Twiſt, en (g) Zucht tot ſtaat, die zoo veel Landts verderft,
En al de donk're nacht des haats, vlucht voor de ſtralen
Van 't Neêrlandtſch zeegenvier, dat ons doet adem halen.
Dit Licht, dat zoo ver ſchijnt, daalt van den Hemel neêr;
Van daar komt ons de Ruſt, op dat de werelt leer,
Dat geen gewelt, of liſt is tegens Godt geſchapen,
En dat zijn Wakkerheid noch waakt, terwijl wy ſlapen;
Dat hy zijn dagen ziet in onze duiſterheid;
Dat hy met duiſternis de nachten lagen leit.
Dies dankt hem 't Vaderlandt voor d'onverwachte zeegen,
Voor haar gevrijde ſtaat, en voor de milde reegen
Der goedertierenheid, die (h) d'Akkers vruchtbaar maakt;
En voor de goude tijd, die zoo veel zeegens ſmaakt;
De goude tijd, en 't licht, die Maas en Rhijn beſchijnen,
En doen het (i) Ongediert van d'yzere eeuw verdwijnen.
't Zachtmoedig Hollandt, en het eed'le (k) Gelderlandt,
De trouwe (l) Zeeuw, het (m) Sticht, de (n) Vrieſche Vrye ſtrandt,
En (o) d'Over-Yſſelaar, en (p) d'Ommelandtſche Steden,
Beſweeren d'Eenigheid der afgezonde Vrede.
't Geledene ongelijk, het afgeweert gevaar,
Hoy-Oegſt-en-Zomer-maent van 't laatſte Jubel-jaar
Vergeet dit Zeven-tal, nu 't Hollandt wil vergeten.
Zoo leit nu d'Eendracht hier een knoop, en ſterke keten,
Die door geen liſt, noch ook geen Alexanders kling,
Van een raak, noch door Haat noch Twiſt aan ſtukken ſpring.

Cedant arma togæ, concedat laurea paci.

[illegible]dam, Gedrukt voor *Franciſcus van den Enden*, in de Nes, [illegible] Winkel.

Figure 8.4 *Blydschap, over d'eenigheid der zeven vrye Nederlanden* (Amsterdam: Franciscus van der Enden, 1651). One of several illustrated broadsheets published in 1651 that celebrated the successful conclusion of the *Grote Vergadering*.

Vergadering.[58] A year later the issue of the prince became the central dilemma in peace negotiations with the Commonwealth. Fearful of a grand Orange–Stuart alliance (William III was the son of Mary Stuart, daughter of the late Charles I), Cromwell insisted that there could be no end to the war if the Dutch did not promise to exclude William from the office of Stadtholder. After drawn-out negotiations, the States of Holland, whose regents took the lead in the foreign policy of the Republic, ensured that a secret clause was written into the Treaty of Westminster (15 April 1654). This Act applied only to the States of Holland and would only be signed by its members after the other provinces had ratified the general clauses in the States General. The Act specified that the States of Holland would never appoint William III as Stadtholder of the province and would always obstruct his appointment to the Captaincy-General of the union.

Holland's covert diplomacy was only discovered by the other provinces when it was too late. Attempts by Holland's opponents to dissuade Cromwell from signing the peace treaty failed to arrive in time, and the Treaty of Westminster was fully ratified. Cromwell was pleased with the whole affair, ignorant of the complex constitution of the Dutch Republic, but confident that Holland would uphold its part of the bargain. In the Netherlands, the peace celebrations were dampened by a widespread sense of betrayal. The States of Friesland, Zeeland and Groningen made vehement declarations in the States General and disseminated in public their objections to the Act of Seclusion; Zeeland's resolution was printed in at least three editions.[59] News of the Act of Seclusion and the opposition of the other provinces spread like wildfire. There was no precedent for Holland's course of action, but neither was there clear evidence of its illegality. Lieuwe van Aitzema commented:

> The fire of discord began to burn brightly; people discussed [the affair] most liberally. A certain courtier stated in a public inn that the seclusion was treason . . . [and] that they ought to break the necks of two or three of the most prominent [regents] . . . on wagons and in barges the Act of Seclusion was insulted and debated most odiously.[60]

Faced by popular unrest, fuelled by public opposition from Zeeland, Friesland and Groningen, the regents of Holland had to make a public response. The defence of the new republican agenda fell on the shoulders of Johan de Witt, the new Grand Pensionary of Holland, who had played a significant role in the peace negotiations with Cromwell. De Witt had become Pensionary of Dordrecht in 1651 and in this capacity had taken over many responsibilities of the elderly Adriaen Pauw, Grand Pensionary between 1651 and 1653. Despite his youth and his relative

[58] De Bruin, 'Political Pamphleteering', p. 80.
[59] *Copia vande resolutie ende motiven der Staten van Zeelandt, tegens d'acte van seclusie by de welcke de provintie van Hollant den prince van Orangien hebben uyt geslooten* (s.l.: s.n., 1654), USTC 1815880. See also De Bruin, 'Political Pamphleteering', p. 81.
[60] Van Aitzema, *Saken van Staet*, III, p. 1110.

inexperience, De Witt had made a deep impression on his colleagues during the *Grote Vergadering* and its aftermath. When Pauw died in February 1653, eight nominees, including De Witt, were put forward to replace him: the other seven promptly withdrew out of respect for their younger colleague.[61]

The States of Holland ordered De Witt to produce a 'well-reasoned deduction or declaration' to refute the objections of the other provinces to the Act of Seclusion.[62] Over the course of several weeks De Witt drafted his *Deductie*, a work of more than 34,000 words. Writing in the name of the States, De Witt presented a series of arguments: that Holland had not broken any promises made to the other provinces in the Union of Utrecht or the *Grote Vergadering*; that no private individual had any right to a public office by birth; and that the Act of Seclusion was necessary for peace. De Witt appended to the text numerous secret resolutions passed by the States of Holland in 1654, the letters, resolutions and declarations exchanged between Holland and her opponents when the Act of Seclusion became public knowledge, authentic documents related to the Duke of Anjou and the Earl of Leicester in the 1580s, and a lengthy table of payments made to the House of Orange by the States since 1586. De Witt read the draft *Deductie* in the States of Holland on 24 July 1654 in an oration lasting five hours. The breadth of argument, the precision of detail and the formidable length of the text defeated all opposition to the Act of Seclusion among the gathered delegates, and the regents ordered the *Deductie* to be printed and issued as a public defence.[63]

The *Deductie* circulated rapidly throughout the country. It appeared in at least eleven Dutch editions, six of which were produced by the *Statendrukker* in The Hague; the others were reprinted anonymously elsewhere. Every province received twelve copies, and every city of the States of Holland received twenty copies. Johan de Witt sent one hundred copies to his father in Dordrecht to distribute to friends and family; he also presented copies to the ministers Cornelius Trigland (the chaplain of William III), Caspar Streso and Tobias Tegnejus, while he gave others to correspondents, allies and opponents throughout the country. Johan Jacob du Bois, a Reformed minister of the French Church in Utrecht, bought or received a copy as soon as it came out.[64] Book auction catalogues reveal that the *Deductie* was also owned by numerous contemporary statesmen, ministers, doctors and professors.[65] Joan Blaeu even sold copies of the *Deductie* in his branch shop in

[61] Rowen, *John de Witt, Statesman*, p. 41.

[62] Rowen, *John de Witt, Grand Pensionary*, pp. 229–37; Serge ter Braake (ed.), *Manifest van de ware vrijheid: De Deductie van Johan de Witt uit 1654* (Arnhem: Sonsbeek, 2009).

[63] Rowen, *John de Witt, Grand Pensionary*, pp. 235–6.

[64] *Catalogus variorum librorum theologicorum medicorum & miscellaneorum viri D. Johan Jacob du Bois* (Utrecht: Dirck van Ackersdijck, 1664 [=1654]), USTC 1846274, f. E4v.

[65] An investigation based on some 150 Dutch auction catalogues from the 17th century. See for some examples *Catalogus variorum librorum Jacobi Claver* (Utrecht: Johannes van Sambix, 1660), USTC 1846346, f. A3r; and *Catalogus instructissimae bibliothecae D. Stephani le Moyne* (Leiden: Johannes van der Linden, 1689), USTC 1846147, p. 81. See also Arthur der Weduwen, 'Sold in a Closed Room:

Frankfurt.[66] For the benefit of foreign readers an official Latin translation was composed by the Leiden professor Antonius Thysius.[67]

The length and administrative jargon of the *Deductie* did not make for easy reading for the politically uninitiated. One supporter of the States of Holland composed a fourteen-page pamphlet dialogue which justified the conduct of the States and summarised the major arguments of the *Deductie*.[68] The dialogue pamphlet was not reprinted once, but this should not be taken as evidence that the *Deductie* had little impact. The *Deductie* itself circulated in an estimated 10,000 to 15,000 copies. This was almost one copy for every hundred Dutch people. It was produced in different sizes for different pockets: in folio for statesmen and jurists, but also in smaller quarto, octavo and duodecimo formats.

The publication of the *Deductie* was a publicity manoeuvre, risky and potentially ruinous for the True Freedom regime. But, as Van Aitzema noted some months after the appearance of the tract, 'whether it's due to wisdom or luck, Holland has carried the day'.[69] The publication of the *Deductie* was undoubtedly a success. The first effect of the *Deductie* was to unite the States of Holland behind a formidable wall of facts, documentation and stately rhetoric. The delegates at the States had been deeply shaken by De Witt's announcement that they would have to sign the Act of Seclusion to attain peace. The regents of Leiden, Haarlem, Alkmaar and Edam offered staunch opposition and were only persuaded not to obstruct the Act at the last moment. The *Deductie* provided the dissenters with political cover, and De Witt's supporters with a means to persuade their colleagues and citizens at home. One regent of the Amsterdam council, Gerard Schaep, could not sleep from excitement after reading the copy he received.[70]

On 6 August 1654, Johan de Witt read out the *Deductie* in the assembly of the States General, officially presenting its arguments to the other provinces. De Witt had proven himself to his peers in Holland, and now a united Holland presented itself to the rest of the union. The publication of the *Deductie* demonstrated to Holland's opponents that the province stood firm and would not easily give way to external pressure. The regents of Zeeland, Friesland and the other provinces were also fully aware that the act of publishing the deduction in this easily available

Auctioning *Libri Prohibiti* in the Dutch Golden Age, 1670–1720', in Arthur der Weduwen, Andrew Pettegree and Graeme Kemp (eds), *Book Trade Catalogues in Early Modern Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 2021), pp. 319–60, here p. 336.

[66] *Catalogus librorum, tabularum geographicarum, et globorum, in officina Blaeviana, Francofurti ad Moenum Venalium* (Amsterdam: Joan Blaeu, 1659), USTC 1840162, p. 16.

[67] *Deductio, sive declaratio Ord. Hollandiæ West-Frisiæque. qua legitima & justa ostenditur concessio instrumenti seclusionis principis Auriaci* (Leiden/Amsterdam: Joannes Maire/Louis III Elzevier, 1654), USTC 1826721.

[68] *Korte vragen en antwoorden, over de deductie ofte declaratie van de Staten van Hollandt* (Amsterdam: Pieter Hermans, 1654), USTC 1826910.

[69] Van Aitzema, *Saken van Staet*, III, p. 943.

[70] Panhuysen, *De ware vrijheid*, pp. 160–1.

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form changed the character of the debate. De Witt and the States of Holland had revealed numerous secret resolutions to the public. De Witt included in the *Deductie* a full account of the peace negotiations with Cromwell, another highly secretive process which had been mysterious even to most regents in the States. By laying all this bare to the eyes of any literate person in the country, the States of Holland had called their opponents' bluff. The French ambassador in The Hague, Pierre Chanut, wrote to his counterpart in London that the other provinces had driven Holland to appeal to public opinion, so that 'the people are made the judges of their magistrates'.[71] At the same time, Van Aitzema commented that he had heard 'a certain Orangist [say], that those of Holland have made the people judges by publishing their deduction: now they must watch that the people do not make themselves hangmen'.[72]

The Orangist was right. The publication of the *Deductie* empowered the public: it was an open invitation to involve themselves in the affairs of state. But what the Orangist hoped for – an uprising or attack on the regents of Holland – did not take place. The *Deductie* was legitimised by sharing it with the public and upheld by the subsequent consent of the people. Holland's opponents recognised this, and no official condemnations of the *Deductie* were published by the other provinces.[73] Van Aitzema had misjudged the situation: in one of his letters to John Thurloe, English secretary of state, he had written that the other provinces would have their reactions printed 'and so much the worse, for the manifesto being rude, the answer will be so too . . .'.[74] In a daring stroke of publicity, True Freedom had gained the upper hand. Within a decade, however, the regents of the States of Holland would learn how capricious the pursuit of publicity could be.

The abominable prayer form

It was no secret that many Reformed ministers opposed the course taken by the regents of Holland.[75] Orthodox firebrands such as Simon Simonides, Jacobus Stermont, Franciscus Ridderus, Thaddeus Landman and Petrus de Witte, all popular preachers in Holland's great towns, warned their flock of the damnably lax attitude of the regents towards unorthodoxy. Utrecht's celebrated professor of Theology, Gisbertus Voetius, whose ideals of vigorous Further Reformation attracted many orthodox supporters, issued similar warning calls. The ministers suspected De Witt and many of his allies of heterodox sympathies. The True Freedom regime tried, as much as possible, to separate ecclesiastical influence from affairs of state, brandishing in their support the works of René Descartes

[71] Cited in Rowen, *John de Witt, Statesman*, p. 47.
[72] Van Aitzema, *Saken van Staet*, III, p. 943.
[73] De Bruin, 'Political Pamphleteering', p. 82.
[74] Cited in De Bruin, 'Political Pamphleteering', p. 90.
[75] Uit den Bogaard, *De Gereformeerden en Oranje*, esp. pp. 153–236, 252–3.

and Thomas Hobbes, two of the most despised writers in orthodox circles. The ministers also opposed the exclusion of the Prince of Orange: comparisons between De Witt and Johan van Oldenbarnevelt, the last Grand Pensionary who opposed the House of Orange and the Reformed Church, were made repeatedly. One popular pamphlet denounced De Witt as 'the new Saint John', echoing the 'Golden Legend of St John', a 1618 pamphlet targeting Oldenbarnevelt.[76] The States of Holland made matters worse by granting hollow victories to the ministers, publishing strict edicts against Socinians and Catholics during the 1650s, but never following up on the tough punishments stipulated.[77]

The States of Holland came into open confrontation with the Reformed Church in the spring of 1663. On 21 March, the States resolved to force the hand of their recalcitrant ministers by altering the formula of the public prayer used in all Reformed churches.[78] At the end of each service the minister asked the congregation to join him in a prayer, in which he asked God to watch over the High Mightinesses of the States General, the Prince of Orange, the provincial States, the magistrates of the cities and all other public officers. The regents of Holland took offence at the order of the prayer formula because it could imply that the States General was sovereign, rather than the provincial States. Henceforth each minister would have to open the prayer with the statement:

> We pray to You for those whom You have pleased to appoint over us, namely: the States of Holland and West-Friesland, our lawful sovereigns. We also pray to You for our allies the other States of the United Provinces, for the gathered delegates at the assembly of the States General and the Council of State, and also for the magistrates and regents of this town, please deliver to all of them Your grace and mercy.[79]

The old prayer formula had left the issue of sovereignty deliberately vague. The minister simply asked the congregation to pray for all public authorities in the Dutch Republic. The new formula removed all ambiguities, placing the States of Holland above all others. Furthermore, the new prayer form made no mention of the Prince of Orange, who, the States argued, had no right to be named as he was a private individual, not a public official.

In April, the States of Holland issued an ordinance in which they justified the alteration of the prayer formula as a means to combat all inconsistencies in the service of the public church. They despatched 'a good number of copies' of the ordinance and printed prayer forms to all jurisdictions in the province, providing French and English translations for use in the Walloon and English churches

[76] *Gulden legende van den nieuwen St. Jan. Dat is: Kort verhael van den edeldom, deughden, ende handelingen van meester Jan van Barnevelt* (s.l.: s.n., 1663), USTC 1800493.
[77] Rowen, *John de Witt, Statesman*, pp. 58–9.
[78] On the prayer form crisis see Van Aitzema, *Saken van Staet*, IV, pp. 993–1036; Weststeijn, *Commercial Republicanism*, pp. 310–16; Rowen, *John de Witt, Grand Pensionary*, pp. 420–36.
[79] SMHG, *Oud Archief*, inv. 2857.

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Figure 8.5 *Formulier van bidden voor de Hooge ende subalterne Overheyt, inde Nederduytsche Kercken van Holland* ([The Hague: Hillebrant van Wouw, 1663]). *Formulaire de priere pour le magistrat souverain & subalterne, dans les eglises Françoises d'Hollande & West-Frise* ([The Hague: Hillebrant van Wouw, 1663]). *Wee pray unto three in behalfe of those whom it hath pleased thee to place in authority over us, to witt, for the States of Holland* ([The Hague: Hillebrant van Wouw, 1663]). Copies of the new prayer forms for use in the churches of Holland, in English, French and Dutch. These copies were sent to the magistrates of Gouda.

(Figure 8.5).[80] The new regulation made a forceful intrusion in the lives of all Hollandish citizens. Many ministers were sorely opposed to the new prayer form, while the magistrates of their cities were pleased by the determination of the States. Every citizen attending church on Sunday would have noticed the different structure of the final prayer, while the magistrates observed the preacher closely from their privileged front-row bench to ensure that he would not deviate from the new text.

The prayer form ordinance was the most ideological intervention made by the True Freedom regime. It affirmed Holland's separation from the other provinces of the union; it demonstrated the continued opposition of the regime to the Prince of Orange; and it confirmed to many Orangists that De Witt's government was embracing the radical republican philosophy advocated by the tracts of the De la Courts. The crisis was especially explosive because it unified two pressing issues: the political dominance of provincial government over the church, and the

[80] Examples can be found in the archive of the magistrates of Gouda: SMHG, Oud Archief, inv. 2857. *De Staten van Hollandt ende West-Vrieslandt. Edele, erntfeste, hoogh-geleerde, lieve, ghetrouwe; d'abusen al van ouden inde ordre van't bidden in de publijcque kercken, hebben ons oorsaecke gegeven over te senden het formulier* ([The Hague: Hillebrant van Wouw, 1663]), USTC 1519303; *Formulier van bidden voor de Hooge ende subalterne Overheyt, inde Nederduytsche Kercken van Holland* ([The Hague: Hillebrant van Wouw, 1663]), USTC 1531855; *Formulaire de priere pour le magistrat souverain & subalterne, dans les eglises Françoises d'Hollande & West-Frise* ([The Hague: Hillebrant van Wouw, 1663]), USTC 1531853; *Wee pray unto three in behalfe of those whom it hath pleased thee to place in authority over us, to witt, for the States of Holland* ([The Hague: Hillebrant van Wouw, 1663]), USTC 1531854.

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role of the Prince of Orange in the state. The True Freedom regime forced their ecclesiastical opponents into the arms of the Orangists.

The decision to alter the prayer form was, as the regents of Holland would emphasise for months on end, a provincial matter. Constitutionally this was true, and only the most radical of Holland's opponents doubted the legality of the action. Yet this did not mean that it was politically expedient. From the Dutch Revolt onwards, the provinces of the union had always consulted one another on ecclesiastical policies, and the synods of the different provinces corresponded closely. When the rift between Remonstrants and Contra-Remonstrants threatened to split the Reformed Church in Holland and Utrecht, the provinces came together at a national synod to destroy the Remonstrant faction. By publishing the altered prayer form without consulting its fellow provinces, Holland abandoned the unwritten rules which governed the constitution of the Dutch Republic.

Friesland and Zeeland, the two provinces most staunchly opposed to Holland's anti-Orangist policies, were the first to make a public response. Both States published in print resolutions in which they bluntly urged the States of Holland to retract the new prayer form.[81] By publicising their position, both States made a determined show of force to their own citizens that they would not tolerate Holland's resolution. The States of Gelderland adopted a more soothing tone: the regents made clear to their citizens that they judged the new prayer form wholly inappropriate, but that they would deliberate with the other provinces to come to a suitable response.[82] Unimpressed by the gathering coalition, the regents of Holland made forceful retorts to Friesland and Zeeland in two open letters published on 4 October.[83] By the end of the year Overijssel and Groningen had also published denunciations of the prayer form, and Gelderland directed an open letter to all other provinces but Holland, urging them to work together to convince Holland 'with irrefutable arguments . . . that the prayer form is an abomination'.[84]

[81] *Resolutie vande ed: mo: heeren Staten van Vrieslandt vanden 23, mey. over de formulieren van gebeden by de Staten van Hollandt ende Westvrieslandt gearresteert* (Leiden: Cornelis vander Linden, 1663), USTC 1800726; *Rescriptie vande ed. mogende Gedeputeerde Staten van Vrieslant over de formulieren van gebeden* (Leiden: Cornelis vander Linden, 1663), USTC 1800728; *Resolutie vande ed. mo. heeren Staten van Zeelant. Genomen den 22. september 1663* (s.l.: s.n., 1663), USTC 1800501; *Instructie voor de heeren ordinaris gedeputeerden wegens de provintie van Zeelant, ter vergaderinge van haer ho. mog. occuperende, raeckende't formulier vande publijcke gebeden* (s.l.: s.n., 1663), USTC 1800502.

[82] *Resolutie vande Staten des vorstendoms Gelre, en graefschap Zutphen, genomen in dese maent septemb. 1663. Op, ende tegens het Hollants nieuw gebede-formulier* (s.l.: s.n., 1663), USTC 1800540.

[83] *Resolutie van haer ed. gro. mog. de heeren Staten van Hollant ende Westvrieslant genomen den 4. october 1663. Tot antwoort of refutatie vande resolutie vande heeren Staten van Zeelant* (s.l.: s.n., 1663), USTC 1800505; *Missive vande heeren Staten van Hollandt, aen de Staten van Vrieslandt over den staet vanden lande* (The Hague: s.n., 1663), USTC 1800472.

[84] *Acte van authorisatie van de Staten van Over-IJssel, aen hare gecommitteerde ter vergaderinge van de Staten Generael, om te helpen vernietigen, en distrueren het Hollandts nieuw-opgerechte gebede-formulier* (s.l.: s.n., 1663), USTC 1521030; *Resolutie vande ed. mog. heeren Staten van Groeningen en Ommelanden, den 22. december st. loc. 1663. Tegens het formulier van 't gebet* (s.l.: s.n., 1663), USTC

The politics of the Dutch Republic was defined by personal relationships.[85] The boundaries of public offices, such as that of the Grand Pensionary, were not always clearly demarcated, and they encompassed public and private spheres of interest. Official duties associated with an office could vary depending on the initiative of the individual and their connections, and patronage was one of the most powerful tools to have at one's disposal. The most efficient business was ultimately conducted outside the ceremonial procedures of the provincial assemblies, in private meetings, through private correspondence and through third parties. This is also how most conflict, be it between the Ommelanders and the magistrates of Groningen, or between the States of Holland and Zeeland, was resolved. Few Holland regents would have been persuaded by the defiant resolutions issued in print by the other provinces against their new prayer form; they no doubt hoped that over time they could persuade their opponents to drop their hostility to the reform.

The Dutch public rarely witnessed these reconciliations, which took place in closely guarded secrecy.[86] Instead they observed the accusations levelled by regents at one another, presented in long sequences of public resolutions exchanged by the provinces. The publication of these resolutions was a deliberate act of communication, intended to strengthen the resolve of supporters while attempting to blame the opposing side for the ensuing discord. As in the crisis of 1650, the authorities paved the way for other commentators to join the fray. With the support of the States of Holland, the writer Johan de Wit (a cousin of the Grand Pensionary) produced an intellectual defence of the new prayer form in three volumes, the *Public Gebedt* (1663–4).[87] Pieter de la Court considered the tract delightful; it was so close to his own intellectual agenda that many Orangist pamphleteers linked the anonymous work to De la Court.[88] Opponents of True Freedom responded rapidly with their own anonymous pamphlets.[89] One Reformed minister produced the *Ver-resenen Barnevelt* (Barnevelt resurrected), a pamphlet which attacked the States of Holland resolution by linking it to the interventions in church affairs of Johan van Oldenbarnevelt

1800506; *Versoeck-brief vande heeren Staten van Gelderlandt, aende respective heeren Staten vande andere provintien* (The Hague: Cornelis vander Vloot, 1664), USTC 1521040.

[85] Rowen, *John de Witt, Grand Pensionary*, pp. 133–90; Geert H. Janssen, *Creaturen van de Macht: Patronage bij Willem Frederik van Nassau (1613–1664)* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2005); Panhuysen, *De ware vrijheid*, pp. 162–260; David Onnekink, *The Anglo-Dutch Favourite: The Career of Hans Willem Bentinck, 1st Earl of Portland (1649–1709)* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007); Coen Wilders, *Patronage in de Provincie: Het Utrechtse netwerk van Stadhouder Willem III* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2015); Lindemann, *Merchant Republics*, p. 40.

[86] Lauret, *Regentenwerk*, pp. 18–19.

[87] [Johan de Wit], *Public gebedt, ofte Consideratien teegens het nominatim bidden in de publique kercken voor particuliere persoonen; en specialijken voor den jegenwoordigen heere prince van Orangien* (Amsterdam: Cyprianus vander Gracht, 1663), USTC 1800379.

[88] Weststeijn, *Commercial Republicanism*, p. 311.

[89] Van de Klashorst, '"Metten schijn van monarchie getempert"', pp. 93–136.

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and his allies in the 1610s. Constantijn Huygens, the secretary of the prince's late father and grandfather, joined in with a lengthy defence of the Stadtholder's office.[90]

Enthusiastic pamphleteers also broadened the scope of the debate. In their quest to defend their authorities, they often pushed the ideological principles of their faction to conclusions which were not altogether favourable to its cause. Johannes Naeranus, a Remonstrant preacher in Rotterdam, was a steadfast defender of the principles of True Freedom.[91] He had written in defence of the regents of Holland against the Reformed Church on several occasions, and in 1663 he penned the *Hollandse vrijheid verdadigt tegen de usurpatie der Stadhouders* (Holland's freedom defended against the usurpations of the Stadtholders), a dialogue pamphlet set in a barge between Leiden and Haarlem. In this pamphlet, and in its second instalment, Naeranus moved the focus of the debate away from the legality of the prayer form, arguing instead that the Stadtholder*s* were the root of Holland's ills. In his pamphlets he accused Prince Maurice of being worse than the Duke of Alba and compared William II to Nero burning Rome.[92]

Naeranus's pamphlets were confiscated in Utrecht, where the regents were sensitive to the complaints of their star professor Voetius and his disciples.[93] The prayer crisis had cooled relations between Holland and Utrecht, and the regents of Utrecht turned a blind eye to anti-Hollandish publications distributed from their jurisdiction. Despite the stringent measures against political pamphleteering in place in all provinces, Dutch authorities generally ignored the publication of seditious texts if they embarrassed their opponents: Holland's regents had no qualms about Naeranus's tracts, while the regents of Friesland and Zeeland pretended not to notice the dissemination of Orangist pamphlets.

The regents of Utrecht were especially supportive of one of Holland's bogeymen, the news writer and publisher Gerard Lodewijk van der Macht. During the 1650s, Van der Macht had worked in The Hague as the proprietor of a series of newspapers. He had an extensive network of correspondents and provided a premium news service compared with those of his competitors. But this news network was augmented by exclusive reports and resolutions supplied by corrupt clerks at the

[90] *Den ver-resenen Barnevelt, betabbert met alle sijne politycke maximen* (Zierikzee: Pieter de Schryver [=s.l.: s.n.], 1663), USTC 1800774; and [Constantijn Huygens], *Den herstelden prins tot stadt-houder ende capiteyn generaal vande Vereenighde Nederlanden* (Amsterdam: J.C. vander Gracht [=s.l.: s.n.], 1663), USTC 1800537. See also Geyl, *Het Stadhouderschap*, pp. 42–50.

[91] Sibbe Jan Visser, *Samuel Naeranus (1582–1641) en Johannes Naeranus (1608–1679): twee remonstrantse theologen op de bres voor godsdienstige verdraagzaamheid* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2011).

[92] H.v.V. [=Johannes Naeranus], *Hollandse vrijheid verdadigt tegen de usurpatie der Stadhouders* (s.l.: s.n., 1663), USTC 1800763, p. 49; H.v.V. [=Johannes Naeranus], *Het tweede deel der Hollandse vrijheid. Verdadigt tegen de usurpatie der Stadhouders* (s.l.: s.n., 1664), USTC 1801221, p. 6.

[93] *Hollands Nieuw Jaar gezonden aan den heere officier van Uitrecht. Over het ophalen en onderdrukken der Hollandse Vrijheid. En het toestaan en gedoogen van alderhande pasquillen tegen de Ed: Groot Heeren Staten van Holland &c.* (s.l.: s.n. [=The Hague, Johannes Rammazeyn], 1664), USTC 1801611.

Court of Holland, and after an investigation by the Court in 1658, Van der Macht was banned from Holland for ten years.[94] Van der Macht moved to Utrecht, where he continued his activities as newspaper publisher with the approval of the local magistrates. But during the 1660s, Van der Macht, who had very little sympathy for the ideology of True Freedom, also began to print anonymous pamphlets directed against the States of Holland. He reprinted resolutions of the States of Zeeland and Gelderland during the prayer crisis; published dialogue pamphlets that criticised Holland's Francophile foreign policy; and produced tracts which attacked Holland's attitude towards the Reformed Church.

Van der Macht published his pamphlets anonymously or used pseudonyms to cover his tracks, but his identity was well known by his sponsors in Utrecht as well as his opponents. Joannes Naeranus, a Rotterdam publisher and nephew of the Remonstrant minister who wrote in defence of True Freedom, exposed Van der Macht's activities in his newspaper; Otto Barentsz Smient, an Amsterdam news publisher, did the same.[95] Despite the remonstrances of Naeranus and Smient, Van der Macht's anti-Republican pamphlets were in great demand in Holland. Towards the end of the 1660s, the Court of Holland moved to restrict the circulation of his pamphlets in The Hague: a lengthy investigation revealed that ten booksellers in the town stocked Van der Macht's publications, including some of the most prominent publishers in the town.[96] One bookseller, Hermanus Gael, admitted that he had been sent over thirty different deliveries by Van der Macht in the space of two months, buying numerous pamphlets at an average price of one and a half stuivers a piece. The booksellers all paid Van der Macht through a local cloth merchant, Jan Jacobsz Hacke, who then sent the money on to Utrecht.

Gerard Lodewijk van der Macht's publications pervaded The Hague in the 1660s, and he undoubtedly had regular customers in the other major cities of Holland. The booksellers involved knew that there was an audience for his seditious texts and happily sold resolutions and pamphlets from both sides of the debate. In 1669, the Court of Holland arrested Van der Macht when he returned to the province after his original sentence ran out, and the Court promptly banished him for life for the dissemination of subversive literature. When William III came to power in 1672 he pardoned Van der Macht, rewarding him for his service to the Orangist cause, and the publisher enjoyed his retirement in freedom.

The pamphlet debate continued into 1664, ensuring that the prayer form crisis remained in the public eye. The official publications of the provincial States

[94] NADH, Archief Hof van Holland, inv. 5274.7; Der Weduwen, *Dutch and Flemish Newspapers*, I, pp. 38–41, II, pp. 607–37, 1051–78; Arthur der Weduwen, 'Fear and Loathing in Weesp: Personal and Political Networks in the Dutch Print World', in Alexander S. Wilkinson and Graeme J. Kemp (eds), *Negotiating Conflict and Controversy in the Early Modern Book World* (Leiden: Brill, 2019), pp. 88–106, here pp. 100–6.

[95] Der Weduwen, *Dutch and Flemish Newspapers*, I, pp. 40–1.

[96] Der Weduwen, 'Fear and Loathing in Weesp', pp. 103–4.

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continued to be analysed by supporters of both parties. Both sides seemed to agree that the flurry of resolutions and counter-resolutions was the catalyst of the debate. One Orangist writer thanked his friend for sending a copy of the ordinance of the States of Holland and the prayer form, but he noted that before he had a chance to respond he saw that the ordinance was 'distributed and divulged in newspapers, newsletters, and in copies through all the provinces of the union, even further throughout Europe'.[97] The writer echoed sentiments similar to those expressed in 1650 when he stated that he felt obliged to share his thoughts on the prayer form after it was divulged in public.[98] One writer coming to the defence of True Freedom also identified the publications of the States as the source of contention between the provinces. The *Herstelden Barneveldt* (Barneveldt restored) featured a dialogue between a Hollander, a Frisian and a Zeelander.[99] While the Hollander gradually persuaded his opponents during the conversation, the Zeelander noted at the beginning of the dialogue that 'your daily acts and resolutions make clear that you Hollanders are full of glory and ambition'.[100] In this, as in many other pamphlets from 1663 and 1664, the official publications of the provincial States enjoyed a second life.

The prayer crisis had left the regents of True Freedom seriously exposed. Their opponents had engaged more effectively with the Dutch public, keeping up a united front of public resolutions and declarations. And here they had public opinion on their side: the sweeping interventions of the prayer reform had confirmed the worst fears of many Dutch citizens. True Freedom was in danger of losing the carefully cultivated consent that provided the foundation of support for government. As we shall see in the following chapter, the next crisis that shook the Dutch Republic, the eruption of the Second Anglo-Dutch War (1665–7), would seriously test the authority of the States of Holland and demand extraordinary efforts from the Grand Pensionary.

[97] *Bedunckelicken brief van d'een vriendt aen d'ander in Hollant, over het nieuwe formulier door de Staten van die provintie opgerecht den 23 maert 1663* (Leiden: Yemandt van Waermondt [=s.n.], 1663), USTC 1800718, f. A2r.

[98] *Bedunckelicken brief van d'een vriendt aen d'ander in Hollant*, ff. A2r–v.

[99] *Herstelden Barneveldt, ofte t'Samenspraeck tusschen een Hollander, Seeu ende Vries* (Leiden: Symon Cornelisz vander Steyger, 1663), USTC 1800720.

[100] *Herstelden Barneveldt*, p. 1.

9

Their High Mightinesses Turn Newsmongers

In 1693, the burgomasters of Amsterdam issued a set of instructions to Willem Arnold, the new publisher of the local newspaper, the tri-weekly *Amsterdamsche Courant*. Arnold was warned that he should never include in his paper any military or naval news that might be of use to the Republic's enemies or print anything that might offend any potentate in Europe, including the Pope. Most importantly, he was not allowed to 'divulge through the newspapers any domestic affairs or resolutions of the state, even if they are not secret, as they are not suited to be disseminated by a public gazette'.[1]

This sentiment, widely shared by other regents in the Republic, requires some explanation. We have already seen that the Dutch Republic was, politically speaking, one of the most open and participatory states of early modern Europe. The authorities involved their citizens to a significant degree in the making and ceremony of law. The Republic was also home to a vibrant commercial news market and it offered a prime experimental ground for the development of the newspaper. In 1618, Amsterdam became the first city in Europe to be home to two competing weekly papers. By the 1640s, at least seven papers offered ten weekly issues to a national market, while Dutch publishers also pioneered the adoption of newspaper advertising.[2] The newspaper market was supplemented by a rich variety of news publishing in pamphlet form. In comparison with other countries, Dutch printers were responsible for a disproportionately large quantity of pamphlet news already in the late 16th century.[3] Incidental news pamphlets and broadsheets, covering foreign and domestic events, would continue to play a prominent role in the Dutch print trade and commercial news provision throughout the 17th century.

[1] Cited in Der Weduwen, *Dutch and Flemish Newspapers*, I, p. 31.

[2] Der Weduwen, *Dutch and Flemish Newspapers*, pp. 24–7, 94–5; Der Weduwen and Pettegree, *Dutch Republic and the Birth of Modern Advertising*, esp. ch. 1.

[3] For a recent case study see Baars, *Rumours of Revolt*. See also the USTC (ustc.ac.uk): between 1550 and 1650, Dutch printers produced at least 3,400 news pamphlets and broadsheets.

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If one judges by the formal pronouncements of the authorities, Dutch regents viewed this buoyant news market with suspicion.[4] Newspapers were not permitted to comment on domestic politics, and as the instruction to Willem Arnold indicates, they were even prohibited from reporting on affairs of state that were common knowledge on the streets of Dutch towns. Although the Republic was renowned for its relatively lax censorship of the book trade, the authorities moved swiftly against newspaper printers who had overstepped the boundaries of their brief.[5] Works of politics and current affairs featured prominently in the 263 publications that were formally prohibited by government edicts in the Dutch Republic before 1701.[6] The most severe action was reserved for when the regents became aware of the surreptitious sale of news from the offices of state to professional news writers and diplomats.[7] Newspapermen, such as Gerard Lodewijk van der Macht and Crispijn Hoeckwater, suffered dearly for their habits of bribing clerks of the Binnenhof, or for simply 'picking up news' at the Court of Holland, by being fined, suspended and banished.[8]

In 1651, the States of Zeeland declared solemnly that 'secrecy is the noblest element of the affairs of state'.[9] Such idealisation of secrecy was theoretical rather than practical. The Dutch authorities had a more subtle relationship with news provision than is suggested by their sober declarations. Despite their genuine anxiety about unbridled news circulation, they were deeply involved in the commercial business of news, as loyal customers of newspaper and pamphlet printers, but also as sponsors and patrons of news publishers. The magistrates of Haarlem repeatedly protected their local newspaper publisher, Abraham Casteleyn, when he was accused by the Court of Holland of selling state secrets.[10] The authorities clearly valued commercial news services, and they also recognised their importance in influencing foreign and domestic publics.[11]

This chapter explores the role of the authorities as publishers and public interpreters of news. Restricting the publication of news or punishing newspaper printers was only a minor aspect of news control, but it has received a disproportionate amount of attention in the established scholarship. Building on

[4] Weekhout, *Boekencensuur*, pp. 79–84; Groenveld, 'The Mecca of Authors?', pp. 63–86, esp. p. 74.
[5] Der Weduwen, *Dutch and Flemish Newspapers*, I, esp. pp. 85–7. On censorship and the Dutch book trade see Pettegree and Der Weduwen, *Bookshop of the World*, ch. 13.
[6] Weekhout, *Boekencensuur*, pp. 371–89.
[7] See De Bruin, *Geheimhouding en Verraad*, pp. 444–505, for several case studies.
[8] ARA, Hof van Holland, inv. 5274.7, 5279.9; Der Weduwen, *Dutch and Flemish Newspapers*, I, pp. 40–1; II, pp. 1053, 1081.
[9] Cited in De Bruin, *Geheimhouding en Verraad*, p. 355. Cf. Gestrich, *Absolutismus und Offentlichkeit*, pp. 34–6.
[10] Der Weduwen, *Dutch and Flemish Newspapers*, I, p. 46.
[11] Der Weduwen, *Dutch and Flemish Newspapers*, I, pp. 29–34, 45–7, 86–7; Haks, *Vaderland & Vrede*, esp. pp. 203, 207; Jason Peacey, 'Managing Dutch Advices: Abraham Casteleyn and the English Government, 1660–1681', *Media History*, 22 (2016), 421–37, here 425; Peacey, '"My Friend the Gazetier"', pp. 428–9.

recent studies of public diplomacy and 'news management' by ambassadors and statesmen, this chapter demonstrates that the authorities in the Dutch Republic more often stimulated the supply of news to a broad public than restricted it.[12] In the process, they became prominent news publishers themselves. Controlling and shaping news, the authorities recognised, was an essential aspect of state communication.

Making the news

In the 17th century, most Dutch citizens received and passed on information about current affairs by word of mouth. The Dutch Republic may have sustained the most commercial information culture of 17th-century Europe, but printed news media did not replace the traditional circuits of oral communication.[13] Word of mouth was free, and news provided by trusted family or friends was always considered to be most trustworthy. The diary of the schoolmaster David Beck demonstrates the extent to which highly literate and well-read individuals who had access to newspapers and pamphlets still valued most highly news passed on to them by trusted friends.[14]

The importance of oral communication helps explain why proclamations made by provincial and municipal authorities of the Dutch Republic played a significant role in the supply of news.[15] The regents regularly shared news that was of crucial interest to their citizens. They proclaimed news of victory from the front, warned of dangerous criminals on the run and provided names of Dutch sailors taken captive by Barbary corsairs.[16] The States and the burgomasters of Groningen even proclaimed and printed the news of the birth of Louis XIV of France in September 1638, via a 'special despatch' sent to the States General by the French court (then an ally of the Dutch).[17] The publication of a placard on economic or commercial affairs could also constitute a news event in itself. The publishing of a placard on the 'freedom of the fisheries' of the Republic in 1677 was, according to one newsletter writer informing the magistrates of Zierikzee, the source of 'much jubilation' among the population.[18] Given that many proclamations affected the livelihoods of Dutch citizens, they were eagerly anticipated and inherently newsworthy.

[12] Helmers, 'Public Diplomacy', pp. 401–20; Nina Lamal and Klaas Van Gelder, 'Addressing Audiences Abroad: Cultural and Public Diplomacy in Seventeenth-Century Europe', *The Seventeenth Century*, 36 (2021), 367–87; Peacey, 'Managing Dutch Advices'; and Peacey, '"My Friend the Gazetier"'.

[13] Pettegree, *Invention of News*, esp. pp. 346–61.

[14] Beck, *Spiegel van mijn leven*.

[15] For a comparative perspective see Kyle, 'Monarch and Marketplace', pp. 771–87.

[16] For a selection of good examples see the placards in GAG, Staten van Stad en Lande, 1594–1798 (1), inv. 475.

[17] USTC 1549525 and 1549528.

[18] Zeeuws Archief, Zierikzee, Stad en Gemeente Zierikzee, 1275–1939 (5022), inv. 910, item 2.

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Sharing news through proclamations also allowed the regents to create a narrative of events, shaping the reception of current affairs. On 14 July 1653, at the height of the First Anglo-Dutch War, the magistrates of Haarlem shared news of the recent Dutch defeat at the Battle of the Gabbard. They also expounded on the pestilence and poverty that afflicted the city that summer: God's wrath had clearly descended upon Haarlem, due to the brazen sinfulness of its inhabitants. All festivities habitually organised by the civic militia were cancelled until further notice.[19] In a sophisticated news environment such as this, bad news could not be hidden: best to confront it, head on.

The magistrates of Amsterdam demonstrated similar shrewdness when, in September 1652, a band of sailors from the fleet at Vlieland stormed the West India House in Amsterdam, throwing stones at the commissaries of the fleet, abusing them and threatening to shoot them. The magistrates responded immediately by issuing a proclamation and disseminating its text throughout the city to defuse the situation.[20] The regents set out how they had first tried to appease the sailors with 'kind words and promises' but were met with increasing hostility and therefore arrested the ringleaders. These ringleaders and their followers deserved severe punishment. Yet, after deliberation, the magistrates granted a full pardon to all the mutineers, 'who followed the lead of others, most out of blind anger, without considering the consequences'.

The States General also oversaw the publication of news through printed news bulletins produced by their *Statendrukker*. At the end of the 16th century, *Statendrukker* Albrecht Hendricksz published numerous news pamphlets reporting Dutch victories, Spanish defeats and successes of Dutch allies elsewhere in Europe.[21] His successors continued this tradition. In the 1620s and 1630s, *Statendrukker* Machteld van Leuningen produced pamphlets supporting the Protestant cause in the Thirty Years' War; she also printed reports of Dutch successes in Brazil and the Southern Netherlands, and French victories against Spain during the early stages of the Franco-Spanish War.[22]

We cannot conclude that these news pamphlets were commissioned by the regents, but it is certain that they approved of them and supported their publication. By the second half of the 17th century, the States General was openly involved in the dissemination of news, through the printing of news reports or letters

[19] *Alsoo uyt de jeghenwoordighe conjuncture van tijden ende saecken, te sien is, dat Godts thoorn is ontsteecken, soo ist dat den heeren verbieden alle corporaelschappen vande schutterijen eenighe vergaderinghen te maecken* (Haarlem: Vincent Casteleyn, 1653), USTC 1519705.

[20] *Notificatie. Alsoo t'zedert sondagh vele matroosen niet alleen buyten consent van hare capiteynen, maer oock tegen 't bevel vanden commissaris ondernomen hebben haer te vervoeghen by de heeren directeuren ende op ongehoorde maniere te eysschen* (Amsterdam: Broer Jansz, [1652]), USTC 1525430.

[21] USTC 443704, 422649 (1588), 427975, 422717 (1589), 423395 (1595), 423628 (1596), 429682, 423776, 423716, 423718, 429764, 423827, 423712, 79917 (1597).

[22] USTC 1032215, 1032092, 1032234 (1622), 1017249 (1628) 1509704, 1509819 (1629), 1017349 (1632), 1032257, 1032261 (1635), 1032275 (1640).

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ostensibly reserved for the discretion of their High Mightinesses. Leaking was not only a tactic used by the opponents of the government, but also a valuable strategy exploited by the States.[23] The States General frequently published as broadsheets letters received from their admirals or generals in the wake of battles: numerous examples are known from the three Anglo-Dutch Wars (1652–4, 1665–7, 1672–4), the Franco-Dutch War (1672–8), the Nine Years' War (1688–97) and the War of the Spanish Succession (1702–13).[24]

Letters from Dutch diplomats abroad could similarly be made accessible to a broad public.[25] This was a process that was aided by the norm established in 1669 that all incoming correspondence from Dutch ambassadors and envoys addressed to the States General was to be printed after its receipt in The Hague.[26] These diplomatic despatches were circulated for the convenience of the regents and the ambassadorial network, supplementary to other news services used by the authorities. Yet these despatches also provided useful material to share with the public, whenever it suited the regents to do so: this was most notably the case in 1688, when the regents printed as placards dozens of diplomatic letters sent by Aernout van Citters, their resident in London, commenting on the mood in the English capital during the events of the Glorious Revolution.[27]

Another important strategy with which the authorities could shape the reception of news was through the announcement of prayer days.[28] Since the early days of the Dutch Revolt, municipal and regional authorities had proclaimed days of thanksgiving, fasting and prayer to reflect on important moments in the struggle against Spain. During the prayer day all citizens were prohibited from feasting, drinking and gambling; instead they were encouraged to attend church, where the preacher would hold a special service dedicated to the subject of the prayer day. During the early stages of the Dutch Revolt, prayer days were proclaimed in some provinces on average twice a year.[29] From 1584 onwards, most prayer days became national affairs. The States General was responsible for the announcement of the occasion and proposing the day, but the implementation of the prayer day, and the

23 Haks, *Vaderland & Vrede*, pp. 196–8.

24 Two representative examples include Maerten Tromp, *Extract, uyt den brieff vanden lieutenant admirael Tromp, aen de Staten Generael der Vereenichde Nederlanden, geschreven in 't schip Brederode, leggende voor Calis, den vierden Martij 1653* (The Hague: widow and heirs of Hillebrant van Wouw, 1653), USTC 1520862; and Paulus Wirtz, *Missive van de heer veldt-maerschalck Wirtz, geschreven uyt Gornichem den 28 november 1672* (The Hague: Jacobus Scheltus, 1672), USTC 1521405.

25 Examples include P. Pels, *Nouvelles uyt Polen over-gezonden aen haer hoog mogentheden* (The Hague: Jacobus Scheltus, 1669), USTC 1806390; and Frederiko Valckenier, *Missive van den secretaris Frederiko Valckenier, geschreven aen haer hoogh mog. tot Madrid den 2 september 1671* (The Hague: Jacobus Scheltus, 1671), USTC 1808126.

26 See Chapter 6.

27 See Chapter 11.

28 Kist, *Neêrland's Bededagen*. See also Haks, *Vaderland & Vrede*, pp. 73–6, 86–114.

29 HGDH, Oud-archief van de gemeente 's-Gravenhage, 1313–1815, inv. 635, ff. 38, 45, 50, 52, 55, 57, 59, 61, 66.

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precise wording of the prayer, was left to the provincial States.[30] Some 300 prayer days were announced by the States General from the later 16th century to the end of the 17th century. They were issued most frequently to give thanks for military triumphs, to celebrate the achievements of allies of the Republic or to pray for success in a forthcoming campaign. Local annual prayer days continued to exist alongside those issued by the States General, but these tended to commemorate and celebrate past events, such as the relief of the sieges of Alkmaar, Leiden and Groningen, or the liberation of the province of Utrecht. Abstaining from drink was unlikely to be a priority on these local holidays.

The announcement of a prayer day was an act of mass communication.[31] A prayer day impacted on the lives of most citizens in the country, joining them together in a single moment of reflection. All Reformed churches (Dutch, French and English) observed the prayer day, and by the end of the 17th century other Protestant denominations and Jewish communities participated as well. As soon as the States General announced a prayer day, an intricate communication system was set in motion. The States General sent out formal written requests to the seven provinces; the provincial States then announced the prayer day through proclamations and distributed printed ordinances that included the written instructions from the States General and the text of the prayer to be read out at the church service.[32] Municipal authorities and bailiffs followed up with their own proclamations and ordinances to spread word of the prayer day and ensure its implementation.[33]

Prayer days never broke a news story; rather, they allowed the authorities to clarify and explain momentous events. The authorities could rely on the scholars of the Republic for further support in shaping the interpretation of the news, an unstated but entirely conventional part of the vocation of professors at Dutch universities and illustrious schools. The scholar Caspar Barlaeus published panegyrics on the capture of Den Bosch (1629) and Olinda (1630), and he held a formal oration at the Illustrious School of Amsterdam on the victorious Battle of the Downs (1639).[34] Nicolaas Heinsius composed a poem on the conquest of

[30] Kist, *Neêrland's Bededagen*, I, pp. 195–8.
[31] For some European comparisons see Forssberg, *The Story of War*; Philip A. Williamson, *National Prayers: Special Worship since the Reformation*. Vol. 1: *Special Prayers, Fasts and Thanksgivings in the British Isles, 1533–1688* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2013); Vermeersch, *Multimedia in de stad*, pp. 110–16.
[32] See for example *Copia. Edele mogende heeren: nademael het Godt door syne grondeloose bermherticheyt, gelieft heeft, tot het besluyt van een tractaet van vrede, soo ist dat wy, noodich hebben gheacht uyt te schryven een danck-seggingh* ([Zwolle: Jan Gerritsz Tydeman, 1648]), USTC 1122512.
[33] *Borgemeesteren ende raadt in Groningen doen te weten. Naedemael het godt de heere almachtigh, belieft heeft, te comen tot een vrede, haer ho. mo. hebben geoordeelt te schrijven, een algemeenen danck ende bededagh* ([Groningen: s.n., 1678]), USTC 1519495. See also the proclamation registers of the magistrates of Schiedam, noting five prayer days between 1629 and 1632. Gemeentearchief Schiedam, Archief van het stadsbestuur tot 1795 (291), inv. 326, f. 5v.
[34] Caspar Barlaeus, *Sylvæ-ducis obsidio* (Leiden: Govert Basson, 1629), USTC 1027620; Caspar Barlaeus, *Triumphus super captâ Olinda* (Leiden: Govert Basson, 1630), USTC 1018901; Caspar Barlaeus, *Oratio panegyrica, de victa Hispanorum regis classe Frederico Henrico, duce facti Martino Trompio* (Amsterdam: Joan and Cornelis Blaeu, 1639), USTC 1030594.

Breda (1637), while Antonius Thysius held an oration at the University of Leiden on the capture of Sas van Gent in 1644.[35] These orations were generally printed as elegant folio pamphlets, and given their Latinate nature, they were destined for an elite and international readership. They nevertheless played an important role in the canonisation of Dutch triumphs and the representation of its status abroad.

Flatterers and advertisers

To influence the supply of news further, the authorities of the Dutch Republic promoted a congratulatory print culture. The States General and the provincial States offered substantial cash rewards to publishers, engravers and writers for publications that promoted the prestige of the States.[36] Works of history, poetry or literature could be rewarded if they contained a dedication to the States or paid special deference to the glory of the Dutch Republic. More often, though, monetary awards were offered to the authors and printers of celebratory news reports, flattering portraits of Dutch statesmen, admirals and generals, and engravings or detailed maps of battles and sieges that underscored the success of the Dutch Republic.[37] The best engravers and publishers could be commissioned to produce publicity pieces; the Dutch West India Company was deeply involved in sponsoring positive accounts of its exploits in Brazil during the 1620s and 1630s.[38]

This rewards system also encouraged other artists and publishers to issue laudatory illustrations, poetry and news reports on their own initiative in the hope of similar generosity. Publishers commonly offered their products to the assembled body of regents at the States, but sometimes also to individual grandees. The Leeuwarden printer Hero Galama once came up short as he presented his new engraving of the Frisian admiral and naval hero Tjerck Hiddes de Fries to the famously scrupulous Johan de Witt. The Grand Pensionary promptly returned the

[35] Nicolaas Heinsius, *Breda expugnata* (Leiden: Elzeviriana, 1637), USTC 1027909; Antonius (II) Thysius, *Oratio panegyrica, in expugnationem Sassæ Gandensis* (Leiden: Willem Christiaensz vander Boxe, 1644), USTC 1027626.

[36] P. J. Verkruijsse, 'Het boekenmecenaat in de zeventiende eeuw', *De zeventiende eeuw*, 6 (1990), 137–42; and P. J. Verkruijsse, 'Holland "gedediceerd". Boekopdrachten in Holland in de 17e eeuw', *Holland*, 23 (1991), 225–42.

[37] For some examples see Ha. H. P. Rijperman (ed.), *Resolutiën der Staten-Generaal van 1576 tot 1609*, vol. 14 (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1970), pp. 318–19, 624, 914; and Kees Zandvliet, 'Kartografie, Prins Maurits en de Van Berckenrodes', in Kees Zandvliet, *Prins Maurits' kaart van Rijnland* (Alphen aan de Rijn: Canaletto, 1989). See more broadly Christi Klinkert, 'Information or Indoctrination? News Prints of the Military Campaigns of Maurice of Nassau (1585–1625)', in Martin Gosman and Joop W. Koopmans (eds), *Selling and Rejecting Politics in Early Modern Europe* (Louvain: Peeters, 2007), pp. 59–70.

[38] Michiel van Groesen, *Amsterdam's Atlantic: Print Culture and the Making of Dutch Brazil* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017), pp. 52, 80, 83.

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print (as it was his habit to return all gifts) but promised Galama that he would purchase a copy when 'it became publicly available'.[39]

The authorities could rely on printers of news to produce accounts favourable to their policies and positions. This is most evident from the contentious politics of the Twelve Years' Truce (1609–21) and the resumption of war against Habsburg Spain in the early 1620s. Aert Meuris, a specialist news publisher in The Hague, was part of a network that exerted considerable influence on Dutch public opinion towards the end of the Truce.[40] Meuris was one of the most prolific polemicists for the Contra-Remonstrant cause and had close connections to Constantijn Huygens, who worked for the English ambassador, Sir Dudley Carleton, and later the Dutch diplomat François van Aerssen, both opponents of Grand Pensionary Johan van Oldenbarnevelt. Meuris produced over thirty anonymous tracts in the 1610s and 1620s that publicly associated Oldenbarnevelt and his allies in the Remonstrant faction with 'Spanish tyranny' and the persecution of Protestants throughout Europe.[41]

After the triumph of Prince Maurice of Orange over Oldenbarnevelt and the Remonstrants, Meuris continued to highlight the plight of Protestants suffering under the yoke of the Habsburgs and their Catholic allies abroad. Pamphlets concerning the 'cruel and tyrannical' executions ordered by the Holy Roman Emperor in Bohemia or the murder of Protestants in Switzerland clearly tied these events to the belligerent agenda promoted by the authorities under the leadership of Maurice in the early 1620s.[42] Some of these news accounts were not very subtle: one was a Dutch translation of a recent placard issued by the Elector of Cologne against Protestants in the district of Münster, which, Meuris claimed on the title-page, 'demonstrates what awaits those of the Reformed religion, [in places where] the Papists become absolute masters'.[43]

Helmer Helmers has convincingly demonstrated that the publication of foreign news in the Dutch Republic was critical to its domestic policy debates and public opinion.[44] He also ties the emergence of the first Dutch newspapers

[39] ARA, Archief Johan de Witt (3.01.17), inv. 2489. My thanks to the 'Correspondence of Johan de Witt' project for this reference.

[40] Ad Leerintveld, 'Politiek, religie en literatuur: Het fonds van de Haagse drukker Aert van Meurs en de familie Huygens', *De zeventiende eeuw*, 8 (1992), 139–47. More broadly see Helmer Helmers, 'Foreign News in Times of Domestic Crisis: The Truce Conflicts, the Thirty Years' War and the Rise of the Dutch Newspaper', in Wilkinson and Kemp (eds), *Negotiating Conflict and Controversy*, pp. 253–68, esp. pp. 262–5; and Pettegree and Der Weduwen, *Bookshop of the World*, ch. 2.

[41] See the typographical analysis conducted in Paul Dijstelberge, *De beer is los! Ursicula: een database van typografisch materiaal uit het eerste kwart van de zeventiende eeuw als instrument voor het identificeren van drukken* (PhD thesis: University of Amsterdam, 2007).

[42] USTC 1031594 (1621) and USTC 1031584 (1622).

[43] *Placcaet. Des bisschops van Ceulen, tegens die van de religie in't sticht Munster. Waer uyt te sien is, wat die van de gereformeerde religie hebben te verwachten, daer die papisten absoluyt meester warden* (The Hague: Aert Meuris, 1625), USTC 1012450.

[44] Helmers, 'Foreign News in Times of Domestic Crisis'; and Helmer Helmers, 'Cartography, War

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in the late 1610s to the pro-war pressure group around Prince Maurice and the Contra-Remonstrant faction, arguing that their appearance was not a coincidence but deliberately played into the priorities of the ascendant Contra-Remonstrants.

If the authorities were involved in the birth of the Dutch newspapers, it remains to be seen to what extent they incorporated the new medium in their strategies of news control and state communication. 17th-century newspapers were, in essence, services for foreign news.[45] Although they could be relied upon to cover Dutch military affairs on the front judiciously and extensively, they rarely reported on domestic politics. News reports from The Hague tended to mention the arrival or departure of regents, diplomats and envoys, or commented politely but concisely on the illness or death of important figures. Anything else was beyond the pale. The *Grote Vergadering* of 1651, arguably one of the most important episodes of Dutch political decision-making in the 17th century, was barely covered in the press, relegated to a few lines announcing preparations for the assembly in The Hague.[46]

Dutch newspapers had, in general, a high reputation for trustworthiness and the quality of their news in the 17th century.[47] Catholic readers abroad rightly suspected that the papers occasionally exaggerated a Protestant victory, but the Dutch papers were markedly different to the Paris *Gazette*, a bi-weekly paper of high-quality international news, but which was largely paid for by the French state and described in unctuous detail events at the royal court.[48] Unlike in France, there is little evidence that the Dutch authorities used their newspapers to glorify their rule, and when a Dutch defeat had to be reported, the newspapermen were more forthcoming than in France or the Southern Netherlands.[49] Comparative work on newspapers in the Holy Roman Empire also suggests that with very few exceptions, newspapers were not used as mouthpieces of government, even if their printers had close ties to their local prince.[50]

Correspondence and News Publishing: The Early Career of Nicolaes van Geelkercken, 1610–1630', in Raymond and Moxham (eds), *News Networks*, pp. 350–74.

45 Der Weduwen, *Dutch and Flemish Newspapers*, I, chs 2, 5–6, *passim*.

46 Joop Koopmans, 'De vergadering van de Staten-Generaal in de Republiek voor 1795 en de publiciteit', *BMGN*, 120 (2005), 379–96, here 385. On the *Grote Vergadering* see Chapter 8.

47 Peacey, 'Managing Dutch Advices', pp. 421, 425; Der Weduwen, *Dutch and Flemish Newspapers*, I, pp. 43–5, 61–72.

48 Der Weduwen, *Dutch and Flemish Newspapers*, I, pp. 52–3, 77–8. On Renaudot and his *Gazette* see Stéphane Haffemayer, *L'information dans la France du XVIIe siècle: La Gazette de Renaudot de 1647 à 1663* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2002); and Howard M. Solomon, *Public Welfare, Science, and Propaganda in Seventeenth Century France: The Innovations of Théophraste Renaudot* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1972).

49 For a case study see Arthur der Weduwen, 'The Battle of the Downs: Reporting Victory and Defeat in the Early Periodical Press', *Media History*, 24 (2018), 1–25.

50 Jan Hillgärtner, 'Newspapers and Authorities in Seventeenth-Century Germany', in Lamal, Cumby and Helmers (eds), *Print and Power*, pp. 134–47.

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The Dutch regents read their local papers with care and interest, but they do not seem to have used them extensively to influence public opinion. A comparison between the extant printed diplomatic despatches of the States General from the 1680s and 1690s and Dutch newspapers does not indicate that the despatches were leaked to newspapermen from the Binnenhof.[51] In fact, it seems that there was little need: the newspapers had extensive and efficient international news networks themselves and were able to report much of the same foreign news as the Republic's envoys. In some cases, the newspapermen received reports directly from the diplomats of the State General, who also relied for their own news to a large extent on newspapers and handwritten newsletters.[52] In desperate times, the authorities were prepared to intervene to shape newspaper copy. On 20 May 1672, during the early stages of the Third Anglo-Dutch War, Gijsbert van der Hoolck, a delegate to the States General, wrote to the Utrecht regent Cornelis Booth that he attached

> [a] copy of the resolution, by which the English and Scottish merchants are to be returned their impounded goods and ships. Your Excellency will be interested to see the same inserted in the Thursday Haarlem newspaper, not without knowledge of us; similarly you will see in the Saturday newspaper, in some different words, the same message reiterated, in order to make it all known to the world: it will undoubtedly make a good impression in the British nation.[53]

Indeed, one finds in the edition of 19 May 1672 of the *Oprechte Haerlemse Courant* the following report, datelined The Hague, 18 May:

> The Lords States General, wish to demonstrate to the world, and especially to the English and Scottish nation, that their High Mightinesses do not blame the current tragic, bloody and mutually ruined prosperity, navigation and commerce of the detestable war on the innocent common people, but on those who offer ill counsel, and those who, with the aid of others, use the same war, to ruin the aforementioned navigation and commerce, and to overthrow the true religion and freedom of both nations.[54]

This was, in essence, the text of the resolution spoken of by Van der Hoolck. It is noteworthy that the *Oprechte Haerlemse Courant*, by all accounts the paper of record of the Republic, was here being employed to influence a foreign audience, rather than a domestic public. The regents knew that the Haarlem tri-weekly was widely read in England, so they inserted this report to encourage anti-Catholic

[51] The despatches are held at ARA, Archief Staten Generaal (1.01.02), inv. 12083–5. This finding is part of an ongoing investigation by myself and Basil Bowdler, and will be set out in a forthcoming publication.
[52] Peacey, '"My Friend the Gazetier"', esp. pp. 420–5.
[53] W. P. Sautijn Kluit, 'De Haarlemsche Courant', *Jaarboek van de Maatschappij der Nederlandse Letterkunde* (1873), 3–132, here 12–13; Der Weduwen, *Dutch and Flemish Newspapers*, I, p. 45.
[54] *Extraordinaire Haerlemse Donderdaeghse Courant*, no. 20 (Haarlem: Abraham Casteleyn, 19 May 1672).

and anti-French sentiments in England and fracture the Anglo-French coalition against the Dutch.[55] Given how blatant this example was, and the fact that English diplomats suspected the manipulation of the content of Dutch newspapers by the authorities, it is unlikely to have had much impact.[56]

In the middle of the 17th century, Dutch authorities began to make use of an innovation in the newspaper market, the newspaper advertisement, for domestic state communication. Dutch newspapermen pioneered the use of advertising in the early 1620s, and for the first thirty years this service was mostly for the benefit of their colleagues in the book trade, who advertised newly published titles and book auctions.[57] By the late 1640s, other services (most prominently schools) were also advertised in the newspapers, while at the same time readers began to place announcements for lost or stolen possessions, and for missing children and pets. Gradually, the regents of the Republic joined in. The first few cautious notices concerned criminals on the run, the inauguration of new universities (in Utrecht and Harderwijk) and the announcement of new markets. By the 1660s, the authorities had become regular advertisers: by 1675, over one hundred municipalities, as well as five of the seven provincial States, four of the five Admiralties, and the West and East India Companies had placed announcements in Dutch newspapers, mostly in those published in Haarlem and Amsterdam.[58]

It is notable that these official announcements did not overlap greatly with the range of proclamations and ordinances issued by the authorities. The texts of ordinary municipal or provincial edicts were rarely placed in the newspaper columns. This can partially be explained by their length, which would have occupied much of the space available on the two-sided folio half-sheets on which the newspapers were printed. More pressingly, the authorities did not bother to place such ordinances because the readership of the newspapers was too dispersed, and too small, for such announcements to have reached those who were most urgently impacted by local proclamations. Even the most popular tri-weeklies of the Republic did not have print runs of more than 2,000 copies by the 1670s, and these copies would be distributed across a national market. It therefore made little sense for the magistrates of Leiden, Haarlem or Utrecht to insert a local ordinance in a newspaper that might be read by only a few hundred readers in their vicinity; certainly when we reflect that the authorities had efficient means available, thanks

[55] Der Weduwen, *Dutch and Flemish Newspapers*, I, pp. 44–5; Peacey, 'Managing Dutch Advices'.
[56] Peacey, 'Managing Dutch Advices', p. 431; Peacey, '"My Friend the Gazetier"', pp. 429–30.
[57] The development of newspaper advertising is covered comprehensively in Der Weduwen and Pettegree, *Dutch Republic and the Birth of Modern Advertising*. For an English translation of the first 6,000 advertisements placed in the Dutch Republic, see Der Weduwen and Pettegree, *News, Business and Public Information*.
[58] See the sixth index in Der Weduwen and Pettegree, *News, Business and Public Information*, pp. 621–31. See more broadly Der Weduwen and Pettegree, *Dutch Republic and the Birth of Modern Advertising*, ch. 4.

to proclamations, town criers and printed placards, to make this ordinance known to all local inhabitants.

The newspapers did offer a useful platform to communicate news of important events (chiefly markets and festivals) that local authorities wished to make known to citizens throughout the Republic (Figure 9.1). The newspapers were valued especially by many small rural jurisdictions, such as the villages of Strijen, Schoorl, Kollum, Vollenhove and Den Klundert, where the annual market represented a critical event in the social and economic life of the community.

> The magistrates of Schoorl give notice that their cattle market will be held on 19 April instead of the Monday after Palm Sunday, and that all inhabitants of Schoorl who wish to sell cattle, sheep or pigs will be required to present their animals at the market, and that all visiting merchants will enjoy the established freedoms of the market when departing with their purchases from Schoorl.[59]

Frequently, small jurisdictions also emphasised in their newspaper announcements that further details were available on printed placards, which were evidently also disseminated widely across the country.[60] Larger jurisdictions frequently advertised local markets too, but cities such as Leiden, Haarlem, Delft and Amsterdam also communicated news of barge and post schedules, plague outbreaks and wanted criminals, while the Admiralties frequently advertised for auctions of prizes taken by brave Dutch captains at sea.

> All are notified that the barges from Leiden to Delft and The Hague will depart each morning at 8 am instead of 9 am from 1 October onwards, and that the barge from The Hague will depart from 1.30 pm instead of 2 pm. The magistrates of Delft and The Hague have instructed that the morning barges departing for Leiden at 9 am are required to arrive within two and three quarter hours, so that passengers are able to join the barge from Leiden to Utrecht that departs at 12.30 pm.[61]

> Warning. The magistrates of Leiden give notice that they wish to counter the false rumours, which are daily doing the rounds, that many people in Leiden are sick and dying [of the plague], and that in fact not a single person has been brought into the Leiden plague house in the last two years, and that fewer people have fallen sick or died in Leiden this year than in any year of the last decade, and that God Almighty is to be thanked for this, and that this information should be shared with everybody.[62]

> The Council of the Admiralty of Hoorn means to sell on 30 December (in Enkhuizen) an English ship with a large variety of cargo, including wine, cloth,

[59] *Oprechte Haerlemse Saterdaegse Courant*, no. 15 (Haarlem: Abraham Casteleyn, 10 April 1666); Der Weduwen and Pettegree, *News, Business and Public Information*, p. 251.
[60] See Chapters 5 and 6.
[61] *Oprechte Haerlemse Saterdaegse Courant*, no. 38 (Haarlem: Abraham Casteleyn, 18 September 1666); Der Weduwen and Pettegree, *News, Business and Public Information*, p. 261.
[62] *Oprechte Haerlemse Dingsdaegse Courant*, no. 44 (Haarlem: Abraham Casteleyn, 4 November 1670); Der Weduwen and Pettegree, *News, Business and Public Information*, p. 399.

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De Heeren Commissarissen vande Tutele van zijn Hooghheydt den Prince van Orangie/ zijn herwaerts beschreven/ om/ nevens de Hooghden van den hoogh-ghemelte Prince/ te confereren/ over 't geene tot dienst van zijn hoog-gedachte Hooghheyt soude moghen strecken. Men meynt of de t'samen-komst wel mocht gheschieden in 't Hof van de Princesse Douariere van Orangie.

Amsterdam den 22 October. De uytgestrooyde tijdinge van het overlijden van den Lt. Admirael, den Heere van Obdam, bevindt men t'eenemael niet waer te zijn: maer dat ghedachte Heer sigh omtrent Venlo in goede gesontheydt bevint. Op den 19 deser zyn twee Schepen uyt Muscovien binnen ghekomen, wesende ses weecken dat sy van Archangel geseylt zijn: met de selve zijn Brieven van den 10 September, daer in ghemelt wort, dat aldaer scherpelijck verboden was, eenigherhande Vergift daer te Lant te brenghen, alsoo bevonden was, dat eene van de Kockx van den Keyser de Spijse van den Czaar hadde vergiftigt, om alsoo de gedachte Majesteyt om den hals te brenghen. Het een der gemelde Schepen van Muscovien [illegible] de Sint Jan, en het ander de Spinder; ghelaeden wesende met Stockvis en Salm; en hebben alleen van Hitlant herwaerts, by contrarie Wint, drie weecken onderwegen geweest.

Weenen den 6 October ...

NOTIFICATIE.

BUrghermeesteren ende Regeerders der Stadt Dordrecht, notificeeren midts desen yeghelijck, dat de Bamisse, ofte Keude Marckt, den voorleden Iaere Anno 1659 geintermitteert, wederom hebben geresolveert aen te stellen na ouder gewoonte: Werdende deswegen eenen yeghelijck, daer aen geleghen zijnde, gewaerschouwt, op den 28 deses loopende Maents Octobris, goedts tijdts voor den Noene alhier, op de Lootinghe te verschijnen: Sullende deselve Marckt alsoo van Iaer tot Iaer werden gecontinueert. Notificeeren het selve mede van de Linde-Laecken Marckt: desgelijcks het voorleden Iaer onderlaten, welcke nu mede haren voortganck sal hebben op den [illegible] deser.

Ghedruckt tot Haerlem / by ABRAHAM CASTELEYN, Stadts Drucker op de Marckt / in de Druckery. Den 23 October / 1660.

Figure 9.1 Detail showing an announcement placed by the magistrates of Dordrecht in the *Haerlemse Saterdaegse Courant*, no. 43 (Haarlem: Abraham Casteleyn, 23 October 1660). The magistrates would have had to pay the newspaper publisher, Abraham Casteleyn, for this notice (a sum of around one and a half guilders). Only the local jurisdiction where the newspaper was published could place announcements for free.

> wool, beer and herring. The Admiralty of Hoorn will also sell two English ships, loaded with butter and cheese, on 28 December.[63]

In all these instances, and all others placed by the authorities, this was news of interest to a broad, widely dispersed audience among the Dutch professional and commercial classes. Ultimately, the newspaper had not yet become a medium that truly permeated Dutch society, and for this reason, the regents preferred to rely on more traditional media. The authorities certainly did not ignore the periodical press and benefited indirectly from the extensive coverage of Dutch military successes and those of its allies, but newspapers were not yet influential enough to play a crucial role in state communication.

[63] *Tydinge uyt verscheyde Quartieren*, no. 52 (Amsterdam: widow of Broer Jansz, 24 December 1666); Der Weduwen and Pettegree, *News, Business and Public Information*, p. 270.

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News management from Lowestoft to the Medway

From the perspective of the authorities, it was easier to publish good news than bad. Many of the strategies of news control and interpretation described thus far were easier to employ when the authorities had positive news to share. The realities of daily life were, however, very different, and all too often the regents had to engage with disappointing or truly disastrous news. We can test the official management of the news sphere by the authorities by concentrating on one specific case study, the tumultuous events of the Second Anglo-Dutch War (1665–7). This conflict represented one of the greatest challenges to the True Freedom regime. In 1660, when King Charles II departed from the Dutch Republic to reclaim his throne in Britain, he was waved off with much ceremony, gifts and expressions of mutual friendship. Yet relations quickly soured, and by 1664 it was abundantly clear that Charles was bent on war with the Republic. The king had restored the Commonwealth government's Navigation Acts, encouraging commercial rivalry with the Dutch, and insisted on the obligation of Dutch ships to lower their flags and salute English vessels when encountering them at sea. Surprise attacks on Dutch merchant convoys and trade colonies, including the sudden takeover of New Amsterdam (renamed New York), further soured relations, leading to the outbreak of war in March 1665.[64]

The war forced De Witt and his allies into an uncomfortable position, given that Charles was Prince William III's uncle. Since the restoration of Charles, the supporters of the prince had hoped that the king might take a personal interest in his nephew's cause.[65] Indeed, Charles gave the impression that the war against the Dutch was not so much about commercial rivalry as about his love for his nephew and his dislike of De Witt and his allies.[66] This allowed Orangists in the Dutch Republic to create a narrative that the war was a folly visited on the country by a cabal of Holland regents, driven by their animosity towards the House of Stuart–Orange. This narrative played on widely shared popular sentiments, ignited by the Act of Seclusion and the prayer crisis of 1663–4.[67] When drummers tried to recruit sailors for the fleet on the streets of Leiden in 1665, they were harassed by inhabitants who wanted them to do so in name of the prince, rather than the States.[68]

The state apparatus that enabled the implementation of a prayer day was unavailable to the government's Orangist opponents. It therefore provided the regents of True Freedom an ideal means with which to combat the Orangist

[64] An excellent account is provided by Gijs Rommelse, *The Second Anglo-Dutch War (1665–1667): Raison d'état, Mercantilism and Maritime Strife* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2006).
[65] Geyl, *Orange and Stuart*, pp. 163–300; De Bruin, 'Political Pamphleteering', p. 75.
[66] Rowen, *John de Witt, Statesman*, pp. 127–30.
[67] See Chapter 8.
[68] Dekker, *Holland in beroering*, p. 44.

narrative of the war. On 21 January 1665, before the States General declared war on England, the regents announced a prayer day in which they revealed that war was an inevitability. The public prayer included the statement that

> [f]or some time, this state has not only been threatened by its neighbours and allies with rumours of war, but these rumours have been followed by visible aggression, first beyond Europe and now also within Europe, to the excessive damage and sadness of all pious and good inhabitants of these lands.[69]

The legitimacy of war rested on identifying one's enemy as the aggressor in the conflict, and the prayer day presented the States with an ideal means to brand England in this role. Once war was formally declared, the States General (on the proposal of Holland) implemented a weekly national prayer day, to last indefinitely.[70] This extraordinary resolution concentrated the nation's mind on the war effort; as thousands of men abandoned their jobs as fishermen and merchant sailors to enlist in the service of the state, the States had to ensure that the rest of the country would stand behind them.

Hillebrant van Wouw, *Statendrukker* of Holland and the States General, also played a major role in the government's news management. Before the official outbreak of the war, the States General published a letter written by Johan Valckenburgh, a director of the West India Company, sent from Guinea on 4 October 1664. In his letter, Valckenburgh described the outrages committed by the English in the region, attacking Dutch forts and harassing Dutch subjects.[71] The States General ordered Van Wouw to print the letter as a placard to support the Dutch declaration of war: he produced at least four broadsheet editions. On 2 May, the States of Holland ordered the letter to be printed again, this time appended to the text of a Holland resolution, in which the States observed that they had heard many rumours that Valckenburgh's letter was not authentic. With their resolution they wished to attest to the letter's authenticity, and for good measure they also ordered the letter to be reprinted by Van Wouw in French and English.[72] Around the same time, the States General issued several ordinances in which they elaborated at length on England's unjust aggression towards the Dutch Republic.[73]

The first real engagement of the war took place on 13 June 1665, off the Suffolk port of Lowestoft. In the months preceding the battle, the States had maintained

[69] Kist, *Neêrland's Bededagen*, II, pp. 216–17.

[70] Kist, *Neêrland's Bededagen*, II, p. 218.

[71] *Brief van Johan Valckenburgh, directeur generael van wegen de geoctroyeerde West-Indische compagnie op de custe van Guinea, geschreven aende heeren Staten Generael* (The Hague: Hillebrant van Wouw, 1665), USTC 1519353.

[72] *Resolutie vande ed: groot mo: heeren Staten van Hollandt ende West-Vrieslandt noopende de proceduren der Engelschen in Guinea* (The Hague: Hillebrant van Wouw, 1665), USTC 1802602.

[73] This included an ordinance on 10 March on the premiums paid for the capture of English prizes; an ordinance on 11 March against all privateers who dared attack Dutch shipping; and an ordinance on 2 April announcing a prohibition on all fishing vessels from equipping and heading out to their usual fishing grounds.

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a vigorous campaign of public communication. Battle was anticipated: numerous broadsheets were circulated around the country listing the preparations of the Dutch fleet and the probable size of the English fleet that would meet it at sea. One volume in the Fagel pamphlet collection in Trinity College Dublin contains close to twenty news broadsheets published during the run-up to the battle of Lowestoft.[74] Weekly newspapers published in Amsterdam, Haarlem, The Hague, Rotterdam and Utrecht devoted significant portions of their back pages to the preparations of the Dutch fleet and any potential signs of its manoeuvring. With the Dutch public's attention squarely concentrated on the upcoming battle, news control was essential in its aftermath.

At Lowestoft, the Dutch were routed: a fifth of the fleet was destroyed or captured, while the flagship of Lieutenant-Admiral Jacob van Wassenaer Obdam was blown up along with its commander. The Dutch sustained some 2,500 casualties, in addition to 2,000 sailors taken captive. English losses were miniscule in comparison. When the fleet limped back home, rumours of treachery threatened to undermine completely the authority of the States. On 16 June, three days after the battle, the *Oprechte Haerlemse Courant* reported that 'there are so many variant reports that it is impossible to believe anything'.[75]

The disastrous outcome ensured that the Orangist narrative of the war gained traction. Support for Prince William was fuelled by the States of Overijssel, which published an incendiary broadsheet in which they reprinted a proposition made by their delegates in the States General.[76] The delegates had urged the States General to make peace with England, appoint William as Captain-General of the armed forces and send him as an extraordinary ambassador to England to appease his uncle. To exert pressure on their Holland colleagues, the delegates of Overijssel had their speech printed and distributed around the country. Shortly afterwards Thaddeus Landman, a popular Orangist minister in The Hague, argued in one of his Sunday sermons that the Prince of Orange should immediately be declared Captain-General, and that the regents should sue for a hasty peace with England.[77] For good measure, Landman also attacked the anti-English attitudes of the local regents. Landman cited the Overijssel proposition as evidence that his sentiments were shared by the secular authorities.

After the defeat at Lowestoft, confidence in the True Freedom leadership was at an all-time low. It was an especially bitter blow because, under De Witt's leadership, the regents had gone to great lengths to improve the Dutch fleet. A strong fleet was integral to the commercial, maritime and anti-Orangist ideology

[74] Trinity College Dublin, Fagel collection, Volume Fag. H.2.84.

[75] *Oprechte Haerlemse Dingsdaegse Courant*, no. 24 (Haarlem: Abraham Casteleyn, 16 June 1665).

[76] *Propositie van de edele mogende heeren Staten, vande geaffligeerde, ende verdruckte provincie van Over-Yssel, gedaen ter vergaderinge vande Ho: Mo: Staten Generael den 20. October 1665* (s.l.: s.n., [1665]), USTC 1516243.

[77] Van Aitzema, *Saken van Staet*, V, p. 502; Geyl, *Orange and Stuart*, pp. 209–10.

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of True Freedom.[78] De Witt had been responsible for significant improvements in the Dutch navy, including the diversion of States General funding for the construction of major warships, but the 'new navy' had not yet been seasoned in battle against a serious maritime power before Lowestoft, and it showed in the results.

The news of the defeat had to be managed very carefully.[79] Due to the hostility of many ministers, a prayer day was postponed until early September, yet an official response was paramount.[80] Shortly after the States General had gathered all the details of the battle, they ordered Hillebrant van Wouw to publish a broadsheet that listed all the Dutch captains and ships that had been engaged at Lowestoft, with an annotation of which ships had been lost at sea or were still missing (Figure 9.2).[81] This striking placard, printed by Van Wouw in several editions, was a necessary acknowledgement of defeat. The statement at the end of the broadsheet that seventeen of the 121 vessels that had set out for battle had never returned home spoke volumes: at this stage the States did not yet offer any explanation or justification for the defeat. But the placard did allow thousands of Dutch citizens the relief of knowing that the ship on which their husband or father served had returned home – and therefore a chance that they were still alive.

Communicating this simple list of ships was the first step in countering the rumours and unofficial casualty lists that circulated in the immediate aftermath of the battle: on 30 June the *Ordinarise Middel-weeckse Courante* of Amsterdam reported that the placard had been disseminated by the States 'because of the multitude of many unfounded lists of the fleet'.[82] After sharing this information with the public, the States could begin to explain and justify their position.

On 13 July, the States General published an ordinance noting the sentences imposed on numerous captains who had been found guilty of misconduct during the battle of Lowestoft.[83] Two weeks later the States published a placard on the discipline of the fleet, demonstrating that the authorities would take stringent measures to repair the fleet's damaged reputation.[84] Hillebrant van Wouw printed

[78] Gijs Rommelse and Roger Downing, 'The Fleet as an Ideological Pillar of Dutch Radical Republicanism, 1650–1672', *The International Journal of Maritime History*, 27 (2015), 387–410. The point is also emphasised in Andrew Lambert, *Seapower States: Maritime Culture, Continental Empires and the Conflict That Made the Modern World* (London: Yale University Press, 2018), pp. 157–203, although Lambert underplays the extent to which a 'seapower culture' permeated Dutch politics before the advent of True Freedom.

[79] Cf. Der Weduwen, 'The Battle of the Downs', pp. 1–25.

[80] Kist, *Neêrland's Bededagen*, II, pp. 218–19.

[81] *Lyste, vande schepen den 22en ende 23en May 1665. ende den 11en Junij daer aen volgende uyt Tessel geseylt, mitsgaders van die geene welcke inden slach den 13en Junij daer op gevolght, zijn gebleven, oft op het wederkeeren vande vloot worden gemist* (The Hague: Hillebrant van Wouw, 1665), USTC 1519346.

[82] *Ordinarise middel-weeckse Courante*, no. 26 (Amsterdam: widow François Lieshout, 30 June 1665).

[83] *Sententien gewesen by den E. manhaftigen kryghs-raedt, aen de wandebvoorige [sic] scheeps-capiteynen, ende officieren* (s.l.: s.n., 1665), USTC 1802528.

[84] *Nadere ordre van de hoog: moogende heeren Staten Generael ter observantie van goede discipline in 'slandts vloote* (The Hague: Hillebrant van Wouw, 1665), USTC 1802466.

L Y S T E,

Vande Schepen den 22en ende 23en May 1665. ende den 11en Iunij daer aen volgende uyt Teſſel geſeylt, mitſgaders van die geene welcke inden Slach den 13en Iunij daer op gevolght, zijn gebleven, oft op het wederkeeren vande Vloot worden gemiſt.

Het Eerſte ESQUADRE. (Schepen.)

D'Heer van Waſſenaer, Lieutenant-Admirael van Hollandt ende Weſt-Vrieſlandt, als Admirael. — *d'Eendracht.*
Abraham vander Hulſt, als Vice-Admirael. — *Amſterdam.*
Aelbert Claeſſz Graef, als Schout by Nacht. — *Tyt-verdrijf.*
O. C. Cap. de Reus. — *Marſeveen.*
Cap. Jacob Swart. — *Kruyningen.*
Cap. Jan van Amſtel. — *de Vryheyt.*
Cap. Henrick Gotſkens. — *de Vreede.*
Cap. Otto van Treſlong. — *Gouda.*
Cap. Hugo van Nieuhof. — *de Lantman.*
Cap. Jacob Willemſz Broeder. — *de Dom.*
Capiteyn Jacob Wiltſchut. — *Harderwijck.*
Cap. Adam van Brederode. — *Haerlem.*
Capiteyn Baltaſar van Voorde. — *Zeelandia.*
Cap. Herman Egbertſz Wolff. — *de Star.*
Cap. Polaene. — *'t Jacht de Brack.*

Gebleven oft vermiſt.
d'Heer van Waſſenaer. — *d'Eendracht.*
Cap. de Reus. — *Marſeveen.*

Het Tweede ESQUADRE. (Schepen.)

Den Lieutenant-Admirael Johan Evertſz als Admirael. — *'t Hoff van Zeelandt.*
Den Schout by Nacht de Liefde als Vice-Admirael. — *Kleyn Hollandia.*
Cornelis Evertſz de Jonge, als Schout by Nacht. — *Utrecht.*
O. C. Cap. Baſtiaen Senſen. — *Oraigne.*
Cap. Iacob Simonſz de Witt. — *Prins Maurits.*
Cap. Jacob Penſe. — *Middelburgh.*
Cap. Jacob Cleydijck. — *Dordrecht.*
Cap. Baſtiaen Thuyneman. — *'t Wapen van Zeelandt.*
Cap. Chriſtiaen Ellertſz. — *Utrecht.*
Cap. Iacob van Boſhuyſen. — *Delft.*
Cap. Jan Banckert. — *Delft.*
Cap. Symon Block. — *Zeelandia.*
Cap. Jan Crijnſz. — *Schakels.*
Cap. Adriaen Solderwagen. — *Schiedam.*
Cap. N. N. — *'t Jacht loopende Hart.*
Cap. Jan Pieterſz Tant. — *'t Advis-Boot genaemt Dieſhoeck.*

Gebleven oft vermiſt.
Jacob van Boſhuyſen. — *Delft.*
Jacob Symonſz de Witt. — *Prins Maurits.*
Cap. Thuyneman. — *'t Wapen van Zeelandt.*
Cap. Baſtiaen Senſen. — *Oraigne.*

Het Derde ESQUADRE. (Schepen.)

Den Lieutenant-Admirael Cortenaer, als Admirael. — *Groot Hollandia.*
Cap. Dirck Schey, als Vice-Admirael. — *Oosterwijck.*
Cap. Nicolaes Marrevelt, als Schout by Nacht. — *Staveren.*
O. C. Cap. Jurriaen Jurriaenſz Poel. — *Delflandt.*
Cap. Albert Matthyſſz. — *Hilverſum.*
Cap. Jooſt Verſchuyr. — *Suyer Huys.*
Capiteyn Cornelis van Hoogenhoeck. — *Provincien.*
Capiteyn Henrick van Tol. — *Duyvenvoorde.*
Cap. Antony de Marne. — *de Boey.*
Cap. Iſbrant de Vries. — *Doesburgh.*
Cap. Gerbrant Boes. — *Ter Goes.*
O. C. Cap. Pool. — *Sphæra Mundi.*
Capiteyn Lieve van Haſevelt. — *de Harderinne.*
Capiteyn Johannes vander Mars. — *de Maecht.*
Cap. Jan van Blanckenburgh. — *Over-Yſſel.*

Gebleven oft vermiſt.
Cap. Albert Mathyſſz. — *Hilverſum.*
Cap. Gerbrant Boes. — *Ter Goes.*

Het Vierde ESQUADRE. (Schepen.)

Lieutenant-Admirael Stellingwerff, als Admirael. — *Sevenwolden.*
Den Vice-Admirael Coenders. — *Groeningen.*
Den Schout by Nacht Bruynſvelt. — *Princeſſe Albertina.*
O. C. Corſten Crijnſen de Rechter. — *'t Huys te Swieten.*
Capiteyn Boer. — *Oostergoo.*
Cap. t'Jerck Hiddes. — *de elf Steden.*
Cap. Jan Janſz Vyſelaer. — *Westergoo.*
O. C. Capiteyn Catt. — *de Mars.*
Capiteyn Cornelis Allertſz Ooſtrum. — *Omlandia.*
Cap. Beyma. — *Friſia.*
Cap. Barent Hiddes. — *De Poſtillon van Smirna.*
Cap. Jooſt Michielſz. — *Hollandia.*
Cap. Jacob Pieteys. — *de Phoſant.*
Cap. Willem Codde vander Burgh. — *Tijſt.*
Capiteyn Vogel. — *'t Jacht de Ruyter.*

Gebleven oft vermiſt.
Cap. Catt. — *'t Schip de Mars.*
Cap. Vogel. — *'t Jacht de Ruyter.*

Het Vijfde ESQUADRE. (Schepen.)

Den Vice-Admirael Tromp, als Admirael. — *de Liefde.*
Capiteyn Gillis Thijſz Campen, als Vice-Admirael. — *Coeverden.*
Cap. Pieter Salomonſz Schout by Nacht. — *Campen.*
Cap. Commer Gerritſz. — *de Luypaert.*
Cap. Ian de Haen. — *Stadt en Lande.*
Capiteyn Ian Pieterſz Onklaer. — *Nieuw Batavia.*
Cap. Adriaen van Reede. — *de Tromp.*
Cap. Tomas Fabricius. — *Jaerſvelt.*
Cap. Jan Adelaer. — *'t Raethuys.*
Cap. Pieter Uttenhout. — *Groeningen.*
Cap. Henrick van Vollenhoven. — *de Son.*
Cap. Berckhout. — *Princes Royael.*
Cap. Cornelis Gerritſz Burger. — *de Bull.*
Cap. Jooſt Smient. — *de Roos.*
Cap. Adriaen van Veen. — *Aſperen.*
Capiteyn Henrick Hanckroy. — *Vollenhoven.*
Capiteyn Laurens de Bruyn. — *'t Jacht de Fortuyn.*

Gebleven oft vermiſt.
Capiteyn Gillis Thijſz Campen. — *Coeverden.*
Capiteyn Cornelis Gerritſz Burger. — *de Bul.*

Het Seſte ESQUADRE. (Schepen.)

Den Vice-Admirael Cornelis Evertſz als Admirael. — *Vliſſingen.*
Cap. Cuyper. — *'t Schip Swanenburgh.*
Simon Loncke. — *'t Jacht de Viſſer.*
Den Schout by Nacht Adriaen Banckert, Vice-Admirael. — *Vere.*
Cap. Pieter Bronſaert, als Schout by Nacht. — *De 3 Helden Davids.*
Cap. Jacob Oudaert. — *Utrecht.*
Cap. Krijn Kerckhoven. — *Rotterdam.*
Cap. Adriaen de Haſe. — *Dordrecht.*
Cap. Laurens Heemskercken. — *De Vreede.*
Cap. Jacob vander Cam. — *Gorcum.*
Cap. Ian Willems Mariniſz. — *de Zee-Ridder.*
Capiteyn Adriaen van Cruningen. — *Goes.*
Cap. Adriaen Banckert. — *de Viſſchers Herder.*
Cap. Marinus Loncke. — *Wes-Cappel.*
Cap. Frans Nideck. — *Briel.*
Cap. Pieter Wouterſz Wijnbergen. — *Swoll.*
Capiteyn Willem Hendricxſz. — *de Kiſſe genaemt Soutelande.*
Cap. Andries Pieterſz. — *'t Advis-Jacht ghenaemt de Haſewint-hont.*

Gebleven oft vermiſt.
Capiteyn Cuyper. — *Swanenburgh.*
Cap. Jacob Oudart. — *Utrecht.*

Het Sevende ESQUADRE. (Schepen.)

Den Vice-Admirael Schram, als Admirael. — *'t Wapen van Naſſau.*
Den Schout by Nacht Stackhouwer, als Vice-Admirael. — *d'Eendracht.*
Cap. Houttuyn als Schout by Nacht. — *'t Wapen van Medenblick.*
Cap. de Boer. — *Gelderlandt.*
Cap. Bebberen. — *Hollantſchen Thuyn.*
O. C. Cap. Joris Janſz Ruyter. — *Carolus Quintus.*
O. C. Cap. Boon. — *de Nagelboom.*
O. C. Cap. Cornelis Muys. — *de Beurs.*
Cap. Slord. — *Joſua.*
Cap. Bruyninghs. — *Weſt-Vrieſlant.*
Cap. Huyſman. — *Jupiter.*
Cap. Halfhoorn. — *de jonge Prins.*
O. C. Cap. — *Agata.*
Cap. Hen. — *'t Jacht Hoorn.*
Cap. Victol. — *d'Eenhoorn.*
Cap. Boos. — *'t Caſteel van Medenblick.*

Gebleven oft vermiſt.
Cap. Joris Janſz Ruyter. — *Carolus Quintus.*
Cap. Boon. — *Nagelboom.*
Cap. Halfhoorn. — *Jonge Prins.*

Het Achtſte ESQUADRE. (Schepen.)

Dit Eſquadre is den elfden Junij uyt Teſſel geloopen, doch niet by de Vloot geweeſt.
Cap. Canter. — *Stadt en Landen.*
Cap. Clant. — *St. Pieter.*
Commandeur Bouman. — *den grooten Herder.*
Commandeur Brouwer. — *den kleynen Herder.*
Commandeur Biſſchop. — *Zutphen.*
Commandeur Hals. — *Leyden.*
Cornelis Tomaſz. — *St. Paulo.*
Jan Raep. — *St. Paulo.*
Commandeur Braeckel. — *'t Jacht de Cat.*

Deſe zijn alle in Teſſel weder gearriveert.

	Schepen.	Jachten.
Oorlogh-Schepen uytgeloopen	112	9
weder ingekomen	96	8
gebleven oft vermiſt	16	1

IN 'S GRAVEN-HAGE,
By Hillebrandt van Wouw, Ordinaris Drucker vande Hoogh Mogende Heeren Staten Generael der Vereenighde Nederlanden. Anno 1665.

Figure 9.2 *Lyste, vande schepen den 22en ende 23en May 1665. ende den 11en Junij daer aen volgende uyt Tessel geseylt, mitsgaders van die geene welcke inden slach den 13en Junij daer op gevolght, zijn gebleven, oft op het wederkeeren vande vloot worden gemist* (The Hague: Hillebrant van Wouw, 1665). The list of the Dutch fleet and the names of the ships lost at Lowestoft, distributed by the States General in the aftermath of the battle.

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three editions of this ordinance; significantly, it was reprinted by another five printers. News travelled fast, and all eyes were on the regents, watching their every move. The fate of True Freedom hung in the balance.

The regents knew that every proclamation, ordinance or published letter would be scrutinised and pored over, but justifications, promises and warnings could only do so much to rally opinion in the wake of a national disaster such as Lowestoft. Johan de Witt, one of the delegates of the naval commission of the States General, left the safety of The Hague and joined the Dutch fleet as its acting naval commander to prepare it for its return to sea.[85] This was unconventional and daring: Pieter de Graeff, De Witt's brother-in-law, told the Grand Pensionary that he was mad to do so. He could not understand how a man 'of such great wisdom and intellect could embark on such folly'.[86] Although he was a poor sailor, De Witt remained with the fleet for most of the autumn, slowly winning the respect of the captains and sailors. On one occasion, De Witt rowed out to sea to measure the depths of a dangerous shallows, the Spanish Gap, demonstrating to the reluctant captains that it was safe to pass. As morale in the fleet stabilised, news of De Witt's exploits trickled back to Holland's towns, and De Witt shared further news of his achievements in an anonymous pamphlet.[87] It was a far cry from the dignified and publicity-shy ideal of a regent, and this episode demonstrates that De Witt recognised the importance of public opinion.[88] For the first time, the True Freedom regime was personified by a courageous leader.

The cause was also helped by the arrival of better news. This came first in August 1665, when a richly laden Dutch Indies convoy fought off an attack by the English fleet off the coast of Norway and returned safely to the Dutch Republic, accompanied by Admiral De Ruyter's fleet, which had raided English possessions in Africa and the West Indies. The Indies fleet, transporting goods valued at around eleven million guilders, was the richest that had ever returned. As this news story spread throughout the country, the States General announced a prayer day for 2 September, uneasily navigating a fine line between the acknowledgement of defeat, redemption and hope for a successful future:

> After it pleased God to inflict upon the United Netherlands this heavy and wicked naval war, in which we have been involved due to the unjust pretensions of our neighbours, who profess the same Reformed religion as we do, and that due to this war all navigation and trade of the good inhabitants of these lands (being the principal sinews of this state) has been suspended, and that the weapons of this state have not had the success which we had hoped and expected from the Lord's

[85] Rowen, *John de Witt, Statesman*, pp. 114–15.
[86] Cited in Van der Vlugt, *Wij zijn de Bickers!*, p. 214.
[87] *Copye van een missive, aen een goet vrient geschreven tot onderrichtinge van het gene gedurende de laetste expeditie ter zee van consideratie is voorgevallen* (Delft: s.n., 1666), USTC 1803633. With my thanks to Jaap de Haan for the reference.
[88] Cf. Rommelse and Downing, 'The Fleet as an Ideological Pillar', p. 403.

> mercy . . . but that it has nevertheless pleased God Our Majesty to return to us safely a considerable fleet, crowned with victory, and that to repeal the threatened violence and danger at sea we have once against prepared an armada to sail out.[89]

The authorities continued to use prayer days for the duration of the Second Anglo-Dutch War to steer the tone of the news, although they were still harassed by a group of Reformed ministers, including Jacobus Sceperus in Gouda and Simon Simonides in The Hague, who used these occasions to thunder against the True Freedom regime.[90] From November onwards, the weekly prayer days were reduced to monthly prayer days, a sign that the worst trials had passed. On 2 June 1666, a prayer day was held to thank God for the speedy conclusion of peace with the Bishop of Münster, who had attacked the Dutch Republic in the east while all minds were focused on the naval war against England. After the successful Four Days' Battle in June 1666, a special prayer day was held to celebrate the victory, involving popular festivities and the firing of cannon after church services, 'all performed as took place in the year 1639', when the Dutch won a momentous victory against the Spanish at the Battle of the Downs.[91] The Downs had been the last great Dutch naval triumph, and the reference to the previous victory revived confidence in Dutch naval might. When it became clear that the English would send out another fleet that summer, two more prayer days were announced for 17 July and 2 August, to pray for the fleet in anticipation of battle.[92]

The following two years of the war showed that individual testimonies were crucial to official news management. The authorities played a central role in the distribution of news by publishing letters and reports from the Dutch fleet during the summers of 1666 and 1667. It was critical that the States maintain this prominent position in the news supply because of the difficulties in reporting a naval war. When a Dutch army fought on the frontiers of the state, news from the battle travelled along established postal routes with special couriers; when a naval battle took place, dozens of ships were scattered in different directions and returned to different ports. Every captain told a different story of the engagement, with the result that numerous, often contradictory accounts circulated in the immediate aftermath of the battle.

To prevent the distribution of the most seditious rumours, it was essential that the authorities prepare an official account. For this purpose, they often made use of the first letter sent by the commander of the fleet. In June 1666, after the Four Days' Battle, the States General ordered Van Wouw to print a letter from Admiral De Ruyter, dated 14 June.[93] This was the first official despatch of the exhausting

[89] Kist, *Neêrland's Bededagen*, II, pp. 218–19.
[90] Uit den Bogaard, *De Gereformeerden en Oranje*, pp. 219–24.
[91] Uit den Bogaard, *De Gereformeerden en Oranje*, p. 221.
[92] Uit den Bogaard, *De Gereformeerden en Oranje*, pp. 222–3.
[93] *Brief vanden Ed: Heer Admirael Generael Michiel Ad: Ruyter* (The Hague: Hillebrant van Wouw, 1666), USTC 1521134.

engagement fought between the two fleets: De Ruyter had written the letter from his ship in the evening and described in fewer than 400 words that he had engaged the English fleet, lost four ships, but captured six English vessels and sunk an unspecified number. De Ruyter signed off with a dramatic touch, 'chasing the fleeing English fleet', leaving no doubt about the success of the engagement. The prominent imprint of Van Wouw with the official consent of the States General below the text served as a mark of the authenticity of the letter.

After the Four Days' Battle, Johan de Witt and his fellow delegates of the naval committee interviewed the commanders and captains of the fleet. De Witt compiled the testimonies into a single narrative of the encounter, which he also ordered Hillebrant van Wouw to print. News of the publication also appeared in the *Oprechte Haerlemse Courant*, which notified readers on 3 July 1666 that 'Their High Mightinesses had published in print an authentic account of what passed in the naval battle'.[94] The fourteen-page news report was a bestseller, circulating in at least twelve editions and, like the letter of the West India Company director Valckenburgh, was also reprinted in French and English.[95]

In the summer of 1667, the States made use of more classified letters to communicate the stunning success of the raid on the Medway. Johan de Witt, together with his brother Cornelis and De Ruyter, had planned a surprise attack on the English fleet. The designs of the plan were kept secret, and when the Dutch fleet set sail in early June, few knew its destination. Between 19 and 24 June the Dutch fleet engaged in a series of raids up the rivers Thames and Medway, taking the town of Sheerness, bombarding several fortresses, burning thirteen English warships and towing two away. Cornelis de Witt had sailed with De Ruyter as representative of the States General, and while on the fleet he wrote three letters to the States, dated 20, 22 and 23 June. In these three letters he described the successes of the Dutch fleet in brief but striking terms: one of the letters was signed 'on board the *Royal Charles*', the captured flagship of the English fleet.

As soon as the despatches arrived in The Hague, the States General ordered the letters to be published by Van Wouw.[96] These printed letters were the first official confirmations of the victory and were quickly reprinted by several

[94] *Oprechte Saterdaegse Haerlemse Courant*, no. 27 (Haarlem: Abraham Casteleyn, 3 July 1666).

[95] *Verhael van 't gepasseerde inde zee-slach tusschen de vlooten van Engelandt ende vande Vereenighde Nederlanden* (The Hague: Hillebrant van Wouw, 1666), USTC 1803490.

[96] Cornelis de Witt, *Hoogh Mogende Heeren, onsen laetsten aen u ho: mo: is geweest vanden seventhienden deser loopende maendt, dien selven avondt quamen wy ten ancker voor-aen de mondt ofte het inkomen van 's Conincx-diep* (The Hague: Hillebrant van Wouw, 1667), USTC 1519337; Cornelis de Witt, *Hooge Mogende Heeren, onse laetste aen u ho: mog: is geweest vanden twintighsten deser loopende maent, by de welcke ick aen u ho: mo: het innemen ende het overgaen van het fort Charnesse hebbe genotificeert* (The Hague: Hillebrant van Wouw, 1667), USTC 1519335; Cornelis de Witt, *Hoogh Mogende Heeren, wy hebben op gisteren u ho: mo: geadviseert, hoe merckelijck dat Godt Almachtigh de wapenen van u ho: mo: gelieft hadde te segenen* (The Hague: Hillebrant van Wouw, 1667), USTC 1519334.

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other booksellers in The Hague (Figure 9.3).[97] The secrecy of the venture and its overwhelming success ensured that De Witt's letters placed the authorities at the centre of the development of the news story. Once again the cause of True Freedom was personified by an individual voice. Cornelis de Witt was lauded by poets and pamphleteers on his return. One writer mused that

> [h]itherto it was Johan, who passed through sea and storm /
> Past enemy, treason, hate and envy /
> And now it is Cornelis: two men, the pillars of this state.[98]

In an age in which the credibility of news was inextricably tied to the reputation and honour of the news bearer, Cornelis de Witt's letters carried additional significance. Rather than offer the public an anonymous news report issued in the name of the States, the dissemination of the letters was a conscious attempt to convince the Dutch public that the exploits were as extraordinary as they read.

After the success of the Medway, peace was signed at the Congress of Breda on 31 July. A prayer day was held in early September to celebrate the peace, while Dutch printmakers, poets and writers praised the successful conclusion of the war in numerous pamphlets and engravings. The peace was framed by many artists as the victory of the brothers De Witt and the triumph of the Stadtholderless regime.[99] A celebratory portrait of Cornelis de Witt painted by Jan de Baen was hung in the Dordrecht town hall for all to see; engraved copies of the portrait by Romeyn de Hooghe circulated throughout the country. The *Royal Charles* became a popular tourist attraction, exhibited at fairs, before it was broken up (although the stern was kept and is displayed at the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam today).

The triumph of True Freedom was cemented by the Perpetual Edict, a resolution passed on 2 August 1667 by the States of Holland that abolished the office of Stadtholder for all eternity. The Perpetual Edict was not a secret resolution: in their confidence the regents of True Freedom made a determined show of their victory. The resolution was printed by Van Wouw and circulated in at least six editions. The radicalism of this development horrified Holland's opponents, and the unity that had characterised the Dutch Republic towards the end of the war

[97] Cornelis de Witt, *Brieven, van den heer Cornelis de Witt* (s.l.: s.n., 1667), USTC 1804255; Cornelis de Witt, *Derde en naerder missive van den heer Cornelis de Witt* (The Hague: Jacobus Scheltus, 1667), USTC 1804314; Cornelis de Witt, *Extract, uyt een missive van de heer de With* (The Hague: Johannes Rammazeyn, 1667), USTC 1521065.

[98] *Den Hollander, over het verbranden en verooveren der Engelse Schepen* (s.l.: s.n., [1667]), USTC 1520198.

[99] Lotte Jensen, 'Wederom vereenight door de vrede: Gelegenheidsgedichten op de vrede van Breda', and Helmer Helmers, 'Onder schyn van trek tot vrede: Politieke spanningen in de Nederlandse vredespubliciteit', both in Raymond Kubben (ed.), *Ginder 't vreêverbont bezegelt. Essays over de betekenis van de vrede van Breda, 1667* (Breda: Van Kamenade, 2015), pp. 52–61 and pp. 65–77. More broadly see Lotte Jensen, *Vieren van Vrede: Het ontstaan van de Nederlandse identiteit, 1648–1815* (Nijmegen: Vantilt, 2016), pp. 43–56.

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Extract, uyt een Missive
VAN
De HEER de WITH,
Geschreven in de Royael Charles voor
Chattan den 22. Iuny 1667.

NAer dat den 20. deser door 's Landts Vloote het Fort Charnisse leggende op Chattam verovert was en aldaer in 't Magazyn een groot aental Masten / Stengen en Rionthout / alle ter waerde van ontrent vier hondert duysent guld: by d'onse ware ghenomen en verovert / is 's Lants Vloot des anderendaeghs de Reviere opgeseylt / en door Advijs Jachten en ghewapende Booten de Reviere van Rochester gedaen peylen / ende die diep ghenoch bevonden hebbende / zijn op den 22. deser smorgens met een Voorvloet deselve opgeseylt / ende aldaer bevonden diversche groote Engelsche Oorlogh Scheepen / sonder Stenghen en Seylen / doch van veel en schoon Canon versien / en van Volck wel beset; dan naer dat 4 a 5 van deselve door Brantschepen waren geruyneert / zijn eenige van deselve ghenoeghsaem geabandonneert / en in ons handen ghekomen / dan de Heer de Wit kan niet specificeeren wat Schepen Verbrant zijn / dan de Royael Charles / met noch een groot Schip / yder met vijftigh Metale stucken zijn genomen / weynigh hooger noch / lagen noch vijf groote Schepen / die zy oock souden vermeesteren / dan om sulcx te beletten / hebben d'Engelsche 15 a 16 Schepen doen sincken; doch is de Reviere daer door soo niet geslooten / of zy zijnder ghepasseert. De Royael Charles sullen zy herwaerts oversenden.

Extract uyt de Heer de Witz Missive
Van den drie en twintigsten Iuny 1667.

CApiteyn Braeckel is de eerste geweest, die een Oorloghschip heeft aen Boort gheleyt en verovert: oock is het Schip de Matthias, seer groot, doch maer 52. Stucken ophebbende, verbrant, daer door sulcke versaegheyt onder 't Volck gekomen is, dat datelijck al het Volck van de Schepen sijn afgeloopen, en alsoo de Royael Charles met Chaloupen genomen, sijnde maer 32. Stucken daer op; de Carolus Quintus, nevens noch een ander groot Schip verbrant; het Schip Sloth van Hauningen, voerende 72. Stucken, ghenomen zijnde, is by inadvertentie verbrant; Noch is een groot Capitael Schip verbrandt; De drie Scheepen die hooger lagen, sijnde de 3 Vlagge-Scheepen: als de Loyael Londen, Royael Jems, en Loyael oock, sijn mede verbrant; In het heele Gevecht sijn maer 150. oft 200. Matrosen en Soldaten ghebleven; Het Schip de Marme[illegible] konnende voeren 60. Stucken, hebben de Engelsche, nevens veele andere Scheepen, om [illegible]e te dempen doen sincken.

In 's Gravenhage, ghedruckt by Iohannes Rammazeyn, Boeckdrucker woonende onder de Ulebomen, over de Nieuwehaven.

Figure 9.3 *Extract, uyt een missive van de heer de With* (The Hague: Johannes Rammazeyn, 1667). Opportunist publishers, such as Johannes Rammazeyn in The Hague, aided the cause of True Freedom by reprinting Cornelis de Witt's letters from the Medway. Note the large title, emphasising De Witt's name and the fact that the letter was written from the *Royal Charles*.

dissipated. In 1668, the States of Zeeland elected William III as First Noble of their province, giving him effective control of the provincial assembly.

State communication was a capricious business. Under the banner of True Freedom, the authorities had their triumphs, but they also made serious mistakes in judging the sentiments of their citizens. Regardless of the outcome, the Dutch public was at the heart of the political conflict in the Dutch Golden Age. The consent of citizens who played no formal part in the processes of government was crucial to the authority of the regents. Whether it concerned Groningen artisans, Orangist preachers or sailors from Holland or Zeeland, the communication strategies of the authorities necessarily addressed the question of how to involve the public in the affairs of state. More often than not, the States decided to share political information rather than withhold it – through prayer days, the publication of news reports, the sponsoring of anonymous pamphlets or the printing of official declarations. In their quest for political supremacy, the regents of True Freedom paved the way for the informed, active citizenry that would emerge in a furious tempest in the summer of 1672.

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IV

From the Disaster Year to the Dutch Armada

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10

State Communication and Catastrophe

The Perpetual Edict of the States of Holland was in force for less than five years. On 3 July 1672, the regents of Holland announced their decision to abolish the edict and to appoint Prince William III of Orange as their Stadtholder. Jacobus Scheltus, the printer of the States in The Hague, published this momentous repudiation of the De Witt regime so that it could be dispersed across the country. The document he produced left little to the imagination, boldly entitled with the phrases 'Election of His Highness the Prince of Orange to [the post of] Stadtholder, Captain General and Admiral General' and 'Mortification of the Perpetual Edict'.[1]

The publication that sealed the fate of True Freedom was hardly an elegant piece of work. Surviving examples attest to poor inking, evidence of a rushed job required to be fulfilled under demanding circumstances. There were few who would have criticised Scheltus for this. The summer of 1672 was the darkest hour of the Dutch Republic.[2] The country was on the verge of extinction, overrun by the forces of France, Münster and Cologne, and threatened at sea by an Anglo-French naval blockade. On 21 June, Grand Pensionary Johan de Witt had been assaulted and severely wounded by four disgruntled citizens, and was bed-bound while the invaders stood at the frontiers of Holland. The regents of Holland's cities cowered before rising waves of popular frustration, anger and violence. To placate their citizens, the regents of Holland abandoned the principles of True Freedom they had sworn to uphold and installed William as Stadtholder. On 4 July, when representatives from the States made their way to William's military camp in Bodegraven to communicate their decision personally, news of his appointment had already spread throughout Holland. To prove that they had listened to their clamouring citizens, the regents disseminated the resolution in print. Now they

[1] *Mortificatie van't eeuwich edict. Extract uyt de resolutien van de Heeren Staten van Hollandt ende West-Vrieslant, in haer edele groot mog. vergaderinge genomen op sondagh den 3 julij 1672* (The Hague: Jacobus Scheltus, 1672), USTC 1842224.
[2] Luc Panhuysen, *Rampjaar 1672: Hoe de Republiek aan de ondergang ontsnapte* (Amsterdam: Atlas, 2009).

prayed that their new Stadtholder would protect them from the French, and from the fury of their own citizens.

Prince William III dominated the politics of the Dutch Republic from 1672 until his death three decades later. He saved the Republic from Louis XIV, but the experience left him with a profound distrust of France and the ambitions of her Sun King. William pursued a staunch anti-French foreign policy for the remainder of his life.[3] The Stadtholder-King, as he would become after his daring invasion of England in 1688, unleashed two lengthy wars against France, committing the Dutch Republic to war until 1713. Today these international endeavours are the greatest source of William's fame. But in 1672 all this lay in the future. Before he became the Stadtholder-King, William had to navigate the intensely provincial politics of the Dutch union. Between 1672 and 1688 he was transformed from an inexperienced prince to a skilled politician. In the Williamite Republic, he learned that he could not rely only on his illustrious name or his military exploits to achieve his ambitions. He had to appeal for support to the Republic's obstinate regents and opinionated citizens. This proved one of William's most persistent challenges, but it was also one of his greatest achievements.

'Published by the pens of state'

When William III was appointed Stadtholder of Holland, some wondered if there would be anything left for him to rule over. In the spring of 1672, a coalition composed of the crowns of France and England and the bishoprics of Münster and Cologne declared war on the Dutch Republic. On 1 June King Louis XIV of France crossed the Dutch border at the head of 100,000 troops. He advanced with unprecedented speed. He bypassed the fortress of Maastricht and rapidly fell upon the string of Dutch fortress-towns in the Duchy of Cleves, Gelderland and Overijssel. Strongholds that the Dutch had taken from Spain during the Eighty Years' War after months-long sieges capitulated within days. Only Groenlo, which held out for eight days, put up more than token resistance. Four weeks into the invasion, on 28 June, the provinces of Utrecht, Gelderland and Overijssel were already lost.[4] While French troops stood at the border of Holland, the army of Münster besieged Groningen and threatened Friesland.[5] The crisis was unparalleled. One shocked citizen wrote a poem in which he called upon his compatriots to rise to the defence of their country. At the end of his *Aanspraak*

[3] Luc Panhuysen, *Oranje tegen de Zonnekoning: De strijd van Willem III en Lodewijk XIV om Europa* (Amsterdam: Atlas Contact, 2016); Wouter Troost, *Stadhouder-koning Willem III: Een politieke biografie* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2001).

[4] J. den Tex, *Onder vreemde heren: De Republiek der Nederlanden, 1672–1674* (Zutphen: Terra, 1982).

[5] J. J. Kalma and K. de Vries (eds), *Friesland in het rampjaar 1672: It jier fan de miste kânsen* (Leeuwarden: Fryske Akademy, 1972); Theissen, *'Voor Vrijheydt ende Vaderlandt'*.

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aan de Bataviers (Demand to all Batavians) he listed the names of fifty-four towns and fortresses that already had been lost to the invaders.[6]

War with France had been expected since 1671, but that fifty-four strongholds could have been lost in a month of fighting was extraordinary.[7] The populace drew the obvious conclusion: a defeat this calamitous could only have been the result of treachery. One pamphleteer noted that

> [w]hoever turns his thoughts onto the current conditions of our dear fatherland, and considers the grave dangers, in which it has so unexpectedly and suddenly been plunged, must sadden himself to his core . . . and at the same time condemn the cowardice and disloyalty of the many who have forgotten their oath and duty.[8]

There was little doubt in the public mind who was to blame for this desperate state of affairs. From June 1672 onwards, a torrent of pamphleteers placed the blame wholly on the regents of the True Freedom. Never before had so many pamphlets appeared at the same time: a recent survey has identified at least 1,600 editions.[9] One commentator marvelled that 'everywhere, pamphlets come down like rain'.[10]

What made the pamphlets of 1672 different from and more dangerous than those of previous pamphlet debates was the coherence of their message. It was the regents who had neglected their duty as fathers of the community. They had enriched themselves with the proceeds of tax revenue while cutting the size of the army. They had made sycophantic overtures to France and ignored the menace of its expansionist greed. Some regents, the pamphlets declared, had received generous bribes from Louis and negotiated the surrender of key fortresses on the Rhine.[11] Worst of all, the regents had belittled the young Prince of Orange and denied him what was his by right. One pamphleteer noted that the outpouring of public invective, aimed squarely at Johan de Witt and his allies, was their just deserts:

> Even if these regents are attacked harshly it should not come as a surprise, for they too had their time, when they used their deductions, [and their] justifications for the Act of Seclusion . . . and many other defaming libels and writings, published by the pens of state at the country's expenses, and delivered hundreds of insults in the guise of their official communications, in order to blacken the House of Orange, and to tread it underfoot.[12]

[6] *Aanspraak aan de Bataviers* (s.l.: s.n., 1672), USTC 1519302.

[7] Herbert H. Rowen, *The Ambassador Prepares for War: The Dutch Embassy of Arnauld de Pomponne, 1669–1671* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1957); Paul Sonnino, *Louis XIV and the Origins of the Dutch War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

[8] *Verhael van't voornaemste, 'tgene desen staet 'tseder eenige iaren is overgekomen* (s.l.: Lieven van Waermont [=s.n.], 1672), USTC 1809329, p. 3.

[9] Reinders, *Printed Pandemonium*, esp. pp. 97–121.

[10] *Wederlegging-gedicht, van het lasterschrift, genaemt, verhael van 't voornaemste* (Middelburg: Jan Neffendeweg [=s.n.], 1672), USTC 1809620, p. 7.

[11] Reinders, *Printed Pandemonium*, pp. 102–5; Harms, *Pamfletten en publieke opinie*, pp. 156–67.

[12] *Geneesmiddelen voor Hollants-qualen. Vertoonende de quade regeeringe der Loevesteynse factie* (Antwerp [=s.l.]: s.n., 1672), USTC 1808674, p. 4.

This anonymous pamphleteer identified a prominent source of anger, reflected in many other pamphlets published that summer.[13] The ideological justifications of the True Freedom regime had made a deep impression on the Dutch public. The Act of Seclusion, Johan de Witt's *Deductie*, the prayer reform and the Perpetual Edict were put forward as examples of the wickedness of De Witt's government. The fact that these were official publications, published at the expense of the States of Holland, only exacerbated popular resentment against the authorities.

In the aftermath of 1672, the most prominent expressions of the ideology of True Freedom were sold at auction as 'forbidden books'. Between 1670 and 1720 more than 130 libraries were auctioned in the Dutch Republic which included separate sections of *libri prohibiti*. These sections were composed predominantly of the heretical books of Socinian theologians or libertines such as Spinoza, condemned by the authorities for their corrupting philosophy. But De Witt's *Deductie* of 1654, issued in the name of the States of Holland, is found repeatedly in sections of *libri prohibiti*, as is the three-volume *Public Gebedt,* the work of his namesake and cousin Johan de Wit, the most prominent justification of Holland's prayer reform of 1663.[14]

Apart from Pieter de la Court's radical republican works, which turn up frequently as forbidden books, none of the tracts of True Freedom listed as *libri prohibiti* were ever banned by the authorities. But the proclamations and resolutions of True Freedom had made a profound impact on Dutch citizens. They had not generated enough support for the government for it to weather the storm of 1672, but they had played a crucial role as the public representations of True Freedom ideology. In the Williamite Republic of the later 17th century, this made them controversial enough to be sold alongside the abominations of religious heterodoxy. To the booksellers responsible for the auction of these libraries, selling *libri prohibiti* represented an opportunity to attract some publicity and perhaps make an extra guilder in sales. To the wary statesmen who survived the cull of 1672, it was a reminder that no government could ignore the popular will of its citizens.

The desperate events of 1672 left a lasting mark on the national consciousness of the Dutch Republic. Determined not to forget, some citizens kept diaries and chronicles of their observations and experiences of that summer and its aftermath.[15] Contemporary histories devoted to the crisis appeared from 1673 onwards and proved hugely popular.[16] On 2 June 1674, the Amsterdam bookseller

[13] Another good example is provided by *Het rechte fondament van het nieuwe herstelde oudt Hollands regt, ofte de wettige vryheydt der borgeren* (s.l.: s.n., 1672), USTC 1809205.

[14] Der Weduwen, 'Sold in a Closed Room', pp. 319–60, esp. p. 336.

[15] R. Lindeman, Y. Scherf and R. M. Dekker (eds), *Egodocumenten van Noord-Nederlanders van de zestiende tot begin negentiende eeuw* (Haarlem: Stichting Egodocument, 1993), nos 118, 129–33. See also HUA, Familie Huydecoper, inv. 85, and Familie Martens van Sevenhoven, inv. 109, 151.

[16] Arthur der Weduwen, 'The Dutch Book Trade and the Disaster Year (1672): Crisis, Pragmatism and

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Jan Claesz ten Hoorn advertised the publication of two new tracts on the cruelties of the French invaders of 1672, which, he claimed, 'deserve to be read by all inhabitants of these lands, for [the preservation of] eternal memory'.[17] Ten Hoorn got his wish: one of the books he advertised, the schoolbook *Nieuwe Spiegel der Jeugd, ofte Fransche Tiranny* (New mirror of youth, or French tyranny), remained in print up to the end of the 18th century.[18]

The regents of Holland would have preferred to forget the events of 1672. The city fathers, who in times of calm would be treated with deference by their fellow citizens, had lost all semblance of authority in the summer of 1672. On 19 June, the first stone was thrown at a regent's house in Holland. Weeks later there were no towns where stones had not crashed through the windows of the magistrates and their families.[19] The regents were harassed or manhandled, their houses looted, and many were deposed from the council. What was most shocking was that popular resistance to the authorities was in most places the work of citizens belonging to the broad middling class of privileged inhabitants of Holland and Zeeland.

The defection of these citizens was calamitous. In July, when a Middelburg burgomaster lifted his hat to a militiaman, a gesture of respect that demanded reciprocation, the militiaman did not respond, and when the burgomaster confronted him, the militiaman stated: 'We are now master of this city, and we are masters over you, we will shortly be seated on the cushions.'[20] It was respectable citizens too who were responsible for the lynching of the brothers Johan and Cornelis de Witt on 20 August in The Hague, in a shocking spectacle of murder and mutilation.[21] It was by no means clear that the brothers De Witt would be the only fatal casualties of popular agitation. Three days after the murder, a group of Amsterdam citizens posted up on the bourse a placard with demands for municipal reform.[22] Threateningly, it stated at the end that '[w]hoever rips down this poster will enjoy a bullet as a reward; we will be watching you'.

Recovery', in Ann-Marie Hansen and Arthur der Weduwen (eds), *Publishers, Censors and Collectors in the European Book Trade, 1650–1750* (Leiden: Brill, forthcoming 2023); Arthur der Weduwen, 'Druk, lees en huiver: vroege herinneringen aan het Rampjaar', *Holland Historisch Tijdschrift*, 54 (2022), 193–202.

[17] *Amsterdamsche Saterdaeghse Courant*, no. 22 (Amsterdam: Caspar Commelijn, 2 June 1674); Der Weduwen and Pettegree, *News, Business and Public Information*, p. 506.

[18] Arthur der Weduwen, 'French Tyranny at School: The Disaster Year (1672) and the *Nieuwe Spiegel der Jeugd*', *Jaarboek voor Nederlandse Boekgeschiedenis*, 29 (2022), 60–108; Nicoline van der Sijs and Arthur der Weduwen (eds), *Franse Tirannie: Het Rampjaar 1672 op school* (Zwolle: Waanders, 2022).

[19] Reinders, *Printed Pandemonium*, p. 104.

[20] *Brief uyt Middelburgh in Zeelandt, behelsende eenige vreemde actien, geschreven den 1. Augusty 1672* (Amsterdam: Albert van Panhuysen, 1672), USTC 1523197. See also Chapter 4.

[21] Ronald Prud'homme van Reine, *Moordenaars van Jan de Witt: De zwartste bladzijde van de Gouden Eeuw* (Utrecht: De Arbeiderspers, 2013).

[22] *Het aengeplackt biljet luydt als volght: wy begeeren; 1. dat de oude handvest herstelt sal werden* (s.l.: s.n., [1672]), USTC 1519185.

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Communication in crisis

When war was declared by England and France in March and April 1672, the authorities sprang into action to organise the defence of the country (Figure 10.1). The crisis stimulated a flurry of law making and communication: on 2 May the magistrates of Amsterdam received six different placards from the States of Holland to be proclaimed.[23] But as the country's defences crumbled in the face of the Franco-German invasion in June, official communication petered out; even this most communicative of regimes was rendered speechless. The regents were as shocked as their citizens at the course of events, and they offered little immediate response. When the authorities did attempt to communicate, they found that few citizens were willing to listen. In Amsterdam, one militiaman noted in his diary that a new ordinance proclaimed by the magistrates on the defence of the city had no credibility among the citizenry.[24] The reputation of the magistrates, along with their role as guardians of the community, had suffered a fatal blow. The political contract between the rulers and ruled had been broken. Why would citizens obey their government any longer, when the regents had so obviously failed in their primary duty of care and defence?

The narrative of the Disaster Year is one which places the citizen movement of the Dutch Republic at the centre of events. Michel Reinders's study demonstrates the sophisticated political engagement of Dutch citizens in the summer of 1672. It was the citizens of Holland and Zeeland who were responsible for the changes in government and the defence of the country.[25] Yet despite the collapse of the state and its administration, state communication remained crucial to the unfolding events of that year. In surviving diaries composed by citizens during the summer of 1672 and its aftermath, placards and ordinances were often inserted or copied into their pages, as they were considered valuable as documentary evidence.[26] State publications played an important role in the unconquered provinces of Holland and Zeeland as much as in the occupied territories.

In the east of the Dutch Republic, the occupying forces had swept aside the little resistance that was offered. But the occupiers had to be careful how they treated the new territories in their possession. Force could only go so

[23] SAA, Archief van de Burgemeesters: publicaties van de Staten-Generaal en van de Staten van Holland en West-Friesland, inv. 7.

[24] Hanna de Lange, *'Bloote gerugten' en 'quade tijdingen': Vroegmodern nieuws door de ogen van een zeventiende-eeuwse dagboekauteur, 1672–1673* (MA thesis: University of Amsterdam, 2017), p. 69.

[25] Reinders, *Printed Pandemonium*, especially pp. 22–34, 173–213. See also Reinders, '"The citizens come from all cities with petitions": Printed Petitions and Civic Propaganda in the Seventeenth Century', in Deen, Onnekink and Reinders (eds), *Pamphlets and Politics*, pp. 97–118. Cf. Roorda, *Partij en Factie*, whose focus is more squarely on the machinations of the political elite.

[26] See *Journael ofte dagh verhael, van dat tot Uytrecht en Woerden bij de Franschen is voorgevallen* (Amsterdam: Jan Claesz ten Hoorn, 1674), USTC 1811296, copy in the Universiteitsbibliotheek Utrecht, HS 3 L 17. SAA, B(1672)1. See also De Lange, *'Bloote gerugten' en 'quade tijdingen'*.

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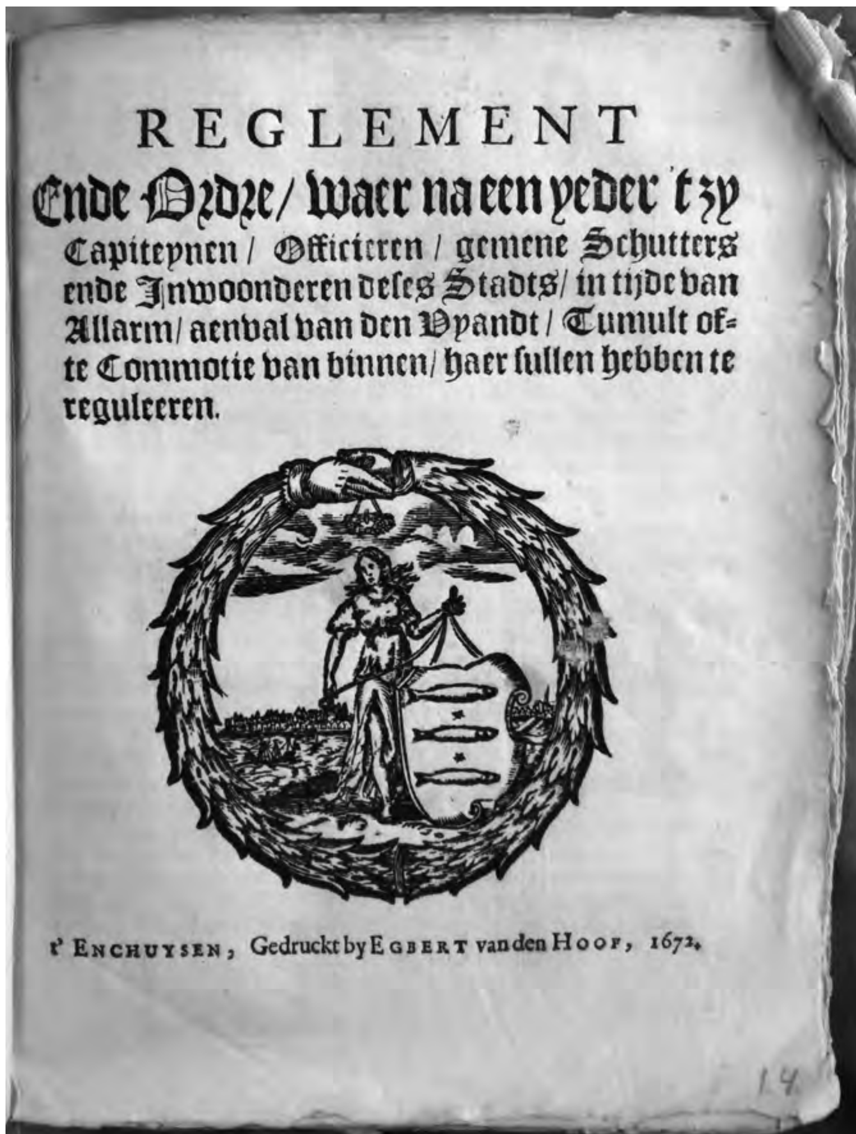

REGLEMENT
Ende Ordre/ waer na een yeder 't zy
Capiteynen/ Officieren/ gemene Schutters
ende Inwoonderen deses Stadts/ in tijde van
Allarm/ aenval van den Vyandt/ Tumult of-
te Commotie van binnen/ haer sullen hebben te
reguleeren.

t' ENCHUYSEN, Gedruckt by EGBERT van den HOOF, 1672.

Figure 10.1 *Reglement ende ordre, waer nae een yeder in tijde van allarm, aenval van den vyandt, tumult ofte commotie haer sullen hebben te reguleeren* (Enkhuizen: Egbert van den Hoof, 1672). Publishing in dire straits: one of the only known surviving 17th-century printed ordinances issued by the magistrates of Enkhuizen is this regulation from 1672 on the defence of the city.

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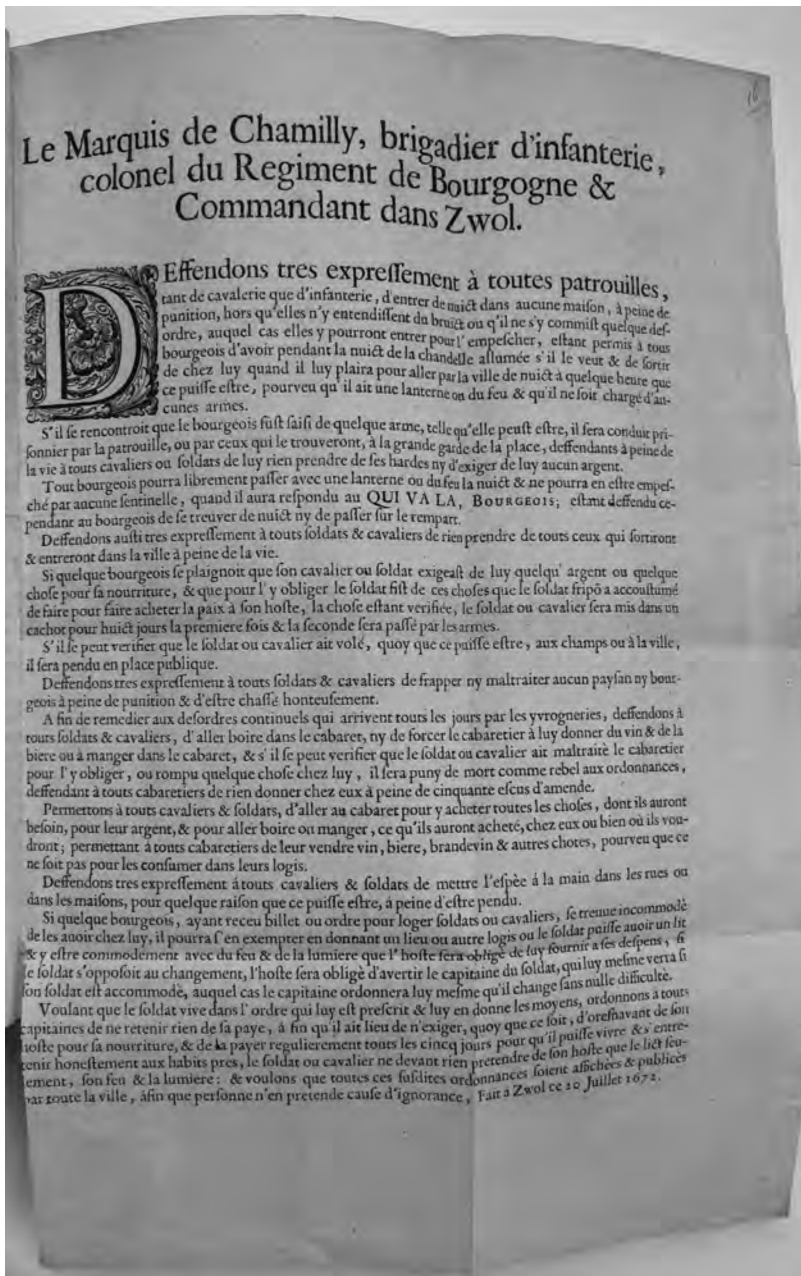
far; although it had proved remarkably effective at cowing the inhabitants of Utrecht, Gelderland and Overijssel into submission, the unanticipated need to establish an alternative government required other skills. King Louis and the Prince-Bishop of Münster, Bernhard von Galen, were determined to incorporate their conquests into their realms. The invaders also required an effective bureaucratic administration to organise billets and nourishment for their soldiers, and taxes to pay the costs of occupation. For this reason the occupiers left in place existing town councils, replacing only those regents who had fled west to Holland; and despite some calls for Dutch Catholics to be raised to the position of first-class citizens in the conquered provinces at the expense of their Protestant neighbours, the French and German officials installed in most towns offered remarkably lenient treatment to Protestant ministers and their congregations.[27]

The occupiers, with the help of the town councils, embarked on a programme of law making and taxation to organise the practicalities of occupation. The former *stadsdrukkers* and *Statendrukkers* of Utrecht, Gelderland and Overijssel were obliged to play their part too, producing numerous placards and printed forms (Figure 10.4).[28] On 11 July, two weeks after the occupation of Zwolle, the printer Gerrit Tydeman, one of the printers of the States of Overijssel, produced a broadsheet to be posted up around town. It instructed citizens to provide light, fire and accommodation for German or French troops assigned to their houses and prohibited them from attempting to buy themselves out of fulfilling the obligation to provide billets. It also explained that if any French troops demanded 'Qui va la?' on the streets at night, the good people of Zwolle were to answer 'un citoyen'.[29] Shortly afterwards Tydeman printed ordinances on the direct orders of the French governor, the Marquis de Chamilly, as well as the Elector of Cologne and the Prince-Bishop of Münster, in Dutch, German and French. Clearly the citizens of Zwolle had poor French, because the instruction on how to respond to demands for identification returned on successive broadsheets issued in 1672 (Figure 10.2).[30]

In Utrecht, the jewel in the crown of French conquests in 1672, the occupying forces made a concerted effort at communication to impress the anxious inhabitants. A few days after the arrival of French troops, the magistrates issued a printed

[27] Den Tex, *Onder vreemde heren*, pp. 35–90; Bertrand Forclaz, '"Rather French than Subject to the Prince of Orange"; The Conflicting Loyalties of the Utrecht Catholics during the French Occupation (1672–3)', *Church History and Religious Culture*, 87 (2007), 509–33.
[28] Der Weduwen, 'The Dutch Book Trade and the Disaster Year (1672)'. For Arnhem, see specifically the plates in Wouter Kotte, *Van Gelderse bloem tot Franse lelie: De Franse bezetting van de stad Arnhem, 1672–1674 en haar voorgeschiedenis* (Arnhem: Gemeentearchief, 1972).
[29] HCOZ, Stadsbestuur Zwolle, inv. 836. *Notificatie. Borgermeesteren schepenen ende raden, doen te weten, dat een borger die soldaten by billetten toegesonden zijn, aen dieselve vuyr, licht ende slaep=plaets sal hebben te geven* (Zwolle: Gerrit Tydeman, 1672), USTC 1522030.
[30] See the collection in HCOZ, Stadsbestuur Zwolle, inv. 805.



Le Marquis de Chamilly, brigadier d'infanterie, colonel du Regiment de Bourgogne & Commandant dans Zwol.

DEffendons tres expreſſement à toutes patrouilles, tant de cavalerie que d'infanterie, d'entrer de nuict dans aucune maiſon, à peine de punition, hors qu'elles n'y entendiſſent du bruict ou q'il ne s'y commiſt quelque deſordre, auquel cas elles y pourront entrer pour l'empeſcher, eſtant permis à tous bourgeois d'avoir pendant la nuict de la chandelle allumée s'il le veut & de ſortir de chez luy quand il luy plaira pour aller par la ville de nuict à quelque heure que ce puiſſe eſtre, pourveu qu'il ait une lanterne ou du feu & qu'il ne ſoit chargé d'aucunes armes.

S'il ſe rencontroit que le bourgeois fuſt ſaiſi de quelque arme, telle qu'elle peuſt eſtre, il ſera conduit priſonnier par la patrouille, ou par ceux qui le trouveront, à la grande garde de la place, deffendants à peine de la vie à touts cavaliers ou ſoldats de luy rien prendre de ſes hardes ny d'exiger de luy aucun argent.

Tout bourgeois pourra librement paſſer avec une lanterne ou du feu la nuict & ne pourra en eſtre empeſché par aucune ſentinelle, quand il aura reſpondu au QUI VA LA, BOURGEOIS; eſtant deffendu cependant au bourgeois de ſe treuver de nuict ny de paſſer ſur le rempart.

Deffendons auſſi tres expreſſement à touts ſoldats & cavaliers de rien prendre de touts ceux qui ſortiront & entreront dans la ville à peine de la vie.

Si quelque bourgeois ſe plaignoit que ſon cavalier ou ſoldat exigeaſt de luy quelqu' argent ou quelque choſe pour ſa nourriture, & que pour l'y obliger le ſoldat fiſt de ces choſes que le ſoldat fripô a accouſtumé de faire pour faire acheter la paix à ſon hoſte, la choſe eſtant verifiée, le ſoldat ou cavalier ſera mis dans un cachot pour huict jours la premiere fois & la ſeconde ſera paſſé par les armes.

S'il ſe peut verifier que le ſoldat ou cavalier ait volé, quoy que ce puiſſe eſtre, aux champs ou à la ville, il ſera pendu en place publique.

Deffendons tres expreſſement à touts ſoldats & cavaliers de frapper ny maltraiter aucun payſan ny bourgeois à peine de punition & d'eſtre chaſſé honteuſement.

A fin de remedier aux deſordres continuels qui arrivent touts les jours par les yvrogneries, deffendons à touts ſoldats & cavaliers, d'aller boire dans le cabaret, ny de forcer le cabaretier à luy donner du vin & de la biere ou à manger dans le cabaret, & s'il ſe peut verifier que le ſoldat ou cavalier ait maltraitè le cabaretier pour l'y obliger, ou rompu quelque choſe chez luy, il ſera puny de mort comme rebel aux ordonnances, deffendant à touts cabaretiers de rien donner chez eux à peine de cinquante eſcus d'amende.

Permettons à touts cavaliers & ſoldats, d'aller au cabaret pour y acheter toutes les choſes, dont ils auront beſoin, pour leur argent, & pour aller boire ou manger, ce qu'ils auront acheté, chez eux ou bien où ils voudront; permettant à touts cabaretiers de leur vendre vin, biere, brandevin & autres choſes, pourveu que ce ne ſoit pas pour les conſumer dans leurs logis.

Deffendons tres expreſſement à touts cavaliers & ſoldats de mettre l'eſpèe á la main dans les rues ou dans les maiſons, pour quelque raiſon que ce puiſſe eſtre, á peine d'eſtre pendu.

Si quelque bourgeois, ayant receu billet ou ordre pour loger ſoldats ou cavaliers, ſe treuue incommodè de les auoir chez luy, il pourra ſ'en exempter en donnant un lieu ou autre logis ou le ſoldat puiſſe auoir un lit & y eſtre commodement avec du feu & de la lumiere que l'hoſte ſera obligè de luy fournir a ſes deſpens, ſi le ſoldat s'oppoſoit au changement, l'hoſte ſera obligè d'avertir le capitaine du ſoldat, qui luy meſme verra ſi ſon ſoldat eſt accommodè, auquel cas le capitaine ordonnera luy meſme qu'il change ſans nulle difficultè.

Voulant que le ſoldat vive dans l'ordre qui luy eſt preſcrit & luy en donne les moyens, ordonnons à touts capitaines de ne retenir rien de ſa paye, á fin qu'il ait lieu de n'exiger, quoy que ce ſoit, d'oreſnavant de ſon hoſte pour ſa nourriture, & de la payer regulierement touts les cincq jours pour qu'il puiſſe vivre & s'entretenir honeſtement aux habits pres, le ſoldat ou cavalier ne devant rien pretendre de ſon hoſte que le lict ſeulement, ſon feu & la lumiere: & voulons que toutes ces ſuſdites ordonnances ſoient affichèes & publicès par toute la ville, áfin que perſonne n'en pretende cauſe d'ignorance, Fait à Zwol ce 20 Juillet 1672.

Figure 10.2 *Le Marquis de Chamilly, brigadier d'infanterie, colonel du Regiment de Bourgogne & Commandant dans Zwol. Deffendons tres expressement à toutes patrouilles* ([Zwolle: s.n., 1672]). 'Who goes there? *Un citoyen*'. A placard issued by the Marquis de Chamilly in Zwolle on 20 July 1672, directed to French troops in the town.

broadsheet in which they announced (presumably on the orders of the French) that the French occupiers were extremely reasonable, and that no complaints from any citizens regarding their conduct had been received.[31] The diary of Everard Booth, the son of an Utrecht regent, kept for the entire duration of the French occupation, reveals that the French administration made proclamations at least two or three times a week (Figure 10.3). Booth faithfully recorded the content of numerous proclamations and also often noted that the occupiers had published a new ordinance that was 'affixed in print everywhere'.[32] On the one hand, the placards seem to have impressed few in Utrecht: Booth recorded frequently that the French ordinances published to restrain the excesses of the occupying troops were 'not observed in any manner' by the soldiers.[33] On the other hand, the citizens of Utrecht paid very close attention to the new publications. On 22 January 1673, Booth noted that a group of citizens who had embarked on a barge for Amsterdam were seized by the French, thrown in jail and robbed of their possessions. The diarist remarked that 'to many people these procedures seem most odd, given that no placard has been published which prohibits travelling to Holland, so these people cannot have said to have broken the law, and should therefore not be punished'.[34]

The success of the citizen movement in Holland and Zeeland also required the appropriation of official means of communication. Between 25 June and 3 July, citizens rose up, as if united by one voice, and forced their magistrates to proclaim their support for the Prince of Orange. Citizens throughout the two provinces invaded town halls, pulled regents from their beds, their cushions in the council chamber or off the street, and forced them at pike and gun point to agree to their demands. To validate the citizens' requests, the magistrates had to make a proclamation from the balustrade of the town hall so that the authenticity of the changes could not be contested. In Dordrecht, citizens threatened to kill the regents if they did not repudiate the Perpetual Edict and announce this decision formally to the whole city. On 29 June, after being subjected to physical intimidation by a large group of citizens inside the town hall, the magistrates of Amsterdam proclaimed from the balustrade that they would never negotiate with the French or surrender the city and confirmed their support for the appointment of the Prince of Orange as Stadtholder.[35] The magistrates then ensured that these

[31] *Synde gebleecken eenen brief gedruckt in Hollandt, inde welcke gestelt zijn vele disordren gemaeckt door de troepen vanden Koningh* ([Utrecht: s.n., 1672]), USTC 1531696, f. 15.

[32] HUA, Familie Booth, inv. 43; J. A. Grothe (ed.), 'Dagelijksche aanteekeningen gedurende het verblijf der Franschen te Utrecht in 1672 en 1673, gehouden door mr. Everard Booth, Raad-Ordinaris in den Hove Provintiaal van Utrecht en Oud-Raad ter Admiraliteyt, uit de papieren van Booth', *Berigten van het Historisch Genootschap*, 6e deel, 2e stuk, 2e serie, 1e deel, 2e stuk (1857), 3–166, here 22, 50, 52, 55, 101.

[33] Grothe, 'Dagelijksche aanteekeningen', 45, 52, 63.

[34] Grothe, 'Dagelijksche aanteekeningen', 81–2.

[35] Reinders, *Printed Pandemonium*, pp. 114, 119.

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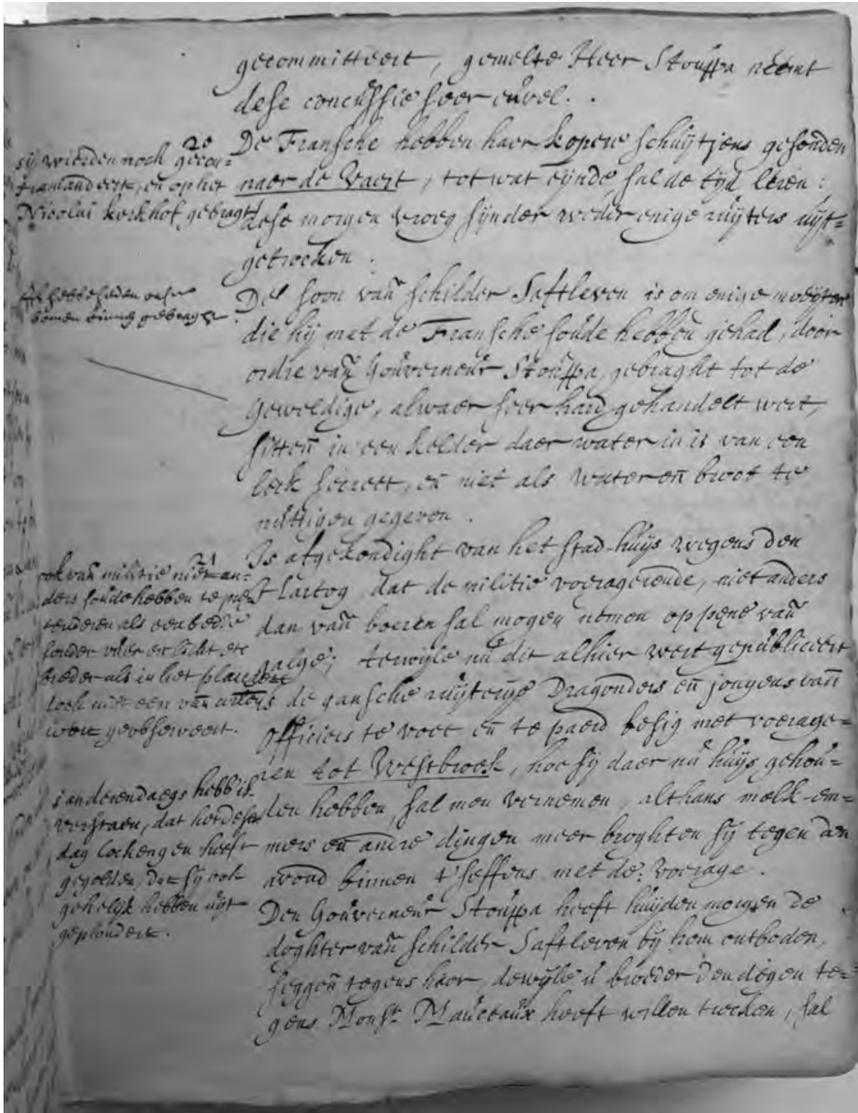

Figure 10.3 A page from the diary of Everard Booth, 1672, recording a French proclamation made in Utrecht to restrain the excesses of the occupying forces.

municipal announcements were printed. The published resolutions quickly spread across Holland and helped inform citizens' demands elsewhere. The resolution of the magistrates of Rotterdam in which they announced the withdrawal of their support for the Perpetual Edict opened with the statement that the magistrates had 'seen the resolution of the council of 36 of Amsterdam, so yesterday we

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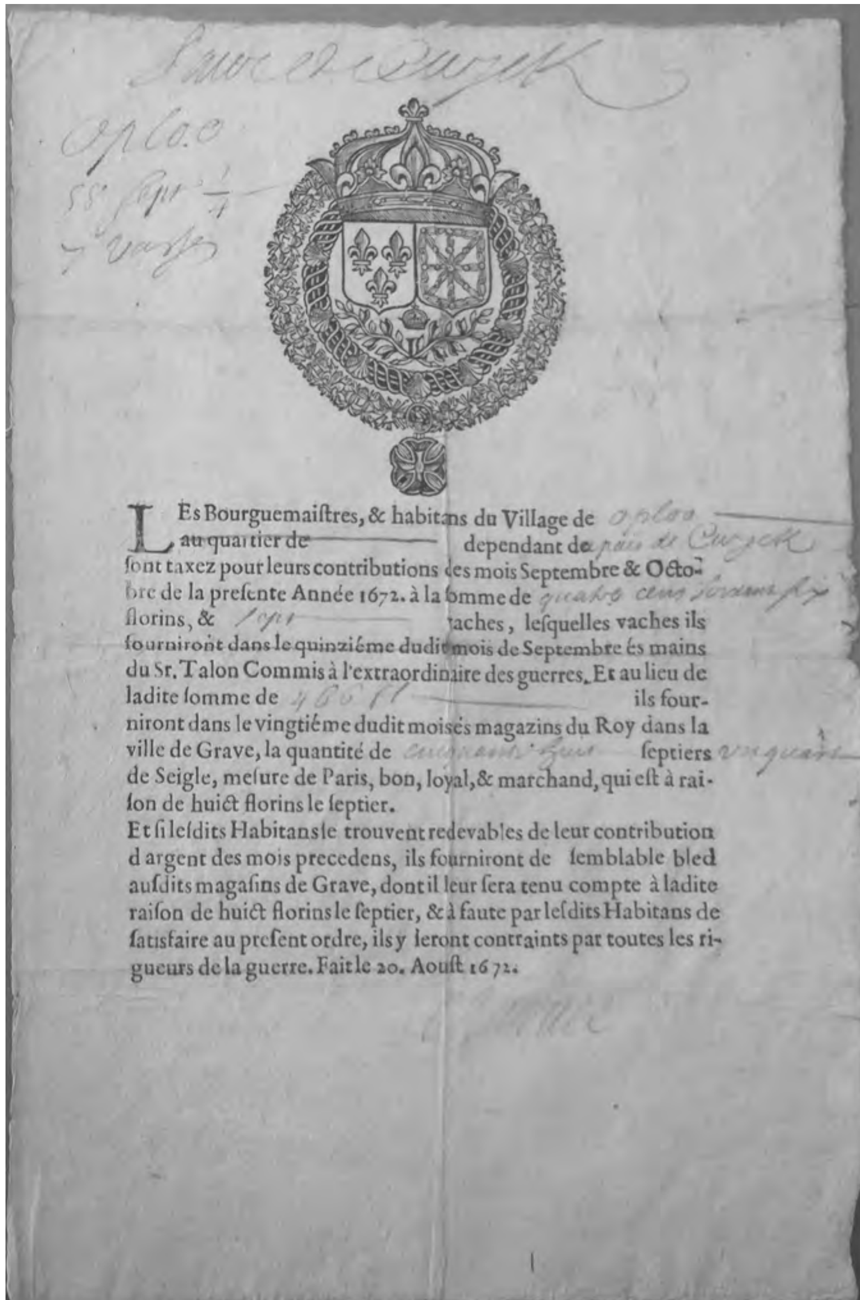

LEs Bourguemaiſtres, & habitans du Village de
au quartier de dependant de
ſont taxez pour leurs contributions des mois Septembre & Octo-
bre de la preſente Année 1672. à la ſomme de
florins, & vaches, leſquelles vaches ils
fourniront dans le quinziéme dudit mois de Septembre és mains
du Sr. Talon Commis à l'extraordinaire des guerres. Et au lieu de
ladite ſomme de ils four-
niront dans le vingtiéme dudit mois és magazins du Roy dans la
ville de Grave, la quantité de ſeptiers
de Seigle, meſure de Paris, bon, loyal, & marchand, qui eſt à rai-
ſon de huict florins le ſeptier.
Et ſi leſdits Habitans ſe trouvent redevables de leur contribution
d argent des mois precedens, ils fourniront de ſemblable bled
auſdits magaſins de Grave, dont il leur ſera tenu compte à ladite
raiſon de huict florins le ſeptier, & à faute par leſdits Habitans de
ſatisfaire au preſent ordre, ils y ſeront contraints par toutes les ri-
gueurs de la guerre. Fait le 20. Aouſt 1672.

Figure 10.4 A French tax form used to raise contributions from communities under occupation. Such tax forms were used throughout the occupied provinces: this surviving example is from the archive of the village of Oploo in North Brabant.

signed a resolution also'.[36] The widespread availability of printed resolutions and letters confirming support for the Prince of Orange played a significant role in emboldening citizens and forced the States of Holland to abandon the principles of True Freedom.

Once the States of Holland had been pressured to appoint William as Stadtholder, they tried to reassert their authority by communicating using the voice of the prince. The regents considered that a proclamation from the prince would be more effective than any announcement made in the name of the States. The regents drafted a letter in the name of William, which they had him sign on 8 July.[37] In this letter, addressed to the magistrates of all Holland towns, 'William' assured the magistrates that he would investigate all instances of popular unrest and prosecute any perpetrators. He also stated that he did not suspect any regents of collusion with the enemy. Throughout Holland, magistrates immediately disseminated the letter in print: there are surviving examples printed in Rotterdam, Haarlem, Amsterdam and Delft.[38] In Rotterdam, led by a council which had been a bulwark of De Witt's True Freedom, there were especially violent riots. William wrote another two letters for the magistrates of Rotterdam on 10 July, which the regents also had printed.[39] One of these letters concerned the flight of Councillor Willem Bisschop from Rotterdam to William's military headquarters, after Bisschop was nearly killed by citizens of the city. The prince ordered Bisschop's assailants to return home and maintain the peace. At the bottom of the broadsheet, the magistrates added a note that 'the original of this [letter] is to be found with Gerard Schellingh, Lieutenant at Sea, living on the Schiedamschen Dijk, behind Miss de Vosch, next to the sign of the French Crown'. The citizens of Rotterdam had little reason to trust their regents any longer, so the magistrates attempted to provide as much verification as possible.

After providing much needed assistance to the regents of Holland, Stadtholder William quickly realised that he did not have to obey the States any longer. When the States of Holland presented William with another ordinance to be proclaimed

[36] *Missive uyt Rotterdam. Van den 30 Juny 1672* (s.l.: s.n., 1672).
[37] Reinders, *Printed Pandemonium*, pp. 126–7.
[38] *Brief van sijn hoogheydt, den heere prince van Orange, geschreven aende leden vande respective steden van Hollant en Westvrieslant* (Rotterdam: Abraham van Waesberge, 1672), USTC 1521301; *Missive bij zijn hoogheidt den heere prince van Orangien geschreven aan de E:E. heeren burgemeesteren en regeerders der stadt Haarlem* (s.l.: s.n., 1672), USTC 1523205; *Missive van sijn hoogheyt den heer prins van Orange, aen haer ed. groot-achtb. de heeren borgermeesteren, ende regeerders der stadt Amsterdam* (Amsterdam: Hendrick and Dirck Boom, 1672), USTC 1521314; *Copie, missive, by sijn hoogheyt den heere prince van Orangie, geschreven aen de E.E. heeren burgemeesteren ende regeerders der stadt Delff* (s.l.: s.n., 1672), USTC 1521311.
[39] *Insinuatie alsoo burgermeesteren, ende regeerders der stadt Rotterdam, door den prince van Orangien, is toegekomen sekere missive* (Rotterdam: Abraham van Waesberge, 1672), USTC 1521307; *Copye naer het origineel syn hoogheydt last aen de vier ingesetenen van Rotterdam, den heer Bisschop zijnde gevolght, aenstonts naer de voorsz stadt te rugge te keeren* (Rotterdam: Abraham van Waesberge, 1672), USTC 1521309.

in his name to quell the unrest, William refused to sign it.[40] He was their servant in name, but the regents were now powerless without his support. The crisis presented an opportunity for William to increase the influence of the Stadtholder's office by removing those regents who had long blocked his path to power. Unlike his father, William II, the young William III had been raised as a prince without political prospects. His entire life had been spent waiting in the Binnenhof, as an official 'child of state', even tutored by Johan de Witt, but uncertain if he would ever have the chance to live up to the reputation of his ancestors. William was deeply embittered but not as hot-headed as his father. While the regents of the True Freedom still held sway, William had gathered around him a circle of trustworthy allies, including the Pensionary of Haarlem, Gaspar Fagel. In the summer of 1672, William's allies helped launch an extensive campaign of pamphlets to undermine further the reputation of the regents of True Freedom.[41] William also provided financial sponsorship to a popular minister from The Hague, Simon Simonides, whose pamphlet *De Worstelinge Jacobs* (Jacob's struggle) offered an extensive apology for one of Johan de Witt's assailants of 21 June; this became one of the bestselling pamphlets of 1672.[42]

After the appointment of William as Stadtholder, it was Johan de Witt who became the primary target of Orangist pamphleteers. Numerous pamphlets levelled the accusation that De Witt had misappropriated funds and received substantial bribes from the King of France. De Witt wrote to William on 12 July to ask him to help refute the accusations, given that they concerned not only De Witt's person but also the dignity of the office of Grand Pensionary of Holland. While Constantijn Huygens Jr, the prince's secretary, advised him not to respond to the letter, ten days later the Stadtholder issued a public letter in which he stated that he himself had been the victim of many malicious pamphlets in the past, so De Witt should not complain.[43] William's public response, clearly hinting at De Witt's *Deductie* and the promulgation of the Perpetual Edict, signalled to all citizens that those who attacked De Witt would not be prosecuted. Shortly afterwards, the lawyer Adriaan van der Goes wrote to his brother in Vienna that it was thanks to William's intervention that the number of pamphlets printed against De Witt had intensified.[44]

A month later, William was responsible for a second publicity coup, one which helped seal the fate of the brothers De Witt. On 7 August, King Charles II

[40] Troost, *Willem III*, p. 92.
[41] Reinders, *Printed Pandemonium*, pp. 106–7, 130.
[42] Simon Simonides, *De worstelinge Jacobs, vervattende de wonderlijke worstelinge, en zalige overwinninge van, Jacob vander Graef* (The Hague: Levijn van Dijck, 1672), USTC 1808939.
[43] *Antwoort van sijn hoogheyt de heer prince van Oranje in dato den 22. july 1672. op de missive van de heer Johan de Wit, aengaende de pasquillen op sijn persoon ende devoir ontrent de legers van den staet* (s.l.: s.n., 1672), USTC 1521324.
[44] De Bruin, 'Political Pamphleteering', p. 93.

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of England had written a letter to William to explain to his nephew why he had attacked the Dutch Republic. The official English declaration of war, issued four months earlier, had included as one of the justifications for war the excessive triumphalism of the True Freedom regime in the wake of the Second Anglo-Dutch War, which Charles had perceived as an insult to his person; but he also referred to commercial competition between the two countries, and a series of diplomatic incidents.[45] In his personal letter to William, Charles now revealed that the only true reason for his alliance with France was the 'malicious Loevestein faction' at the helm of the Dutch Republic.[46] The letter suggested that if only the Loevestein regents (using a popular phrase to refer to the architects of True Freedom) were removed from power, England would once again be a dear friend to the Dutch. On 15 August, Gaspar Fagel ensured that this incendiary letter was published in print.[47]

Five days later, a crowd of citizens murdered Johan de Witt and his brother Cornelis in The Hague. On the same day, Fagel was appointed as De Witt's successor as Grand Pensionary of Holland. Fagel remained a close ally of William for the remainder of his life and was fiercely committed to Orangism. One of his first acts as Grand Pensionary was to help pass a resolution in the States of Holland that granted William the power to replace all magistracies in the province. By November 1672, a third of all city councillors, aldermen and burgomasters in Holland had lost their offices, replaced by supporters of the prince.

William ensured that these alterations in government were well publicised. They played an important role in strengthening his grip on power in Holland and cementing his reputation with the citizens who had clamoured for his appointment. It was crucial that William engaged publicly with the citizen movement, because as soon as William had been granted the power to elect new magistrates, citizens throughout the province began to submit petitions to the prince with lists of nominations for their city councils. These nominations were accompanied in most towns by a list of proposed changes to their municipal constitutions. In a new development, citizens not only submitted the petitions to the prince but also had them printed. Examples of printed petitions survive for most towns in Holland, six towns in Zeeland, and Leeuwarden and Sneek in Friesland. They rapidly spread across the country: one chronicler, Johan Grybius, was able to gather together petitions from Delft, Gouda, Tholen, Zierikzee, Middelburg, Vlissingen, Veere, Goes, Leiden, Haarlem and Amsterdam.[48]

[45] *Translaet uyt het Engelsch. Syne majesteyts declaratie tegens de Staten Generael* (The Hague: Jacobus Scheltus, 1672), USTC 1809381.
[46] *Missive van syne majesteyt den koning van Groot Brittanjen, aen syn hoogheyd den heere prince van Oranjen. Uyt Wthall, den 28 july, 1672* (s.l.: s.n., 1672), USTC 1809181.
[47] Troost, *Willem III*, pp. 94–5.
[48] Troost, *Willem III*, pp. 32, 113. See also Reinders, '"The citizens come from all cities with petitions"', p. 111.

Petitions were an established element of Dutch political culture.[49] They played an important role in the formulation of law, and in the justifications of authorities when introducing new legislation or reinforcing existing ordinances. The submission of a petition was an act of humility, in which the supplicant recognised the authority of the addressee. Indeed, when representatives of the militias arrived in the prince's camp to submit their petitions, they did so in an established ritual of supplication. But by printing the petitions, and publicly advocating for constitutional changes, citizens changed the terms of the debate.[50] The boisterous demands were not received warmly by everyone. Some pamphleteers singled out the petitioners as fraudsters, determined to secure their own place on the city council cushions:

> What wonder, what news, John Musket plays the chief
> The chalk carrier and cashier would love an alderman's seat
> State-obsessed traders become law makers
> A wagon broker attempts to make himself a statesman
> Everyone rages, 'it's for the Prince', and has some grand design
> So they dispose of the council, and force some simpletons in.[51]

Yet if such sentiments were widely shared, they had little influence. The towns of Holland were dominated by the civic militias that submitted the petitions to the prince. William had to take them seriously and recognise their importance as representatives of community opinion. William's response to the flood of printed petitions was to issue his own printed ordinances, in which he announced the removal of certain magistrates and his choice of new councillors from the lists of nominations sent in by the militias.[52]

The Stadtholder also demonstrated that he listened to the citizens of Holland. When he did not accede to all their demands, he offered public justifications for his decision. The citizens of Veere delivered a petition to William on 24 September in which they requested radical changes to the local government order. These concerned the constitution of the magistracy, the appointment of civic officers, municipal corruption, militia service and taxation. William responded to the petition on 3 October with his own printed ordinance, which included the original thirty requests, annotated by the prince with his decision on each article.[53] He agreed fully to some, left others to the discretion of the new magistrates of Veere,

[49] See Chapter 4.

[50] For perspectives on printed petitions in England, see Zaret, *Origins of Democratic Culture*; and Peacey, *Print and Public Politics*, esp. pp. 267–330.

[51] *Stock in 't Hondert, op 't burgerlyk versoek* (s.l.: s.n., 1672), USTC 1521423. For a similar poem see *Roem van Vieren, of vier gelyken gaen met 't spel stryken* (s.l.: s.n., 1672), USTC 1523213.

[52] *Den prince van Orange, &c. Erentfeste, wijse, voorsienige, seer discrete besondere goede vrienden* (Amsterdam: Johannes van Ravesteyn, 1672), USTC 1521425; *Lyste van de verkooren vroetschappen van 'sGravenhage, gedaen by syn Hoogheyt den heere Prince van Orangien* (s.l.: s.n., 1672), USTC 1521419.

[53] *Ordonnantie of dispositijf van syn hoogheyt den heer prince van Orange, gestreckt over sekere poincten*

tempered some requests and denied others; but for each rejected request he offered an explanation. By disseminating his decisions in print, William openly acknowledged the process of consultation and negotiation that accompanied his assumption of power. This played an important role in restoring the political bond between the citizens of Holland and Zeeland and the rightful authorities of the provinces.

The Stadtholder's response to the citizen movement of 1672 demonstrates the sophistication of the prince's first engagement with public politics. By the end of the year he was securely in power. He had granted enough privileges to the citizens, without compromising his reputation or the position of the newly appointed magistrates. Having observed the divisive politics of True Freedom from the sidelines for the entirety of his young life, William had come to understand that the Dutch public did not have to be restrained or shunned but could be used as a source of strength and authority.

The prince assertive

When Dutch troops entered Utrecht in November 1673, they found a city exhausted by occupation. The first task of the liberators was to re-establish the proper government of the city. The diarist Everard Booth noted a flurry of activity on the part of the administration.[54] On 14 November, town criers, accompanied by drummers, toured the city to instruct any citizens who still lodged French or Swiss soldiers in their homes (presumably wounded soldiers who did not join the French evacuation) to report to the town hall. Printed broadsheets issued by the States General were affixed all around the city instructing citizens that excise duties would have to be paid once more as usual. On 15 November, the Count of Hornes, the commander of the liberating forces, had placards printed and affixed by which he forbade citizens from assaulting one another. Tempers were running high after a year and a half of occupation. Collaborators and sympathisers of the French feared repercussions from their neighbours. Catholics had witnessed the violent reclamation of the Dom by Protestant citizens, who had cleansed the church of its Catholic paraphernalia.[55] On 21 November, a prayer day was held to thank God for the liberation of Utrecht and the retreat of the French, who had abandoned most of their conquests in the Dutch Republic. In Kampen, the magistrates sought to restore the commerce of their town by advertising in the *Amsterdamsche Courant*. On 28 August 1674, they announced that any person

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ende artijckelen, van weghens eenighe borgeren ende gildens, aen de magistraet vande stadt van ter Vere, overgelevert op den 24 september 1672 (Middelburg: Johan Misson, [1672]), USTC 1809623.

[54] Grothe, 'Dagelijksche aanteekeningen', 149–55.

[55] Angela Vanhaelen, 'Utrecht's Transformations: Claiming the Dom through Representation, Iconoclasm and Ritual', *De zeventiende eeuw*, 21 (2005), 354–74.

who settled in Kampen before the end of the year would receive citizenship for free.[56]

The troubles of the previous year could not be forgotten so quickly. Nobody could deny that the provinces of Utrecht, Gelderland and Overijssel had surrendered far too easily. The regents of the occupied provinces were sorely aware of their own failures. In preparation for the inevitable repercussions after liberation, the States of Utrecht had, already on 5 December 1672, drawn up a lengthy justification in which they presented their view of the invasion and capitulation of the province, which was published early in 1673.[57] In their *Deductie*, the regents emphasised that they had done more than other provinces to keep up their payments to the federal coffers; that they had delivered repeated warnings of the sorry state of the defences along the river fortresses before the invasion; and that they had sent most of their troops to Gelderland and Overijssel, as instructed by the States General and the Council of State. The regents expressed their feeling of abandonment by Holland and the Prince of Orange and said that they had had to obey the will of their citizens, who wished to capitulate to the French rather than witness the destruction of their city in a lengthy siege. To support their case, the regents appended to the pamphlet numerous copies of resolutions issued by the States between 1670 and 1672, and letters despatched to the States General and the States of Holland. Around the same time the magistrates of Deventer made a similar plea, publishing a formal defence of their conduct in the summer of 1672, attaching a variety of letters and secret resolutions that they believed helped justify their actions.[58]

The regents in Utrecht and Deventer revealed to the public a wealth of political information to exonerate themselves, but it is doubtful whether these appeals were effective. It probably did not do much for their reputation that these apologies were published while Utrecht and Deventer were still under occupation. After their liberation in 1673 and 1674 the provinces were still assailed by accusations of cowardice and treachery.[59] To punish them for their rapid surrender, Gaspar Fagel suggested to Prince William that Utrecht, Overijssel and Gelderland should not be readmitted to the Union of Utrecht but should be treated as annexed lands and reduced to the status of the Generality Lands. This proposal was not shared with the public, and it is difficult to estimate how popular it would have been. It would certainly have increased the power of Holland and its cities in the union. William,

[56] *Amsterdamsche Dingsdaegse Courant*, no. 35 (Amsterdam: Mattheus Cousart, 28 August 1674); Der Weduwen and Pettegree, *News, Business and Public Information*, p. 519.

[57] Grothe, 'Dagelijksche aanteekeningen', 63; *Deductie van de Staaten van den Lande van Utrecht* (Utrecht], Willem van Paddenburgh, 1673), USTC 1809954.

[58] *Fundamenteel tegen-bericht van heeren gewesene burgermeesteren, schepenen ende raden der stadt Deventer, in den jare 1672. Op ende tegens die lasterlijcke Apologia door Diderick Steck* (s.l.: s.n., 1673), USTC 1810293.

[59] *Missive van de heer Arnold van Boeckholt burgermeester der stadt Deventer. Vervattende de naeckte ronde waerheyt van 't overgeven der selver stadt* (Leiden: Johannes van der Brugge, 1675), USTC 1811723.

wary of granting the magistrates of Holland too much influence, rejected the idea. But he did agree with Fagel that 'significant alterations in the government' of the landward provinces would be necessary.[60] William viewed the landward provinces as foundations on which he could expand his own power in the Republic.

The States General gave William carte blanche to reorganise the political constitution of the liberated provinces before their readmission to the union. With the assistance of Fagel, the Stadtholder drew up new ordinances that regulated the nomination and election of magistrates in the provinces, granting himself extraordinary powers to appoint the regents, who were, formally, to serve as his overlords.[61] William also ordered the dismissal of over 300 regents in Utrecht, Overijssel and Gelderland, a far higher proportion than those discharged in Holland and Zeeland.[62] In their place William appointed new magistrates sympathetic to his cause. Thanks to the new *regeringsregelementen* (government regulations), he would retain the annual right to replace any magistrates in all three provinces for the remainder of his life (Figure 10.5).

The prince now enjoyed more power than any Stadtholder before him. Thanks to the reorganisations, he was assured of the support of Utrecht, Gelderland and Overijssel. The provinces would rarely speak against William.[63] In Zeeland he could count on three out of seven votes in the States at all times because of his position in the States as First Noble and his title as Marquis of Veere and Vlissingen; and in Holland he had the committed support of Gaspar Fagel. In 1674, the title of Stadtholder was made hereditary in Holland and Zeeland, securing William's grip on power. Thomas Chudleigh, the English envoy extraordinary to the Dutch Republic, commented that William wielded immense influence 'on all the governing men, most of which are his creatures, and the others are afraid to declare their opinions in opposition to his'.[64]

For the young prince, it was not yet enough. France may have been driven out of the Dutch Republic, but it was still a formidable threat: the war still raged in the Southern Netherlands and the Rhineland. To consolidate his position, William

[60] Troost, *Willem III*, p. 113.

[61] *Provintie van Utreght, stadhouderlijcke regieringe. Ordre en reglement, waer naer de regieringe in het toekomende sal werden bestelt en beleyt* (s.l.: s.n., 1674), USTC 1811238; *Ordre ende reglement, waer naer de regeringe van Overyssel in het toekomende sal worden beleyt* (s.l.: s.n., 1674), USTC 1812045; *Ordre ende reglement, waer nae de regeringe des furstendoms Gelre, ende graefschaps Zutphen, in het toekomende sal worden beleyt* (s.l.: s.n., [1675]), USTC 1812160. See also D. J. Roorda, 'William III and the Utrecht "Government-Regulation": Background, Events and Problems', *The Low Countries History Yearbook* (1979), 85–109.

[62] Israel, *Dutch Republic: Rise, Greatness and Fall*, p. 815.

[63] M. A. M. Franken, *Coenraad van Beuningen's politieke en diplomatieke aktiviteiten in de jaren 1667–1684* (Groningen: Wolters, 1966), p. 35; Coen Wilders, 'Subservient to the Stadholder: How William III's Interpretation of Capability Determined Politics in the Province of Utrecht, 1674–1688', in Hartman, Nieuwstraten and Reinders (eds), *Public Offices, Personal Demands*, pp. 199–220; Wilders, *Patronage in de Provincie*.

[64] Frederick Arnold Middlebush (ed.), *The Dispatches of Thomas Plott (1681–1682) and Thomas Chudleigh (1682–1685), English Envoys at The Hague* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1926), p. 60.

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Figure 10.5 *Afkondiging van het nieuwe regeringsregelement te Utrecht in 1674*, *c*. 1674. An anonymous depiction of the proclamation of William's new *regeringsreglement* in Utrecht on 16 April 1674. The proclamation was made by the President of the States of Utrecht, Johan van Reede van Renswoude, from the front of the *Statenkamer*, the assembly hall of the States.

attempted to acquire the titles of Duke of Gelderland and Count of Zutphen, titles that had been vacant since the abjuration of King Philip II in 1581. On 19 January 1675, thanks to pressure from Gaspar Fagel and Hans Willem Bentinck, William's closest confidant, the States of Gelderland offered William the two titles, and thereby the sovereignty of the province.[65]

William wanted to accept the offer, but he first wished it to be validated by the other provinces. On 31 January, he sent a letter to the States of Zeeland, Holland and Utrecht requesting their advice on the matter.[66] The regents of Utrecht were the first to respond, with a formal publication on 8 February. The Utrecht regents,

[65] *Conditien ende verbintenissen, waer op sijne hoogheydt is op-gedragen de hooge overicheyt over de provincie van Gelderlandt ende Sutphen* (Arnhem: Hans Verschuur, 1675), USTC 1812243; M. W. Hartogh, 'Prins Willem III en de hertogshoed van Gelderland, 1673–1675: Een onderzoek naar voorbereidingen, motieven en reacties', *Bijdragen en mededelingen der vereniging Gelre*, 69 (1976), 124–55.

[66] *Brief aen de Staten van Hollant. Rakende desselfs opdracht* (s.l.: s.n., 1675), USTC 1842343.

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only installed the year before by William, expressed their wholehearted support for the acceptance of the title, appealing to the memory of the 'inexhaustible labour, the wise policy and invincible bravery' of the prince in his liberation of their province.[67]

Elsewhere, to William's dismay, the news was received with anxious apprehension. Shares in the Dutch East India Company decreased sharply in value.[68] Rumours that the prince wished to become sovereign of the entire country circulated widely: to have a warrior prince at the helm of state, rather than the mercantile regents, would inevitably be bad for business. The news that William's courtiers had already toasted the prince as 'count of Holland' on hearing the news from the States of Gelderland added fuel to the fire.[69] The question was debated in the States of Holland, where two-thirds of the towns supported the prince. But the opposition included the heavyweights of the province: Amsterdam, Delft, Leiden and Haarlem. After the meeting, the regents of Amsterdam sent a letter to the prince to persuade him not to accept the title. In Amsterdam it was Gillis Valckenier, who had been restored to his burgomaster's seat by William in the purge of the magistracy in 1672, who led the opposition. The regents who had been elevated to power in Holland were not necessarily as sympathetic to the prince as he had expected, a reminder of the relative flexibility of Dutch 'party politics'.[70]

The obstinacy of Amsterdam was frustrating, but not as infuriating as the answer of the States of Zeeland. On 16 February, the Zeelanders despatched a letter to the prince urging him not to disturb the unity of the country by accepting the offer. The States immediately had the letter printed and distributed to generate support for their position: we know of at least six surviving editions.[71] The publicity worked. William felt forced to decline the offer from the States of Gelderland after this public display of hostility. He was incensed by the Zeelanders. On 18 March, the prince responded in an open letter, condemning the States of Zeeland for disseminating their resolution and letter in print. He remarked that their letter 'was sold everywhere', providing

> information which would give the good inhabitants [of these lands] a bad impression of ourselves [the prince], so much more so for being in print . . . which

[67] *Extract uyt de resolutie van de Staten van Uytrecht, aen sijn hoogheyt de prins van Oranjen, weegens d'opdracht van hartog van Geldre ende grave van Zutphen* (Arnhem: Adriaen Gerritsz, 1675), USTC 1811600, f. *2v.
[68] Panhuysen, *Oranje tegen de Zonnekoning*, p. 131.
[69] Troost, *Willem III*, p. 115.
[70] Roorda, *Partij en factie*, pp. 237–40. For a recent case study of similar political flexibility see Wout Troost, *Hiëronymus van Beverningk tijdens het Rampjaar 1672* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2021).
[71] *Missive van d'E. mog. heeren Staten van Zeelandt, aen den heer prins van Orange. Raeckende't hartoghdom van Gelder en het graefschap Zutphen* (Middelburg: Adriaen Gerritsz [=s.n.], 1675), USTC 1811883; Cf. Israel, *Dutch Republic: Rise, Greatness and Fall*, p. 816, who states erroneously that the response from William to the Zeeland letter was printed first.

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> makes us presume that some malicious persons [in the States of Zeeland] have only done this to make our intentions hated and suspected.[72]

The affair had seriously damaged the reputation of the prince. His reply to the regents of Zeeland exposed his anger and gave credence to the suspicion that William did indeed have designs on the sovereignty of the country. His supporters immediately tried to repair the damage that had been done. Orangist pamphleteers attacked the States of Zeeland for their ingratitude.[73] In Overijssel and Gelderland, William was welcomed by celebrations, including triumphal arches and laudatory poetry.[74] Romeyn de Hooghe, the most prolific artist of the Franco-Dutch War, produced an engraved broadsheet celebrating William's entry into Utrecht, in which he depicted the prince as a Roman conqueror (Figure 10.6). He also engraved a scene to commemorate William's stay in Arnhem, which included a portrayal of William declining the offer of the States of Gelderland (Figure 10.7). In the accompanying text block attached to the engraving, William was praised for valuing the freedom of the States more than his own power.[75]

Although they were beautiful engravings, De Hooghe's artistic efforts had little impact. An English diplomatic report suggested that William's public response to the States of Zeeland had 'lost him in a great measure the affection of that province [Zeeland] and of the people, who cry up their magistrates for their advice to the prince and assure them they will stick by them'.[76] Popular murmuring against the prince did not die down quickly. In the autumn of 1675, the States of Holland and the States General published placards that forbade any person from saying, writing or publishing that the prince aspired to the sovereignty of the country.[77]

The Geldrian question was the first political setback William experienced after 1672. His defeat at the hands of Amsterdam and Zeeland in 1675 is often represented as the first of a series of factional struggles in the Williamite Republic between the monarchical tendencies of the prince and the mercantile sentiments of the most powerful town councils, especially of the commercial strongholds

[72] *Missive van sijn hoogheyt, den heere prince van Oraigne, geschreven aen de heeren Staten van Zeelant* (s.l.: s.n., 1675), USTC 1812075, p. 8.

[73] *Missive aen den heere &c. behelsende eenige consideratien over de resolutien door de ed: mog: heeren Staten van Zeelant genomen den 24. maant february 1675* (s.l.: Adriaen Gerritsz [=s.n.], 1675), USTC 1812268.

[74] Johannes Vollenhoven, *Blyde inkomst van zyn hoogheit in Overyssel* (Zwolle: Gerrit Tydeman, 1675), USTC 1812247.

[75] Romeyn de Hooghe, *Uytrecht Herstelt* ([Amsterdam: Romeyn de Hooghe], 1674), Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, RP-P-OB-79.282; Romeyn de Hooghe, *Het Hertoghdom Gelder en Graeffschap Zutphen, opgedragen aen Syn K.H. Wilhem Henrick* (Amsterdam: Romeyn de Hooghe, 1675), USTC 1571002. On De Hooghe and the Franco-Dutch War see Henk van Nierop, *The Life of Romeyn de Hooghe, 1645–1708: Prints, Pamphlets, and Politics in the Dutch Golden Age* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2018), pp. 89–138.

[76] Cited in Israel, *Dutch Republic: Rise, Greatness and Fall*, p. 816.

[77] *De Staten van Hollandt ende West-Vrieslandt, alsoo wy van dagh to dagh meer bevinden, dat eenige menschen impressie willen geven, dat den Prince van Orange, sigh de souverainiteyt van den lande aen te matigen* (The Hague: Jacobus Scheltus, 1675), USTC 1566390.

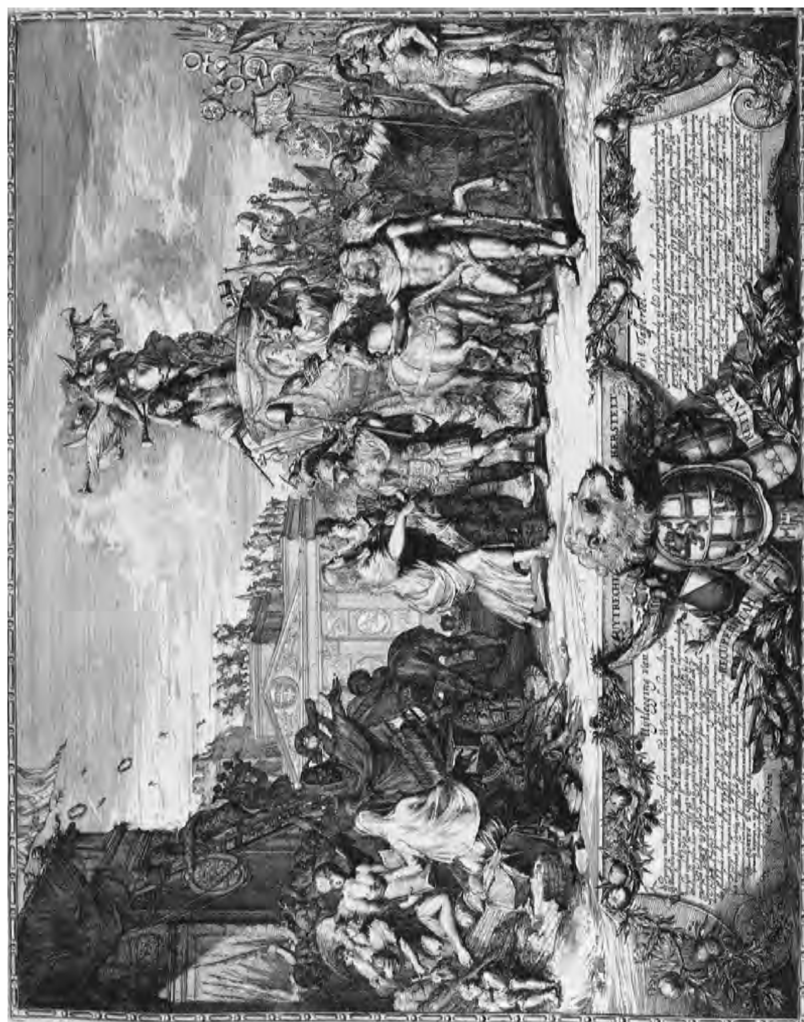

Figure 10.6 Romeyn de Hooghe, *Uytrecht Herstelt* ([Amsterdam: Romeyn de Hooghe], 1674). Romeyn de Hooghe's vision of William III as liberator of Utrecht.

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Figure 10.7 Romeyn de Hooghe, *Het Hertoghdom Gelder en Graeffschap Zutphen, opgedragen aen Syn K.H. Wilhem Henrick* (Amsterdam: Romeyn de Hooghe, 1675). De Hooghe's portrayal of William declining the sovereignty of Gelderland bears a striking similarity to the prince's triumph in Utrecht.

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of Amsterdam, Leiden and Middelburg.[78] In this contest there was no role for the citizens of the Dutch Republic: according to Jonathan Israel, William had 'never sought to flatter the people. . . . Where, initially, his popular appeal had been his foremost weapon, after 1675, William III relied chiefly on behind-the-scenes influence, power of patronage, and twisting arms.'[79] William's biographer Wout Troost argues that the prince's political power was not unlike that of his arch-rival, Louis XIV, a view backed by two Venetian diplomats in the 1690s, who characterised William as 'King in Holland'.[80] Nevertheless, the Geldrian question of 1675 shows that William did not enjoy unbridled power, and that it was not only obstinate Amsterdam that confronted his ambitions. The prince could easily have accepted the offer of the States of Gelderland without petitioning the support of the other provinces. But he was protective of his reputation. He did not wish to follow the path of his father, William II, and achieve his goals by brute force and intimidation.

Contrary to Israel's characterisation, the Dutch public remained a pressing concern to the prince. The Williamite Republic was created thanks to the political engagement of the citizens of Holland and Zeeland in 1672. In the aftermath of the Disaster Year, these citizens did not abandon their interest in politics, or their concern with local or provincial administration. After the liberation of Gelderland, some citizens of Harderwijk published a lengthy account of the abuses committed by their local magistrates, denouncing their conduct and urging the prince to reform the constitution of the city.[81] During the 1670s and 1680s the prince would receive similar complaints from other cities, especially from those towns where he had dismissed many magistrates in 1672. William's nominees for the magistracies were often ill-qualified and corrupt, and in some cases the prince was later obliged to replace these regents with individuals whom he had dismissed in 1672.[82]

The Stadtholder was also confronted with direct opposition from citizen bodies. When William tried to alter the constitution of the city of Deventer in 1677, abolishing the custom that the large council of 'sworn citizenry' be consulted on the nomination of the magistrates, the citizens of Deventer published a petition urging

[78] D. J. Roorda, 'Le secret du prince: Monarchale tendenties in de Republiek, 1672–1702', in Roorda, *Rond Prins en Patriciaat*, pp. 172–92; Roorda, *Partij en Factie*, pp. 244–6; Franken, *Coenraad van Beuningen's politieke en diplomatieke aktiviteiten*, especially pp. 34–6; and Simon Groenveld, 'William III as Stadhouder: Prince or Minister?', in Esther Mijers and David Onnekink (eds), *Redefining William III: The Impact of the King-Stadholder in International Context* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), pp. 17–37.

[79] Israel, *Dutch Republic: Rise, Greatness and Fall*, pp. 817–18, 826.

[80] Troost, *Willem III*, p. 111; P. J. Blok, *Relazioni Veneziane: Venetiaansche berichten over de Vereenigde Nederlanden, 1600–1795* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1909), p. 318.

[81] *Naeckt vertoogh van den handel en wandel der gewesene regenten tot Harderwyck* (Kampen: Jasper Vollenhove, 1674), USTC 1811383.

[82] Israel, *Dutch Republic: Rise, Greatness and Fall*, p. 828; Frits Boeyer, 'William III and the Reformed Church of the Netherlands', in Mijers and Onnekink (eds), *Redefining William III*, pp. 109–23, here pp. 114–16.

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the prince to change his mind.[83] The citizens of Deventer were not alone: in fact, this sort of petitioning was actively encouraged by the authorities. In September 1676 the States of Overijssel issued a placard in which they reminded their citizens that they could attend the assembly of the States in Kampen on 3 October, where they could present supplications and petitions for consideration.[84] We know that such petitions could have serious effects. On 12 February 1674, the States General announced a ban on French imports, specifically targeting French brandy, vinegar, salt and paper. On 9 October of the same year, the States published a humiliating reversal, proclaiming the annulment of the ordinance after widespread popular dissent.[85] More so than the prince, the regents had experienced the wrath of their citizens in 1672 and were eager not to see it repeated.

In the Williamite Republic, the regents were especially attuned to the demands of their citizens because they imposed upon them an ever-increasing tax burden. To finance William's successive wars with France, the tax burden in Holland doubled between 1671 and 1690.[86] In the 1670s, the authorities levelled a series of extraordinary wealth and property taxes to raise money for military and naval expenditure. A 200th penny capital wealth tax, targeting individuals with capital of 1,000 guilders or more, was raised no fewer than twenty-eight times between 1671 and 1678.[87] The regents were seriously testing the depths of their citizens' pockets. There were major popular disturbances in Holland in 1678, because the end of the war was not followed by an immediate decrease in taxation: given the immense debt that the province took on to finance the war, it proved impossible to relieve the tax burden.[88] Instead, the authorities were constantly on the lookout to expand the range of excise duties.

In 1674, two new excise duties proclaimed in Holland failed spectacularly after they proved unenforceable due to popular opposition. One was levied on the production and sale of footwear, and another on 'recreation', levying excise on board and lodging in taverns and inns. The announcement of both excises was accompanied by considerable publicity. The tax form pamphlet announcing the conditions of the excise on footwear survives in seven editions, three printed by *Statendrukker*, Jacobus Scheltus and four reprinted anonymously.[89] The Holland

[83] *Deductie voor de gesworene gemeente der stadt Deventer, aen de heere Prince van Orange, &c. overgegeven* (s.l.: s.n., [1677]), USTC 1813322.
[84] *Notificatie. Wort by desen bekent gemaeckt, dat de gedeputeerden van de ed: mog: heeren Staten van Over-yssel wederom sullen vergaderen binnen de stadt Campen, op den 3. October 1676* (s.l.: s.n., 1676), USTC 1571000.
[85] *Publicatie. De Staten Generael doen te weten: dat de resolutien tegens den invoer van allerhande brandewijnen, azynen, papier ende kastanien, als mede 't Fransche zout, gemortificeert ende ingetrocken sullen werden* (The Hague: Jacobus Scheltus, 1674), USTC 1523190.
[86] De Vries and Van der Woude, *First Modern Economy*, p. 109.
[87] De Vries and Van der Woude, *First Modern Economy*, p. 107. See also Fritschy, 'The Efficiency of Taxation in Holland', esp. pp. 64–75.
[88] Dekker, *Holland in beroering*, p. 135.
[89] *Ordonnantie, waer nae binnen den lande van Hollandt ende West-Vrieslandt sal werden gheheven*

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commissaries responsible for the new excise duties even took to advertising the sale of the tax farming positions in the *Oprechte Haerlemse Courant*.[90] The footwear excise was abandoned the same year as it was introduced, and the *recreatiegeld* was abandoned two years later. In their place the States gradually announced a series of progressive excise duties which targeted the wealthier classes of citizens.[91] These included duties on the ownership of coaches and private yachts, the consumption of coffee, tea and tobacco, and the employment of household servants. By introducing such progressive duties, the regents tried to express their consideration for a population burdened by the most onerous tax system in Europe.

den impost op laersen, schoenen, galossen ende muylen (The Hague: Jacobus Scheltus, 1674), USTC 1810706.

[90] *Extraordinaire Haerlemse Donderdaeghse Courant*, no. 4 (Haarlem: Abraham Casteleyn, 25 January 1674); and *Oprechte Haerlemse Saterdaegse Courant*, no. 8 (Haarlem: Abraham Casteleyn, 24 February 1674); Der Weduwen and Pettegree, *News, Business and Public Information*, pp. 489, 492.

[91] Prak and Van Zanden, 'Tax Morale and Citizenship', esp. p. 149. See also De Vries and Van der Woude, *First Modern Economy*, p. 102.

11

Pamphlet Wars and Declarations

Given the power that he accumulated after the Disaster Year, one might be forgiven for suspecting that William III had monarchical ambitions in the Dutch Republic. In reality, he harboured no such aspirations.[1] Even if he had, the debacle concerning his elevation to Duke of Gelderland and Count of Zutphen was a stark reminder that even fervent Orangists remained committed republicans. William's rejection in 1672 of the suggestion made by his uncle, Charles II, that France and England could make William an absolute ruler in a Dutch rump state also demonstrates that William retained some sympathy for the perplexing, decentralised politics of the Dutch Republic. Although it is well established that William did his best to appoint his (often badly underqualified) cronies to influential offices, the prince never altered the political structure of the Republic. With this conservatism, he was not so different from the bulk of the regent class.

In respect of strategies of political communication, William also had more in common with the regents than his grand status of Prince of Orange would suggest. William could inspire loyalty among the Dutch population as their saviour of 1672, the defender of the Protestant faith and the offspring of the Netherlands' most illustrious family. Yet this did not mean that he could afford to disregard public opinion. Far from being relegated to the sidelines, the Dutch public was an influential force in the political affairs of the Williamite Republic. In 1684, a disagreement over the size of the army proved to be the most contentious issue of William's tenure as Stadtholder. This disagreement also unleashed one of the greatest public debates of the 17th-century Dutch Republic, a debate in which William and the regents were determined that the Dutch public should be involved.

The political crisis of 1684 has never attracted much scholarly attention.[2] Although the debate generated a quantity of pamphlets unrivalled only by the

[1] D. J. Roorda, 'Willem III, de Koning-Stadthouder' and 'Le secret du Prince. Monarchale tendenties in de Republiek, 1672–1702', in his *Rond Prins en Patriciaat*, pp. 118–42 and 172–89.

[2] The best overviews are provided by Gerdina Hendrika Kurtz, *Willem III en Amsterdam, 1683–1685* (Utrecht: Kemink & zoon, 1928); Franken, *Coenraad van Beuningen's politieke en diplomatieke aktiviteiten*, pp. 220–38; and Elizabeth Clare Edwards, *Amsterdam and William III: The Role of*

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Disaster Year, it is scarcely mentioned in studies on print and pamphleteering.[3] This absence of interest is a real detriment to our understanding of the culture of public debate in the Dutch Republic. Recent scholarship on pamphleteering has emphasised the agency of private citizens and publishers.[4] The pamphlet debates are commonly characterised as unwelcome to the aristocratic regents: 'Government officials were not usually supporters of pamphlets. . . . Pamphlets were thus a thorn in the side of the ruling parties and their supporters at all levels of government.'[5] The pamphlet debate of 1684 undermines this proposition completely, as it proves the Prince of Orange and the Dutch regents to be active pamphleteers. They played a central role in fostering public debate, and they had no qualms about pursuing their political strategy in print.

This chapter will explore the crisis of 1684, concentrating on the attempts made by William and his chief ally, Grand Pensionary Gaspar Fagel, to manipulate the debate by blackening the names of their domestic opponents. While they came close to achieving their aims, for William 1684 was above all a lesson in failure. That he learned much from the experience comes through in the second half of the chapter, which discusses the importance of a rich variety of strategies of state communication in William's assault on England in 1688. The Glorious Revolution was not only an unprecedented feat of Dutch arms, but also a triumph of political communication. As this case study indicates, without William's occasionally tortuous experience as a statesman in the Dutch Republic, he would not have become King of England, Scotland and Ireland.

Amsterdam and the ambassador

The crisis of 1684 was precipitated by international tension. Since the end of the Franco-Dutch War in 1678, King Louis XIV had gradually consolidated the eastern and northern borders of France. The king's lawyers unearthed dubious claims to strategic border fortresses, which were forcibly occupied by the king's regiments. William looked on with despair as France seized the Free Imperial city of Strasbourg and the province of Alsace and then focused its gaze on the

Influence, Interest and Patronage on Policy-Making in the Dutch Republic, 1672–1684 (PhD thesis: University College London, 1998).

[3] The crisis does not feature in any of the most recent contributions discussing pamphleteering in the Dutch Golden Age: see Harms, *Pamfletten en publieke opinie*; Vroomen, *Taal van de Republiek*; Clazina Dingemanse, *Rap van tong, scherp van pen. Literaire discussiecultuur in Nederlandse praatjespamfletten (circa 1600–1750)* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2008); Deen, Onnekink and Reinders (eds), *Pamphlets and Politics*; José de Kruif, Marijke Meijer Drees and Jeroen Salman (eds), *Het lange leven van het pamflet: Boekhistorische, iconografische, literaire en politieke aspecten van pamfletten, 1600–1900* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2006).

[4] Harms, *Pamfletten en publieke opinie*, esp. pp. 248–56; and Reinders, *Printed Pandemonium*, esp. pp. 18–22.

[5] Platt, *Britain and the Bestandstwisten*, p. 158. An exception is the recent work by Jan Haverkate: see his *Spindoctors van de Gouden Eeuw*.

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Southern Netherlands. The Spanish Habsburgs were too weak to defend their own possessions, while the Holy Roman Emperor and the German princes were too distracted by the Ottoman threat to commit troops to oppose France along the Rhine. Louis saw his chance, and in the autumn of 1683, French forces invaded the Southern Netherlands and surrounded Luxembourg. Spain declared war on France on 26 October and called upon the Dutch Republic to send 8,000 troops to help defend the Spanish territories, as promised under the defensive treaty signed between the two powers in 1673.

The Dutch honoured their alliance with Spain, but William knew that this token force was too small to make a difference. He proposed that the States General raise an additional 16,000 soldiers for the defence of the Southern Netherlands, to be kept in the field for four months. This would cost just under two million guilders.[6] Given that Holland would be responsible for raising more than half this sum, William's persuasive efforts were initially concentrated on the regents of that province. William submitted a formal request to the States of Holland and toured the province to persuade the magistrates of the necessity of the additional troops. Soon resistance to the proposal had been whittled down to a few cities, led by Amsterdam. How staunch this opposition would be was made clear on 3 November, when the delegates of Amsterdam read their response to the proposal in the States of Holland, urging a peaceful resolution with France for the sake of commerce. The Amsterdammers argued that an additional 16,000 troops would not be able to fight Louis effectively: it was, in their perception, an empty gesture which could only lead to open warfare, at a time when the Dutch had no foreign allies to support them. William responded bitterly that the ambassador of France 'could not have spoken more to the advantage of his king than the delegates of Amsterdam'.[7] He delivered a furious retort, in which he threatened that the leading burgomaster of Amsterdam, Coenraed van Beuningen, should lose his head for his insolent policy.

When William's anger had cooled, he led a delegation from the States of Holland to Amsterdam to persuade the magistrates. The prince hoped that his appearance in Amsterdam would encourage the citizens of the city to confront their regents and force them to submit, as they had in 1672. William made a grand entry into the city but was met with a remarkably chilly reception. He only heard murmurings of discontent against him, and rumours that he would lead the Republic into a disastrous war.[8] While William conferred with the magistrates in the town hall, citizens on the Dam square and around the bourse watched carefully. In contrast to William's expectations, the Amsterdam magistrates actually feared that citizens might enter the town hall and force them to defy the prince openly. It did not come

[6] Kurtz, *Willem III en Amsterdam*, p. 62.
[7] Kurtz, *Willem III en Amsterdam*, p. 67.
[8] Israel, *Dutch Republic: Rise, Greatness and Fall*, p. 832.

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to this, but after six days of unsuccessful negotiations, the prince stormed out of the city. He had miscalculated the sentiments of the people of Amsterdam, who, through their physical presence, had a significant influence over the magistrates. The regents, fearful of William's reaction, prepared for a recurrence of 1650, when William II had made a surprise attack on the city. In January and February the council passed resolutions which doubled the city watch and ordered citizens to break up the ice around the city walls.[9]

The political deadlock was exacerbated by the inexhaustible activity of the French ambassador in The Hague, Jean-Antoine de Mesmes, the Count of Avaux. The ambassador was an experienced diplomat who had represented Louis XIV at the peace congress in Nijmegen in 1678, and he had resided in The Hague as ambassador ever since. He was familiar with the factional divisions in the Republic, and he knew how its complex politics could be exploited. On 5 November 1683, he reassured the States General that Louis would only attempt to take Namur and Luxembourg and would push no further into Flanders. He ensured that his memorandum was printed, and it soon circulated in no fewer than five editions.[10] This was one of the first times that the ambassador engaged in this form of public diplomacy, where he delivered a formal petition to the States but simultaneously appealed to the public beyond the closed council chamber.[11] The following year Avaux embarked upon a far more extensive campaign of publicity, but in 1683 his public assurance of Louis's good faith ended in embarrassment. Five days after his address was delivered, Louis's forces had taken two strategic fortress towns in Flanders, Courtrai and Diksmuide.

The disparity between Avaux's promises and the conduct of the French army strengthened support for Prince William. By January 1684, Amsterdam's camp in the States of Holland had been whittled down to Delft and Schiedam. On 31 January, William's loyal ally, Grand Pensionary Gaspar Fagel, pushed through the troop enlargement with a majority vote, a rare and unpopular means of resolving political deadlock in the States. Yet Amsterdam's financial contribution, which made up over a quarter of the taxes raised in the entire Republic, was essential to implement the troop enlargement. To sway the stubborn regents, Fagel and William resolved to turn them by other means. Now that Amsterdam was isolated in its opposition, they could attempt to stir up public resentment against it.

For this venture, the Grand Pensionary and the prince could exploit the close relationship between the burgomasters of Amsterdam and the Count of Avaux. This relationship stretched back to the peace of Nijmegen in 1678, when Avaux

[9] Kurtz, *Willem III en Amsterdam*, p. 105.
[10] *Memorie, overgelevert door den heer graef d'Avaux aen de Staten Generael. Den 5 november* (s.l.: s.n., 1683), USTC 1826225.
[11] See Helmers, 'Public Diplomacy in Early Modern Europe'.

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had played a considerable role in amplifying Amsterdam's demands for a swift peace. On that occasion he had written to Louis that he was 'master of Amsterdam as much as of Paris'.[12] Once again, the ambassador recognised that his best chance to keep the Dutch Republic out of the conflict between France and Spain was to flatter Amsterdam and stiffen resolve against William. In December 1683 and early January 1684, the burgomasters had received the ambassador on multiple occasions, discussing Louis's intentions and considering possible solutions to the crisis. The ambassador made many promises, offering that if the Dutch pulled back their 8,000 troops from the Southern Netherlands, then France would abandon the Southern Netherlands and attack Spain elsewhere. The Amsterdammers urged Avaux to speak with the other members of the Republic and make known to them the offer of the king. They also promised the ambassador that they would correspond with the States of Friesland and Groningen, which had thus far not yet committed themselves to the prince's proposal.

The Count of Avaux informed Louis frequently of his progress in The Hague and Amsterdam. On 9 January he wrote a lengthy account of his latest discussions with the burgomasters of Amsterdam. This letter was intercepted between Maastricht and Liège by the Governor-General of the Southern Netherlands and promptly sent to Gaspar Fagel. The letter revealed little that was not already known by Fagel and William, who knew that Amsterdam and Avaux had been in contact. But the letter heaped repeated praise upon Amsterdam for assisting the cause of France by obstructing the attempts of William to raise the additional 16,000 soldiers. It also revealed that the burgomasters of Amsterdam were trying to persuade Friesland and Groningen to support their position. In the eyes of Fagel and William, this provided ample material to taint the reputation of Amsterdam's burgomasters with the accusation of treachery.

On 16 February 1684, William entered the assembly of the States of Holland and announced that he had a grave matter to discuss. He ordered the two delegates of Amsterdam, Gerrit Hooft and Jacob Hop, to exit the room, and for the doors to be closed behind them. He then read the intercepted letter of 9 January to the assembly; because of the poor French of some of the delegates, Fagel also read the letter in a Dutch translation, interspersing its content with his own commentary to emphasise Amsterdam's deceitfulness. After several rounds of discussion and voting, the shocked delegates agreed to confiscate the papers of the Amsterdam delegates, so that an investigation could be launched to uncover whether Amsterdam had committed treason in its conferences with Avaux. The delegates agreed that the matter should be kept secret until the investigation had been completed.[13] Yet after the assembly was dismissed, Fagel had the intercepted letter

[12] Jean-Antoine de Mesmes, *Négociations de Monsieur le Comte d'Avaux en Hollande, depuis 1679, jusqu'en 1684. Tome premier* (Paris: Durand & Pissot, 1752), p. 6.
[13] Kurtz, *Willem III en Amsterdam*, pp. 107–10.

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printed by Jacobus Scheltus, who produced at least four editions, two in Dutch and two in French.[14] Soon the letter was reprinted from Rotterdam to Alkmaar and also translated into English. No fewer than eighteen editions are known to us, making this one of the most widely reprinted pamphlets of the 17th-century Dutch Republic. Amsterdam's secret negotiations with Avaux were laid bare for all to see.

The burgomasters of Amsterdam were taken completely by surprise. The two delegates of the city in The Hague had been excluded from the reading of the letter and re-entered the assembly without knowing its contents. The first copy that the magistrates received was the printed version of Scheltus, the same that had been sent to all municipal councils in Holland and that was sold openly throughout the country.[15] By 19 February the magistrates had issued a short formal response in the form of a letter, sent to their colleagues in the States of Holland, and issued in print by the *stadsdrukker* of Amsterdam. The magistrates urged calm and restraint. Avaux's letter had included sections of code, which, the regents attested, had been poorly deciphered. They also accused the Spanish Governor-General of sending Fagel an extract of the letter highlighting the sections most damning to Amsterdam.[16] In this they were supported by the Count of Avaux, who delivered three memoranda to the States General, on 19, 22 and 28 February, in which he complained of the poor decoding of his letter, and especially of its printing.

With the opposition on the defensive, Fagel tried to deliver a decisive blow. He wrote an account of the events that had taken place at the States assembly of 16 February, followed by a discussion of the contents of the intercepted letter. With his anonymous *Missive van een regent* (Letter of a regent), written in an accessible style devoid of diplomatic jargon, Fagel produced a damning indictment of Amsterdam's dealings for a broad public.[17] Writing under the pseudonym 'Philalethes' (Lover of truth), he accused the Amsterdammers of high treason. They had aided the representative of a monarch who was at war with an ally of the Dutch Republic and actively undermined the diplomatic efforts of the States General.[18] If such matters were permitted, then the downfall of the Republic was at hand. That Avaux had made great 'efforts to protect the gentlemen of Amsterdam' only served to highlight the guilt of the burgomasters.[19] Fagel concluded that

[14] *Copie van een brief van den heere d'Avaux, aen den Alder-Christelijcksten Koningh, In den Hage den 9 January 1684* (The Hague: Jacobus Scheltus, 1684), USTC 1826534; *Lettre de monsieur le comte d'Avaux au roy tres-chrestien, le 9. janvier 1684* (La Haye: Jacobus Scheltus, 1684), USTC 1826526.

[15] *Copie van een missive, door de heeren burgermeesteren en raedt der stadt Amsterdam, geschreven aen de andere steden* (Rotterdam: Pieter Martens [=Amsterdam: s.n.], 1684), USTC 1826746, p. 7.

[16] *Copie van een missive*, especially pp. 4–5.

[17] [Gaspar Fagel], *Missive van een regent ter vergaderinge van haer Ed. Groot Mog. De Heeren Staten van Hollandt ende West-Vrieslandt, op den 16 Februarij 1684 praesent zijnde geweest, aen een ander regent* ([The Hague: Jacobus Scheltus], 1684), USTC 1825095.

[18] Fagel, *Missive van een regent*, pp. 37–8, 43.

[19] Fagel, *Missive van een regent*, p. 54.

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'it saddens me, and all good patriots, that the gentlemen of Amsterdam have embarked upon such a wrong and evil path, with such great disadvantages for the fatherland'.[20] Again it was Jacobus Scheltus who, as printer of the States General and the States of Holland, produced the pamphlet. Although the pamphlet was published anonymously, the woodcut vignette used by Scheltus on the title page is identical to that used by him on several other publications in 1684 (Figure 11.1).[21]

The publicity strategy of Fagel and Prince William rested on shocking the magistrates of Amsterdam into submission. By offering the intercepted letter to the public, Fagel and William hoped that the suggestion of treachery would be enough to generate a wave of popular anger against the burgomasters of Amsterdam. Fagel's anonymous *Missive van een regent* then provided a framework in which the contents of the letter could be interpreted by those unfamiliar with the political debates in the States assembly.

The publication made a deep impression on the regents of Amsterdam, who were determined that the accusation of treachery should be publicly refuted. Fagel and William elicited a response which, in its breadth of argument and its unrepentant tone, began to swing opinion. Jacob Hop's 118-page pamphlet, the *Verantwoording van het beleidt der Heeren van Amsterdam* (Justification of the policy of the gentlemen of Amsterdam), provided a point-by-point rebuttal of Fagel's *Missive*.[22] In support of this exhaustive refutation, the magistrates sponsored numerous shorter pamphlets and tracts, many of which were printed by the *stadsdrukker* of Amsterdam, Jan Rieuwertsz. These propagated a series of very effective arguments to delegitimise the conduct of Fagel and Prince William and shifted the locus of public debate from the intercepted letter to wider considerations about the ambitions of the prince and the potential consequences of war with France.[23] The *Trouwhartige aanspraak, aan alle borgers en ingeseetenen der stadt Amsterdam* (Loyal appeal to all citizens and inhabitants of Amsterdam) juxtaposed the thriftiness of Amsterdam's city fathers, who laboured for the welfare of the state, with the courtiers of the prince, who squandered their money on women and dice. The pamphlet questioned why the Dutch should pay for the defence of Spain, especially when France would not be intimidated by an additional 16,000 troops. War, it argued, would only serve the interests of the prince.

[20] Fagel, *Missive van een regent*, p. 59.

[21] Examples include *Copie van een brief van den heere d'Avaux*, USTC 1826534; and *Missive van de Hoogh Mogende Heeren Staten Generael der Vereenighde Nederlanden; houdende antwoordt op de missive van de Staten van Vrieslandt* (The Hague: Jacobus Scheltus, 1684), USTC 1825015.

[22] [Jacob Hop], *Verantwoording van het beleidt der Heeren van Amsterdam* (s.l.: s.n., 1684), USTC 1826816.

[23] See, for some notable examples, *Korte wederlegginge van de missive van een regent* (s.l.: s.n., 1684), USTC 1824945; *Amsterdam gehoont en beledight in hare gedeputeerdens en papieren* (s.l.: s.n., 1684), USTC 1824907; and *Verhael van het geene voorgevallen is in verscheyde conversatien tusschen den Heer Ambassadeur ende de Heeren Gedeputeerden der Stadt Amsterdam* (s.l.: s.n., 1684), USTC 1825080.

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MEMORIE
Van Syn Excellentie de HEER
GRAVE d'AVAUX,
Gepresenteert aen de Staten Generael
der Vereenigde Nederlanden.
ANNO 1684.

Ambassadeur van sijne Aller-Christe-
lijke Majesteyt,
Aen de Hoog Mog. Heeren
Staten Generael, op de Propositien
die haar Ho. Mog. hem hebben
gedaan, uyt den name ende van
wegen hare hoge Geallieerden.
Anno 1684.

MEMOIRE
DE S.E.
LE COMTE D'AVAUX,
Ambassadeur extraordinaire
du Roy tres-Chrétien,
STATS GENERAUX,

MEMORIE
Van zyn Excellentie den
GRAAF van AVAUX,
Gepresenteert aan de
STAATEN GENERAAL,
der Vereenigde Provincien,
1684.

MISSIVE
Van een Regent ter Vergaderinge
Anno 1684.

Figure 11.1 Gaspar Fagel's infamous *Missive*, together with four typical examples of the Count of Avaux's memoranda, submitted to the States General, 1684.

Tarnishing the reputations of William and Fagel increasingly became the focus of Amsterdam's counter-attack. According to the engraver Romeyn de Hooghe, the burgomasters approached him to see if he was willing to make a satirical broadsheet against William.[24] In De Hooghe's account, he gave them the cold shoulder, 'declaring himself generously in favour of the Lord Stadtholder, and the Good Party, of whose just cause and good opinion he had become unequivocally convinced'.[25] While this account should not be relied upon, as De Hooghe wrote it later to defend his reputation, it is certain that the regents of Amsterdam attacked Fagel and the prince in a series of anonymous pamphlets. One pamphlet reproduced the text of a proposition made by Gaspar Fagel in 1668 to the States of Friesland in support of the Perpetual Edict, in which Fagel vehemently defended the principles of True Freedom. The text was, the pamphlet urged, 'most worthy to be read in these times', as it exposed Fagel's hypocrisy and reminded its readers of the Grand Pensionary's swift ideological transformation.[26] Another pamphlet criticised Fagel's influence as Grand Pensionary under William, reminding readers

[24] Van Nierop, *The Life of Romeyn de Hooghe*, pp. 185–6.
[25] Van Nierop, *The Life of Romeyn de Hooghe*, p. 185.
[26] *Propositie, eertijds gedaan aen de Staten van Vriesland, nopende de separatie van 't Stadhouderschap* (s.l.: s.n., [1684]), USTC 1824906.

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that Fagel, like the prince, was a servant of the States, not its master: '[H]e is not the one to exercise power, but who is obliged to obey.'[27]

The accusation that Fagel was attempting to turn the Dutch Republic into a monarchy, with William at its helm, became a cornerstone of Amsterdam's defence. A series of short tracts published by *stadsdrukker* Rieuwertsz reminded the public of the virtues of the long tradition of Dutch republicanism, and the deadly consequences of monarchical or populist governments.[28] A refutation of Fagel's *Missive*, written by a self-professed 'republican', concluded with the statement:

> See here, my dear compatriot, the refutation of the defamatory libel of Philalethes [Fagel], and a general defence of the honour of all republicans, and the honour of the government of Amsterdam, [delivered] against an enemy of freedom, and the sentiments of a royalist.[29]

The Orangist response vehemently refuted allegations of monarchism on the part of William III and continued to emphasise the Francophile leanings of Amsterdam's magistracy. This attack became increasingly literary in form: in April and May, Amsterdammers were confronted by a series of satirical newspapers, short pamphlets which adopted the style of reporting common to the bi-weekly and tri-weekly newspapers of the Republic, denouncing the regents of Amsterdam for obstructing the expansion of the army.[30] The satirical *Mercurius Gallo-Belgicus* featured a fake advertisement which read: 'In Amsterdam there will be sold three old ships, the Faith, the Loyalty, and the Love.'[31] Another included a report from 'Amsterdam, 7 May', which read:

> Here has been sung the *Te Deum Laudamus* [a common means of celebrating political triumphs in France], regarding the agreement of a twenty-year peace, at which the ministers of France, Denmark, Brandenburg and Cologne were all present; but while the Spaniards are collapsing so spectacularly, the musicians received for their efforts a good drinking-penny.[32]

[27] *Antwoord, op een missive van een regend, onder de naem van Philalethes geschreeven, aen een also genaemde ander regend* (s.l.: s.n., 1684), USTC 1825062, p. 4.
[28] *Dat eene populare ofte volks-regeering voor den gemeenen ingeseetenen van Hollandt seer schadelick, eene monarchale ofte eenhoofdige doodelick; ende daar en tegen eene aristokratike regeering, seer heylsaam is* (Amsterdam: Jan Rieuwertsz, 1684), USTC 1824590; *De vaste gronden vry-en gerechtighden van de regeering van Hollant en West-Vrieslant* (s.l.: s.n., 1684), USTC 1827028; *Vertoog van de algemeene vryheydt der Staten van Hollandt ende West-Vrieslandt, onder ende gedurende de bedieninge onser graaven* (s.l.: s.n., 1684), USTC 1824919.
[29] *Antwoordt van een Republiquain op het lasterschrift van den nieuwen Vargas, schuilende onder den naam van Philalethes en van een regent in Hollandt* (Amsterdam: Jan Rieuwertsz, 1684), USTC 1824591, p. 52.
[30] Der Weduwen, *Dutch and Flemish Newspapers of the Seventeenth Century*, I, pp. 155–7.
[31] *Mercurius Gallo-Belgicus* (s.l.: s.n., 1684), USTC 1824798, p. 4.
[32] *Hora novissima, tempora pessima sunt: vigilemus. Extraordinaire Nieuwigheden uit verscheidene gewesten in 't schrikkel jaar* 1684 (s.l.: s.n., 1684), USTC 1824778, p. 4.

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Although they were an inventive form of political pamphleteering, these fictional newspapers were opaque except to the most politically astute participants in the debate. The satirical newspapers did not offer a persuasive contribution to the conflict but seem to have been published as a brief respite for Orangist sympathisers, who could see their cause unravelling in a wave of public opposition. If Fagel and William had enjoyed the initiative in February, by the spring they found themselves trapped in a chaotic public debate, spurred by printed letters, memoranda and pamphlets from multiple participants.

While William had focused most of his attention on rallying the regents of Holland to his cause, he also faced hostility elsewhere in the union. The States of Friesland and Groningen had previously protested in the States General against the proposed troop enlargement, so on 16 March Fagel and William pushed through the resolution in the States General in their absence.[33] The regents of the two northern provinces were incensed and launched a public campaign of defiance. The States of Friesland and Groningen printed their resolutions condemning the vote in the States General, as well as their indignant letters to the States General. They refused to contribute any funds to the troop enlargement and insisted that the companies on their payroll of the 8,000 soldiers already deployed in the Southern Netherlands be returned to Friesland and Groningen. The States General replied in public to these printed missives, but dissent continued to spread. When William tried to enforce discipline in the States of Zeeland, threatening the regents in a public letter, the magistrates of Goes and Middelburg in Zeeland issued recalcitrant resolutions, refusing to pay their share of the troop enlargement.[34]

William's opponents were emboldened by the incessant activity of the Count of Avaux. The French ambassador delivered a series of memoranda in the States General between February and June 1684, in which he pressed the States to support a peaceful resolution of the conflict between France and Spain. We know of at least sixty-six surviving editions of his different memoranda from 1684, most no longer than eight pages in quarto. This was an unprecedented public campaign by an ambassador representing his country abroad. These short pamphlets were remarkably effective pieces of publicity, bolstering the resolve of William's critics, who could point to realistic solutions to the conflict that did not rely on the expansion of the army.

The Count of Avaux was persistent in his diplomatic exertions, but he did not have the stage to himself. The ambassadors and envoys of Spain, Brandenburg, the Holy Roman Emperor, Cologne, Genoa and England all weighed in on the

[33] Kurtz, *Willem III en Amsterdam*, p. 124; Franken, *Coenraad van Beuningen's politieke en diplomatieke aktiviteiten*, p. 232.

[34] *Missive van syn hoogheyt den heere Prince van Orangien, aan de heeren Staten van Zeeland* (s.l.: s.n., 1684), USTC 1825116; *Missive van de ed. heeren van der Goes, aen sijn hoogheyt den heere prince van Oranjen* (s.l.: s.n., 1684), USTC 1519222; *Advis van de heeren van Middelburgh ingebracht ter vergaderingh van de Staten van Zeelant* (Middelburg: Jan Maertensz, 1684), USTC 1824516.

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debate with their own printed memoranda. The Spanish ambassador, Baltasar de Fuenmayor, was the most active: at least thirty editions of his various memoranda survive. He desperately tried to counter Avaux's pacifistic promises and urged the Dutch public to come to the aid of the Southern Netherlands. He was supported in his efforts by Estienne d'Andrea, the envoy of Genoa, who delivered a plea for an anti-French coalition after the French had bombarded Genoa in retaliation for its financial assistance to the Habsburg cause.[35] But the envoys of Brandenburg, Cologne and the Emperor all made clear that they valued a negotiated settlement rather than heightened tension.[36] Cologne even threatened to intervene on the side of France, which made Friesland and Groningen even more determined in their opposition.

No country would welcome having all the world's states bandying their politics about in this way. But once the precedent was set, it was hard to call it to a halt. The public efforts of the diplomatic corps in The Hague had considerable influence on the debate. On 29 April, Avaux communicated a memorandum to the States General in which Louis XIV urged the Dutch to support peace negotiations. Louis promised that if Spain surrendered Luxembourg, then Louis would give up all his Flemish conquests and maintain only a few small fortresses close to the French border. The memorandum, like many others submitted by Avaux, was printed in multiple editions. Shortly afterwards, there was unrest in Dordrecht, as citizens demanded that their regents support the peace negotiations offered by Avaux.[37] The Amsterdam burgomaster Coenraed van Beuningen also recognised the effect of the public debate. On 8 April, he wrote a letter to his colleague Nicolaes Witsen in which he credited the rising success of Amsterdam's cause to popular unrest and dissent, citing the 'murmurings' at home and in other provinces.[38] The debate animated the entire country. In 1684, according to one pamphleteer, one could hear conversations in Dutch bookshops 'regarding affairs of state argued with greater conviction and opinion than the gentlemen regents would dare themselves'.[39]

There was no doubt that print had played a crucial role in the debate. Commentators lamented the anarchic freedom of public debate. A supporter of Amsterdam, responding to Fagel's *Missive van een regent*, noted that

> it is a shame, and it gives the entire Republic reason to sigh, that a regent commits himself so to his passions, that he does not prevent himself from making known to the world through print such an evil and abusive piece of writing.[40]

[35] *Memoire presenté à messieurs les Estats Generaux, par Don Estienne d'Andrea, ministre de la republique de Genes* (The Hague: Crispijn Hoeckwater, 1684), USTC 1826541.
[36] Kurtz, *Willem III en Amsterdam*, pp. 119–20.
[37] Kurtz, *Willem III en Amsterdam*, p. 127.
[38] SAA, Archief van de Burgemeesters, stukken betreffende verscheidene onderwerpen, inv. 497, f. w5.
[39] *Heylsaem bericht, aen alle de gene die sich buyten haer beroep, onderwinden van staets-saken te schrijven* (Amsterdam: Pieter François, 1684), USTC 1825091, f. A3r.
[40] *Antwoord, op een missive van een regend*, p. 3.

Another groaned that '[i]s it not better to leave our government and their representatives alone?'[41] Such tropes, typical of the rhetoric of pamphleteering, obscure the fact that the public debate of 1684 was largely conducted by the authorities of the Republic, stimulated by the ambassadors of foreign powers. The wide circulation of official letters, resolutions and memoranda ensured that the debate could be followed by citizens normally excluded from the deliberations of the regents. Almost all memoranda delivered by the Count of Avaux to the States General appeared in three, four or five editions; Amsterdam's response to the publication of the intercepted letter appeared in twelve editions; the missives of the States of Friesland in six editions; and the defiant retort of the magistrates of Middelburg in eight editions. During the spring and summer of 1684 some resourceful printers even produced compendia of publications issued during the debate.[42] The composer of one of these compendia announced that '[w]hen opposing things are placed alongside one another, their characteristics become clear.'[43]

These publishers knew that controversy sold well, but they also recognised that the debate was no longer a simple conflict between two opposing parties. The quantity of print produced had become overwhelming. The publicity of discord had poisoned political debate and led to disillusionment. In the summer of 1684, one dialogue pamphlet accused all regents of enriching themselves while destabilising the foundations of the state. Supporters and opponents of the prince had all failed in their duty.[44] This was a widely shared sentiment. Shortly after its publication, 350 citizens from seventeen towns of Holland submitted a petition to the Prince of Orange in which they called for greater financial oversight of their towns, and greater autonomy for the municipal militias.[45]

The opponents of William and Fagel won a decisive victory at the beginning of summer. On 2 June, the magistrates of Amsterdam published a resolution in which they resolved to stop paying any contributions to the *gemene middelen* until their papers, which had been confiscated in the States of Holland, had been returned to them.[46] Five days later the fortress town of Luxembourg surrendered to the forces of Louis XIV. Spain indicated that it would negotiate a settlement with France, so the troop enlargement proposed by the Stadtholder had become

[41] *Heylsaem bericht*, f. A2v.

[42] *Allerhande Nouvelles van Nederlandsche Staats-saken* (s.l.: s.n., 1684), USTC 1826020; *Vervolg van consideratien over den toestant der tegenwoordige staats-zaken van Nederlandt* (s.l.: s.n., 1684), USTC 1824855.

[43] *Consideratien over den toestant der tegenwoordige staats-zaken van Nederlandt, door een liefhebber van 't gemeene best* (s.l.: s.n., 1684), USTC 1826682, p. 1.

[44] *Een same-spraak, van een Hamburger, Embder, Haagsman en een Rotterdammer* (s.l.: s.n., 1684), USTC 1824817.

[45] *Copye van een request, gepresenteert aen sijn hoogheyt, door 350 edele burgeren van de 17 steden van Hollandt* (s.l.: s.n., 1684), USTC 1824811.

[46] *Resolutie van de stad Amsterdam. Van den 2. juny 1684. nopende 't verzegelt houden van haer papieren in 's Gravenhage* (s.l.: s.n., 1684), USTC 1824926.

meaningless. William was humiliated by the stubborn defiance of regents whom he considered to be under his control. But the victory was sour too for Amsterdam. The bitterness of the debate instilled a sense of peril. The lack of unity, so visibly displayed in the first half of 1684, left the Republic exposed. The Count of Avaux had demonstrated that foreign agents could easily exploit the highly publicised political divisions in the Republic.

All sides of the conflict came to look upon 1684 with a sense of regret. A rapprochement between William and the northern provinces, and between William and Amsterdam, was carefully cultivated over the next few years.[47] This took place largely beyond the public eye, as the established ideology of oligarchic government prescribed. But when William decided to embark on his next great venture, one of the riskiest military operations of the 17th century, it was accompanied by a momentous publicity campaign. The crisis of 1684 had taught the prince that a public demonstration of unity was vital to his success. His invasion of England in 1688 was in many aspects the apex of the Dutch Golden Age. It was also an extremely accomplished act of state communication, a combined effort of the Stadtholder, the States General and the other authorities of the Dutch Republic. It was the result of a century of experience in the art of persuasion.

'The States printer is not to be corrupted'

On 15 November 1688, the greatest fleet ever assembled in Northern European waters, more than double the size of the Spanish Armada, anchored off Torbay, on the south-west coast of England. Over 400 ships had transported some 15,000 troops and 4,000 horses across the Channel. The invasion was led by Prince William III of Orange and was principally funded by the States General, with the city of Amsterdam as its chief backer: its design was to oust the Catholic King James II and VII and install, in his place, his Protestant son-in-law and eldest daughter (William and his wife Mary Stuart) on the throne of England, Scotland and Ireland. The invasion was a preventative strike, aimed at binding Britain to the cause of the Dutch Republic, to counter the threat of France and Louis XIV. It was a huge gamble. The Dutch knew that Louis would declare war upon them as soon as he heard of the invasion. The States General had committed their best regiments to the fleet. If the armada failed to effect a landing or was defeated by James's army, then the Dutch Republic would be lost.

This was also the decisive moment of William's political life. The operation was planned down to the finest details, a masterpiece of military organisation.[48]

[47] Petra Dreiskämper, 'Aan de vooravond van de overtocht naar Engeland: Een onderzoek naar de verhouding tussen Willem III en Amsterdam in de Staten van Holland, 1685–1688', *Utrechtse Historische Cahiers*, 17 (1996), 1–79.

[48] Arjen van der Kuijl, *Een groot dessein: maritieme aspecten van de expeditie van Willem III naar Engeland in 1688* (PhD thesis: University of Leiden, 1986).

But no degree of planning could ensure good weather. Adverse winds had kept the fleet in port, and once it set off a severe storm forced it back to harbour, with the loss of some 1,000 horses. William persisted, and finally, on 11 November, a providential, 'Protestant' wind allowed the fleet to depart and sail unopposed through the Channel. As the armada sailed south-west, it spread its ships as widely as possible, with the two flanks of the fleet firing volleys at the coasts of England and France. This was a purposeful demonstration of Dutch military prowess. Yet William recognised that a display of arms would not be enough to grant him the crown of England or rally Protestant Europe to face the fury of France. He would have to cultivate the support of his new subjects and persuade his allies that this was a cause worth a costly war. As one agent wrote in April 1688, if William wanted to keep England 'in humour, [he] . . . must entertain it by papers'.[49]

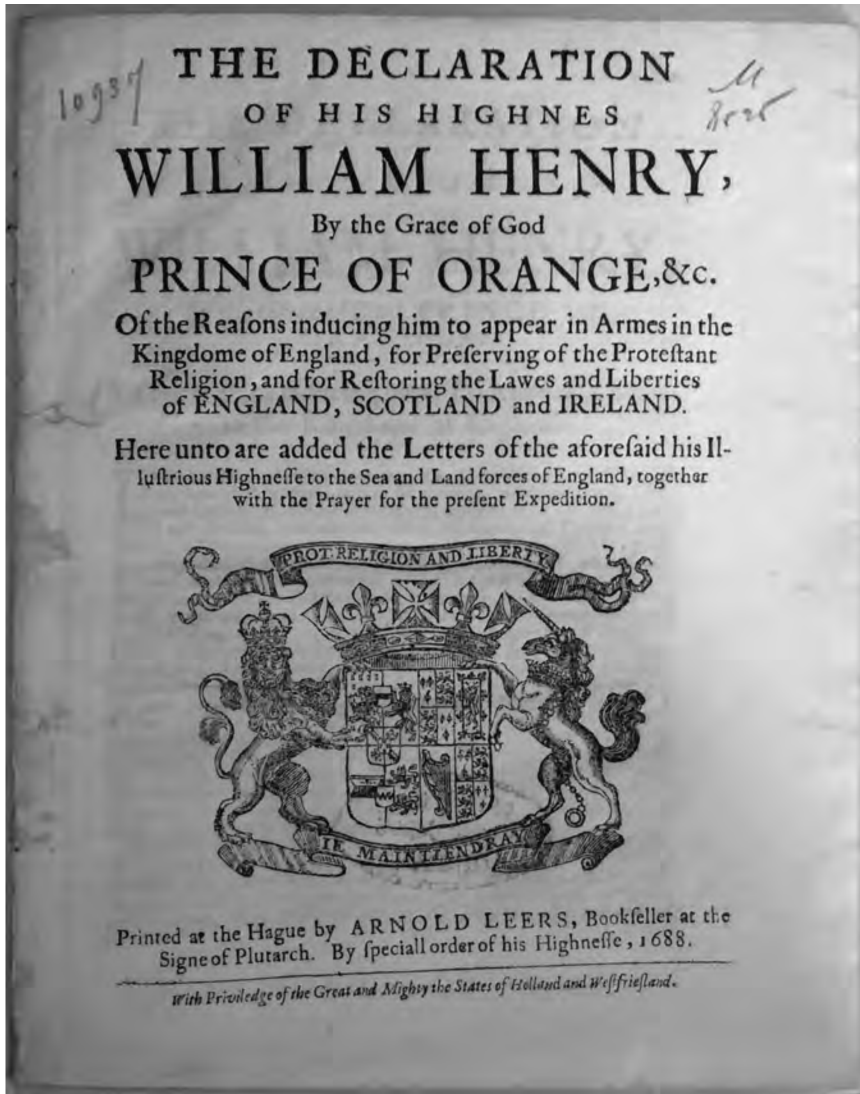
For this reason, the Dutch armada carried with it thousands of copies of William's justification of the invasion: the *Declaration of his Highness William Henry of the reasons inducing him to appear in armes in the Kingdome of England* (Figure 11.2).[50] In 5,000 words, William explained that he had come to redress the 'arbitrary government and slavery' imposed upon England, Scotland and Ireland by James and his 'evil counsellors'. It was drafted by Grand Pensionary Gaspar Fagel, William's loyal ally, and translated into English by Gilbert Burnet, a prominent Anglican cleric and staunch opponent of James who had attached himself to William's court. It appealed directly to James's adversaries in England, echoing their criticisms of James's ecclesiastical policies and political autocracy, and it offered to Parliament an expansion of its powers. Even the English ambassador in The Hague, Ignatius White, Marquis d'Albeville, who abhorred the contents of the *Declaration*, conceded that its style was 'civil and smooth' and predicted that it would 'gain the people's affections'.[51]

The *Declaration* provided the invasion with a clear political agenda. The title page of the pamphlet bore a specially cut woodcut coat of arms of England, Scotland and Ireland, emblazoned with the motto of the House of Orange, 'Je Maintiendrai' (I will maintain) and the phrase 'Prot. Religion and Liberty'. The same phrase was displayed on banners from the masts of the Dutch armada, and it would be with this phrase on their colours that Dutch forces marched from Devon to London, largely unopposed by James's troops. The *Declaration* was distributed and sold throughout England, Scotland and the European continent. It was proclaimed in churches and market squares wherever William entered with his forces. It would come to play a crucial part in the consolidation of Parliamentary dominance in

[49] Cited in Lois G. Schwoerer, 'Propaganda in the Revolution of 1688–89', *The American Historical Review*, 82 (1997), 843–74, here 848.

[50] *The declaration of his highnes William Henry prince of Orange, &c. of the reasons inducing him to appear in armes in the kingdome of England, for preserving of the protestant religion* (The Hague: Arnout Leers, 1688), USTC 1819424.

[51] Schwoerer, 'Propaganda in the Revolution', p. 852.



THE DECLARATION
OF HIS HIGHNES
WILLIAM HENRY,
By the Grace of God
PRINCE OF ORANGE, &c.
Of the Reaſons inducing him to appear in Armes in the Kingdome of England, for Preſerving of the Proteſtant Religion, and for Reſtoring the Lawes and Liberties of ENGLAND, SCOTLAND and IRELAND.
Here unto are added the Letters of the aforeſaid his Illuſtrious Highneſſe to the Sea and Land forces of England, together with the Prayer for the preſent Expedition.

Printed at the Hague by ARNOLD LEERS, Bookſeller at the Signe of Plutarch. By ſpeciall order of his Highneſſe, 1688.

With Priviledge of the Great and Mighty the States of Holland and Weſtfrieſland.

Figure 11.2 *The declaration of his highnes William Henry prince of Orange, &c. of the reasons inducing him to appear in armes in the kingdome of England, for preserving of the protestant religion* (The Hague: Arnout Leers, 1688). A copy of one of the English editions of William's *Declaration*, published 'by special order of his Highness'.

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British politics, and the declaration of the Bill of Rights in 1689.[52] The *Declaration* was one of the most successful acts of publicity of the 17th century, and arguably the most important printed piece of state communication produced in the Dutch Republic.

The irony of the Dutch invasion of 1688 and the publication of the *Declaration* was that neither was a surprise.[53] Already by the middle of the summer, the agents of King James knew that something was afoot. Ambassador Albeville reported to James that he had found a fishing barge in Scheveningen, destined for England, carrying 10,000 copies of a pamphlet that accused James of destroying the Anglican Church.[54] When the ambassador found out that the *Declaration* had been drafted and was to be printed, he made energetic efforts to obtain a copy. On 28 September, he was instructed to 'spare for no money, nor stick at any sum, that may procure it'.[55] Yet all his efforts to secure an advance copy of the *Declaration* proved fruitless. On 12 October, the ambassador explained that

> I have taken all possible care to come by the Declaration which I hear is on the press . . . the States printer is not to be corrupted; I have employed some to see if any of his servants can be; they are all sworn, and their places so lucrative they will not endanger them; I will leave no stone unmoved.[56]

Three days later he reported that he was still unsuccessful. Albeville's failure to obtain a copy of the *Declaration* was especially frustrating when the English government heard how many copies were put to the press. The English consul in Amsterdam wrote home that 20,000 copies of the *Declaration* had been printed in Amsterdam, and similar numbers were produced in Rotterdam and The Hague.[57] A week before the armada sailed, barges from Amsterdam departed for England with an unspecified number of copies in their holds, which were to be distributed in England as soon as the prince had landed, but not earlier.[58] At least sixteen editions were printed in the Dutch Republic in September and October 1688, in English, Dutch and French – many, as the consul reported, in extraordinarily large print runs. As soon as the fleet set sail, the *Declaration* became available for sale in the Dutch Republic for two or three stuivers a copy, and it soon spread further

[52] On the impact and appropriation of the *Declaration* in England, see Tony Claydon, 'William III's Declaration of Reasons and the Glorious Revolution', *The Historical Journal*, 39 (1996), 87–108.
[53] Van der Kuijl, *Een groot dessein*, pp. 19, 36, 44.
[54] C. H. Slechte, 'De propagandacampagnes voor koning-stadhouder Willem III. Een verkenning', *Jaarboek Oranje-Nassau Museum* (2002), 71–105, here 84.
[55] Cited in Jonathan I. Israel, 'Propaganda in the Making of the Glorious Revolution', in Susan Roach (ed.), *Across the Narrow Seas: Studies in the History and Bibliography of Britain and the Low Countries* (London: The British Library, 1991), pp. 167–77, here p. 167.
[56] Israel, 'Propaganda in the Making of the Glorious Revolution', p. 167
[57] Israel, 'Propaganda in the Making of the Glorious Revolution', p. 169.
[58] N. Japikse, *Correspondentie van Willem III en van Hans Willem Bentinck, Eerste Gedeelte, Deel II* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1928), pp. 618–19; Van der Kuijl, *Een groot dessein*, p. 19.

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afield.[59] At least six editions were printed in German in Hamburg, Magdeburg and other German cities. The combined print run, in all languages, easily exceeded 100,000 copies.

The publication of the *Declaration* was an extremely well-organised publicity campaign. The most important aspect of this campaign was William's control of the press. Albeville had expected that he would be able to purchase a copy from one of the printer's apprentices, a common enough procedure for enterprising ambassadors. Yet Albeville did not account for the strict regulations imposed on the printers of the Dutch authorities. Twenty years earlier, in 1669, the States General had issued a protocol for their printer in The Hague, requiring him to be present in the print shop at all times when a secret document was to be printed; he was personally to hand over all copies directly to the secretary of the States.[60] In the case of the *Declaration*, William ensured that all copies were first despatched to him or his confidant Hans Willem Bentinck.[61] To ease the burden of publication on the *Statendrukker*, who would not be able to fulfil the printing of such a large print run in a short space of time, the printing of the *Declaration* was spread between different printing houses in The Hague, Amsterdam and Rotterdam. Remarkably, all editions printed on the orders of William featured the name of a single bookseller in The Hague, Arnout Leers the younger, on the imprint or the colophon. It is possible that Leers acquired a special privilege to direct the distribution of the work, but it might also have been a case of deception on the part of the prince, meant to throw James's bloodhounds off the trail.

The *Declaration* was intended to appeal to different publics. As soon as William left the port of Hellevoetsluis with the fleet, copies of the text were handed directly to all foreign envoys in The Hague, except the English and French representatives, who were left to find a copy for themselves.[62] A French translation was produced to inform an international audience of the purpose of the expedition, and the numerous German reprints attest to significant interest in the Holy Roman Empire. The Stadtholder's frequent attempts to draw the Protestant princes of the Empire into a defensive league against France had finally come to fruition, and it was essential that the members of the league keep their promises.[63]

The distribution of the English copies was carefully organised. English copies were sent in advance of the landing to Britain on barges and fishing vessels. This was a strategy that William had used once before, in 1673, when his agents had smuggled parcels of pamphlets to England, to dissuade Parliament from

[59] P. G. Hoftijzer, *Engelse Boekverkopers bij de Beurs: De geschiedenis van de Amsterdamse boekhandels Bruyning en Swart, 1637–1724* (Amsterdam: APA – Holland University Press, 1987), pp. 154–5.
[60] Schneider, *Voorgeschiedenis*, p. 61. See also Chapter 6.
[61] Israel, 'Propaganda in the Making of the Glorious Revolution', p. 169.
[62] Schwoerer, 'Propaganda in the Revolution', p. 854.
[63] Panhuysen, *Oranje tegen de Zonnekoning*, esp. pp. 215–344.

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approving funds that would enable King Charles II to continue the Third Anglo-Dutch War.[64] If the princes and ambassadors of Europe had all come to appreciate the power of the press, William was among its most enthusiastic adopters to communicate with a foreign public.[65] Prominent English supporters of William's cause were given up to 3,000 copies each, to distribute to trusted friends and opponents of James.[66] Free copies were despatched to English booksellers, who were invited to sell them on. One English printer, John White in York, dared to reprint the *Declaration* before William had arrived in London. For his loyal service, William would later reward White with the position as printer of the king in York and the 'northern counties'.[67] The copies stowed in the hold of the fleet were distributed and affixed across England wherever William's forces passed. The *Declaration* was also reprinted numerous times in London once it was occupied by Dutch forces.

William's publicity campaign did not conclude with the publication of the *Declaration*. Stowed away in the hold of the armada was a printing press and a large stack of printing paper, ready for William to print his first proclamations on English soil.[68] When he entered Exeter, the first city to welcome him, the press was used to print broadsheets inviting English officers and soldiers to join William's side.[69] As the Dutch army made its gradual process through Southern England, many troops did indeed desert King James. Once William was safely installed in London, his officers endeavoured to repress all publications sympathetic to the exiled James. In the middle of December, a mob attacked the house of James's royal printer in London, destroying his premises and typefaces and burning all his printing formes, reams of paper and royal proclamations.[70] The censorship exercised by William in England reinforced his authority while Parliament debated the future of the realm.

Censorship was also employed in the Dutch Republic, but to altogether different effect. One anonymous pamphlet, *La Couronne Usurpée et le Prince Supposé* (The crown usurped and the supposed prince), produced in advance of the invasion, was banned by the Court of Holland. Curiously, the pamphlet offered a vindication of William and Mary's rights to the throne, advancing the rumour that James's newborn son was illegitimate. It was not banned because it

[64] K. H. D. Haley, *William of Orange and the English Opposition, 1672–4* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1953).

[65] Cf. Helmers, 'Public Diplomacy in Early Modern Europe', pp. 401–20.

[66] Schwoerer, 'Propaganda in the Revolution', p. 855.

[67] Schwoerer, 'Propaganda in the Revolution', p. 855.

[68] Schwoerer, 'Propaganda in the Revolution', p. 856.

[69] One example is *A letter, &c. Gentlemen and friends, we have given you so full, and so true an account of our intentions* ([Exeter: s.n., 1688]).

[70] Richard Velthuizen, 'De verovering verslagen. Publieke reacties en propaganda in de Engelse en Hollandse pamfletliteratuur tijdens de Glorious Revolution 1688–1689', *Jaarboek voor Nederlandse Boekgeschiedenis*, 18 (2011), 97–114; Schwoerer, 'Propaganda in the Revolution', p. 860.

was scurrilous: the regents knew that if a pamphlet was banned, it might become more popular and help make the erroneous claim about James's son more widely known. The 'punishment' of the author, printer and bookseller involved in its manufacture was extremely lenient: they had to attend a ceremony in which the author had to tear a copy of the pamphlet into pieces, and nothing more.[71]

As this episode demonstrates, control of the news supply was also exercised back in the Republic. This ensured that William's home public was supportive of the invasion and fed a positive narrative once the campaign was underway. That the invasion of England was the financial, military and political triumph of the Dutch Republic was traditionally neglected in the history of the Glorious Revolution.[72] Yet Dutch military, naval and commercial muscle was vital for the success of the venture. The warships and transport vessels were supplied by Admiralties of the Republic, while the States General had paid the troops three months' wages in advance and hired thousands of Swedish and German mercenaries to man the country's border strongholds while the army was in England. William also secured loans from Dutch bankers, including two million guilders from the Sephardic Jew Francisco Lopes Suasso in Amsterdam. Crucial for William was the backing of Amsterdam, previously a bulwark of opposition to his military ventures. He was aided by his nemesis, King Louis XIV, who drove the merchant regents into William's arms by doubling tariffs in 1687 on Dutch goods and launching a new Franco-Dutch trade war. In September 1688, Louis made matters worse by impounding Dutch ships in French ports. A new French invasion, echoing the disastrous events of 1672, was widely feared.

Louis's new mercantilist measures left the burgomasters of Amsterdam little choice. While the French ambassador, the Count of Avaux, kept up his usual flurry of overtures to Amsterdam, the magistrates had become weary of his promises. Already in 1686, burgomaster Joan Huydecoper had written to a colleague that 'it is clear to see how little one can trust Monsieur d'Avaux's words'.[73] The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685 also played a considerable role in generating support for William's invasion. Thousands of Huguenot refugees arrived in the Dutch Republic, bringing with them stories of repression and Catholic cruelty.[74] When, in 1687, James issued the Declaration of Indulgence, granting

[71] Rindert Jagersma, 'Prohibition as Propaganda Technique: The Case of the Pamphlet *La couronne usurpée et le prince supposé* (1688)', in Lamal, Cumby and Helmers (eds), *Print and Power*, pp. 338–57.
[72] This neglect has been partly redressed by a series of edited volumes published around 1990: see Jonathan I. Israel (ed.), *The Anglo-Dutch Moment: Essays on the Glorious Revolution and Its World Impact* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), in particular his piece in the volume, 'The Dutch Role in the Glorious Revolution', pp. 105–62; and Robert Beddard (ed.), *The Revolutions of 1688* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991).
[73] Cited in Dreiskämper, 'Aan de vooravond van de overtocht naar Engeland', p. 9.
[74] David van der Linden, *Experiencing Exile: Huguenot Refugees in the Dutch Republic, 1680–1700* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015).

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broad freedoms to Catholics in England and Scotland, he prompted widespread fears of a new era of international Catholic domination. That William invaded England for the 'preservation of the Protestant Religion' was not a baseless claim, but a sentiment deeply held and supported by Protestants throughout Northern Europe.[75]

Only with Amsterdam's blessing, and substantial contributions from the Dutch authorities, could the invasion of England go ahead. That this was a truly national venture was made clear by the States General in their formal declaration explaining why they supported William's invasion.[76] This stressed the threat posed by the Kings of France and England to the Dutch Republic, framing 1688 as a potential new Disaster Year. The States argued that James and Louis represented a danger not only to the Dutch Republic, but also to the common Protestant cause, and the peace of all Christendom. When the fleet set sail, the States General proclaimed a national day of prayer and distributed a prayer form that asked everyone to pray for God's blessing on 'the designs of the state, and of his Highness the Lord Prince of Orange, only pertaining to the conservation of the Reformed Religion, the tranquillity of Christianity in general, and the averting of all unrighteous violence from abroad'.[77] The community of Sephardic Jews in Amsterdam implored their God on the same day that He

> [b]less, guard, favour, aid, support, save, exalt, enhance, and raise to the most glittering peak of success the Noble and Mighty States of Holland and West-Friesland, the High and Mighty States General of the United Provinces, and His Highness the Prince of Orange, Stadtholder and captain-general by sea and land of these provinces, with all their allies, and the noble and illustrious burgomasters and magistracy of this city of Amsterdam.[78]

After the fleet finally departed Hellevoetsluis, the nation held its breath. The easterly wind that had swept the armada so providently to Devon also hindered any news returning quickly back up the Channel to the Dutch Republic. Ministers continued to lead their congregations in prayer for a swift and successful end to the venture.[79] The tri-weekly newspapers of Amsterdam and Haarlem waited

[75] David Onnekink, 'The Last War of Religion? The Dutch and the Nine Years War', in David Onnekink (ed.), *War and Religion after Westphalia, 1648–1713* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), pp. 69–88.
[76] *Resolutie inhoudende de redenen, die haer hoogh mogende hebben bewogen, om syne hoogheydt, in persoon naer Engelandt overgaende, met schepen ende militie te assisteren* (The Hague: Jacobus Scheltus, 1688), USTC 1821604. See also David Onnekink, *Reinterpreting the Dutch Forty Years War, 1672–1713* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), pp. 69–72.
[77] J. van den Berg, 'Religion and Politics in the Life of William and Mary', in Paul Hoftijzer and C. C. Barfoot (eds), *Fabrics and Fabrications: The Myth and Making of William and Mary* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1990), pp. 17–40, here pp. 18–19.
[78] Cited in Harm den Boer and Jonathan I. Israel, 'William III and the Glorious Revolution in the Eyes of Amsterdam Sephardic Writers: The Reactions of Miguel de Barrios, Joseph Penso de la Vega, and Manuel de Leao', in Israel (ed.), *Anglo-Dutch Moment*, pp. 439–62, here p. 439.
[79] Matthijs Wieldraaijer, 'Good Government and Providential Delivery: Legitimations of the 1672 and 1688/1689 Revolutions in Dutch Sermons', *Dutch Crossing*, 34 (2010), 42–58.

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anxiously for any rumour that might inform Dutch readers of William's success. On 20 November, five days after William had landed in Torbay, the Saturday issue of the *Amsterdamsche Courant* published rumours that William had landed on the Isle of Wight.[80] Shortly after this, news arrived that the fleet had landed at Torbay, which was confirmed on 23 November in the next instalment of the Amsterdam paper as truly reliable news.[81] By 27 November, the newspaper reported news from Exeter that William's landing had been a momentous success, and that he had been cheered on by the people of England.[82]

In November and December, the printers of the Dutch Republic kept up a stream of news reports on William's progress. The Dutch ambassador in London, Aernout van Citters, wrote daily despatches home to The Hague, relating how the city had switched its loyalties from James to William, and how Londoners had welcomed William in the middle of December. His ambassadorial letters were published by Jacobus Scheltus in The Hague and were soon reprinted in other towns.[83] Formal diplomatic correspondence to the States General had been published in this manner before, but never as frequently as the letters of Van Citters: over forty printed letters dated November or December 1688 survive today (Figure 11.3).[84] Scheltus also printed official despatches from the army, reporting on its progress as it slowly wound its way towards London.

The ambassadorial despatches were complemented by many printed broadsheets, pamphlets and prints documenting William's success in England. Over 200 printed news reports concerning the invasion in 1688 were published throughout the Dutch Republic, most of them short bulletins and letters announcing the next stage of the army's progress, or the collapse of James's authority. By the middle of December, Dutch citizens could read that the city of Nottingham had declared for William, publishing its own local declaration.[85] The newspapers continued to devote generous space to news from England, printing multiple reports from London and other English towns in each successive issue. On 14 December, the *Amsterdamsche Courant* also found space for a lengthy 'narrative of events [that have] passed since His Highness departed'.[86]

The encouraging news reports were accompanied by a wealth of celebratory media. At least forty-nine engraved prints were produced to support William's cause in 1688 and 1689, in addition to sets of playing cards, and at least thirty-one

[80] *Amsterdamse Saturdaegse Courant*, no. 46 (Amsterdam: Caspar Commelijn, 20 November 1688).
[81] *Amsterdamse Dingsdaegse Courant*, no. 47 (Amsterdam: Caspar Commelijn, 23 November 1688).
[82] *Amsterdamse Saturdaegse Courant*, no. 47 (Amsterdam: Caspar Commelijn, 27 November 1688).
[83] Aernout van Citters, *Advysen uyt Engeland in dato den 30. November* (Utrecht: Anthony Schouten, 1688), USTC 1828168; Aernout van Citters, *Het voornaemste uyt de brieven van de heer ambassadeur van Citters, van den 16 en 19 november 1688* (Rotterdam: Paulus Boekenes, 1688), USTC 1821040.
[84] See Chapter 9.
[85] *De declaratie van den adel, heeren en gemeentens, op de vergaderplaets tot Nottingham, den 22 nov:/2 decemb. 1688* (s.l., s.n., [1688]), USTC 1817272.
[86] *Amsterdamse Dingsdaegse Courant*, no. 50 (Amsterdam: Caspar Commelijn, 14 December 1688).

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Uyt
ENGELAND
In dato den 30 November 1688.

ADVYSEN
Uyt
ENGELANDT.
Van dato den 26 November 1688.

Westmunster den 26 November 1688.

Waer mede, &c.

IN 'sGRAVEN-HAGE,
By *Jacobus Scheltus*, Ordinaris Drucker van de Hoogh Mog. Heeren Staten Generael der Vereenighde Nederlanden.
Anno 1688. *Met Privilegie.*

IN 'sGRAVEN-HAGE,
By *Jacobus Scheltus*, Ordinaris Drucker van de Hoogh Mog. Heeren Staten Generael der Vereenighde Nederlanden. Anno 1688. *Met Privilegie.*

Figure 11.3 *Advysen uyt Engelandt. Van dato den 26 November 1688* (The Hague: Jacobus Scheltus, 1688). One of many official news accounts of the progress of the invasion, printed by Jacobus Scheltus in The Hague.

medals (Figures 11.4 and 11.5).[87] William's artistic supporter, Romeyn de Hooghe, played a prominent role in disseminating a positive (if often highly imaginative) visualisation of the Glorious Revolution.[88] De Hooghe had glorified the prince in print since the Disaster Year, but more as an opportunistic engraver rather than a devoted Orangist. From at least the middle years of the 1680s, however, he committed himself firmly to William's cause, becoming his most dutiful propagandist.[89] Although he did not accompany the fleet, De Hooghe used printed news reports and topographical sketches by other artists to create a series of magnificent illustrated broadsheets to immortalise the invasion of England. He also produced numerous satirical prints (at least seven in 1689) ridiculing King James, his supposedly illegitimate infant son, Louis XIV and the Jesuits. It is difficult to ascertain whether De Hooghe was commissioned to produce the laudatory and satirical prints, because William's private accounts for the period between 1683 and 1701 have been lost.[90] What is certain is that William appreciated De Hooghe's efforts. The prince commissioned work from the artist for his palace and gardens at Loo, granted him an exclusive commercial licence to export stone from his quarry at Lingen and paid for his son to study in Italy for two years. Most importantly, he protected the artist against the numerous enemies that he had made over the course of a quarrelsome career.[91]

Many other artists contributed to the celebratory production of printed media. The poet Katharina Lescaille, who had written in support of the brothers De Witt as recently as 1676, lauded William's invasion in verse.[92] Poetry in support of the prince was more likely to sell in 1688 and 1689 than publications honouring the memory of Johan de Witt; and one could also hope for the potentially enriching rewards of patronage. There were few writers whose ideological opposition was so entrenched that it trumped the imperative of the moment to deliver some panegyric lines to the local printer in celebration of William's success. The absence of negative reporting of the invasion was also reinforced because the authorities kept a very close eye on the output of the presses: in early 1689 the Court of Holland banned a pamphlet that criticised William's ambitions.[93] For once, this was a state that was determined to uphold the ideals of unity to which it so often aspired.

[87] Slechte, 'De propagandacampagnes', pp. 78–9; Schwoerer, 'Propaganda in the Revolution', p. 860; Hugh Dunthorne, 'William in Contemporary Portraits and Prints', in Mijers and Onnekink (eds), *Redefining William III*, pp. 263–76.

[88] Van Nierop, *Life of Romeyn de Hooghe*, pp. 205–16. More broadly see Meredith McNeill Hale, *The Birth of Modern Political Satire: Romeyn de Hooghe and the Glorious Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020).

[89] Van Nierop, *Life of Romeyn de Hooghe*, pp. 184–6, 191.

[90] Slechte, 'De propagandacampagnes', p. 79.

[91] Van Nierop, *Life of Romeyn de Hooghe*, pp. 184–6, 337–63.

[92] Nina Geerdink, 'Cultural Marketing of William III: A Religious Turn in Katharina Lescailje's Political Poetry', *Dutch Crossing*, 34 (2010), 25–41, esp. 27.

[93] Velthuizen, 'De verovering verslagen', p. 104.

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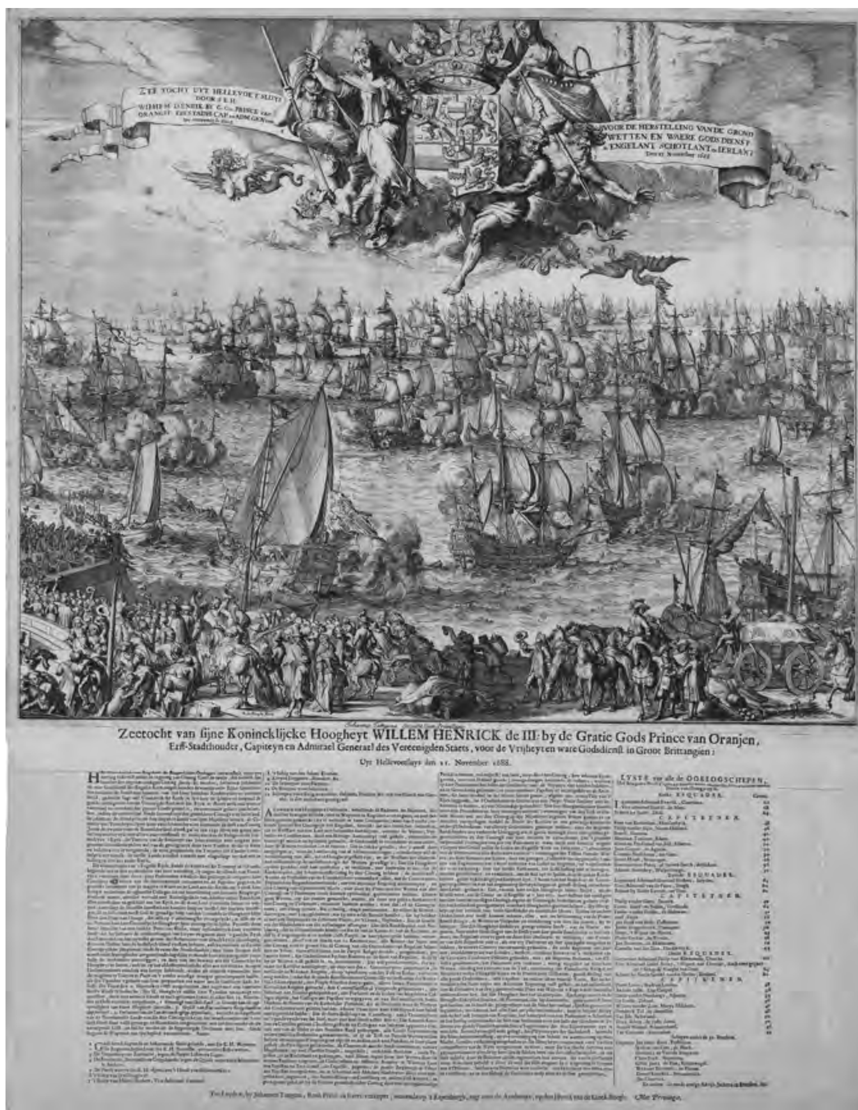

Figure 11.4 Romeyn de Hooghe, *Zeetocht van sijne Konincklijcke Hoogheyt Willem Henrick de III* (Leiden: Johannes Tangena, [1688]). The departure of the fleet, captured in this magnificent illustration by Romeyn de Hooghe.

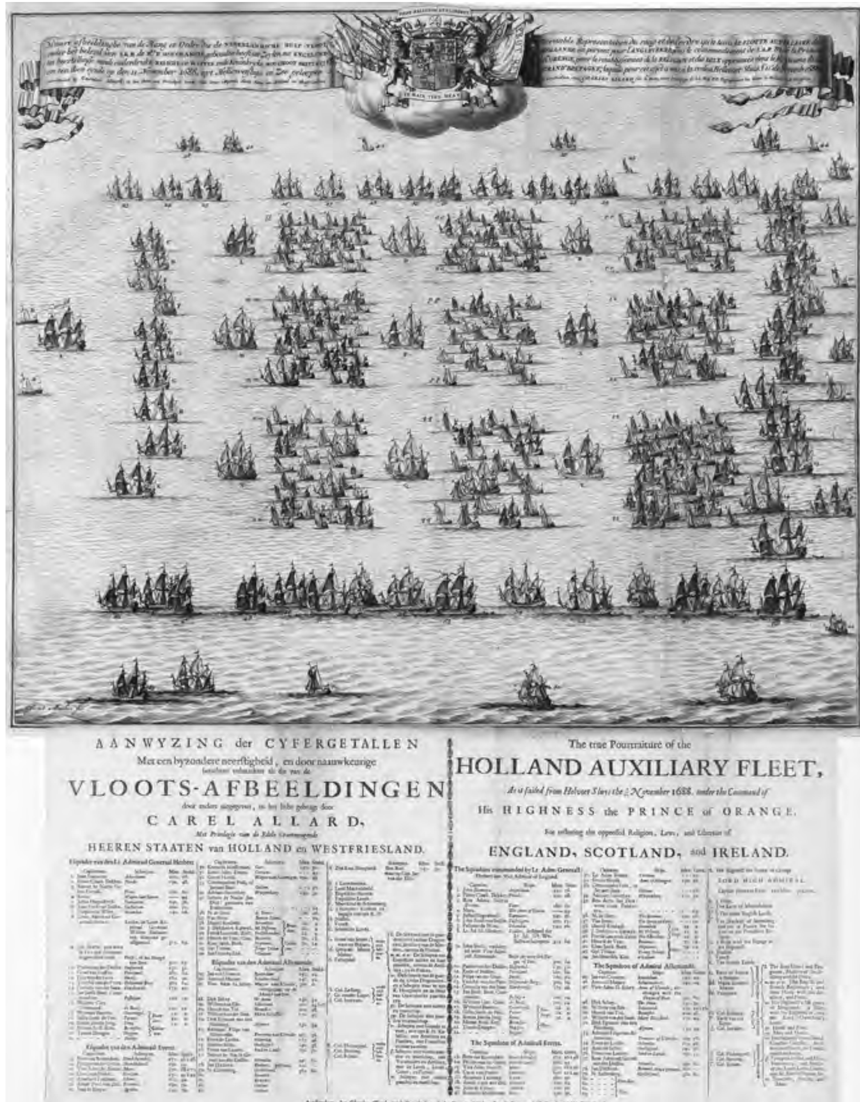

Figure 11.5 *Aanwyzing der cyfergetallen van de vloots-afbeeldingen. The true pourtraiture of the Holland auxiliary fleet, under the command of the Prince of Orange* (Amsterdam: Charles Allard, [1688]). An imposing portrayal of the Dutch fleet, with a list of warships in Dutch and English, published with privilege of the States of Holland.

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Between the autumn of 1688 and the spring of 1689 the invasion of England dominated Dutch political life. On 30 March 1689, the States General issued a prayer day to thank God for the success of the invasion.[94] A month later the magistrates of Hoorn paid their trumpeter and their bell ringers a supplementary four and three guilders respectively, for trumpeting and ringing 'for the victory', meaning the coronation of William and Mary as joint monarchs of England.[95] This was not only a triumph for William and a transformation of British politics; it was also proudly recognised as a Dutch achievement. In Haarlem, Romeyn de Hooghe was commissioned by the magistrates to design a tall 'victory standard' for the market square to celebrate the coronation.[96] Govard Bidloo, a talented poet and polemicist, municipal surgeon of The Hague and future personal physician of William III, declared on the day of William and Mary's coronation that

> [n]ever has The Hague celebrated a more merciful day than this; more glorious to Holland; more awe-inspiring to the enemies of this state; happier for England, more desirable for Europe and astonishing for all peoples.[97]

A year and a half later, Bidloo and De Hooghe worked together as joint 'directors of the two triumphal arches' erected by the magistrates of The Hague to honour William's return to the Republic, after an absence of over two years in England and Ireland. The States of Holland also contributed to the festivities, making 6,000 guilders available to add another triumphal arch and a massive fireworks display.[98] William, when he arrived on 30 January 1691, preferred to do without the pomp, but he consented to a formal entry and banquet in The Hague on 5 February. The regents and people of the Republic ensured that he received what was arguably one of the greatest political ceremonies in the Northern Netherlands since the Joyous Entries of Philip II in 1549. Having largely abandoned such ceremony after they renounced their monarch, they reinstated it now that they had a Stadtholder-King.

[94] Velthuizen, 'De verovering verslagen', pp. 104–5; Kist, *Neêrland's Bededagen*, pp. 259–61.
[95] WFAH, Oud Archief stad Hoorn, 1356–1815, inv. 320.
[96] Van Nierop, *Life of Romeyn de Hooghe*, p. 364.
[97] Cited in Pasi Ihalainen, *Protestant Nations Redefined: Changing Perceptions of National Identity in the Rhetoric of the English, Dutch and Swedish Public Churches, 1685–1772* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), p. 273.
[98] Van Nierop, *Life of Romeyn de Hooghe*, pp. 365–72.

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Coda

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12

The Prince Is Dead, Long Live the Republic

> Oh hero! Oh martial ruler! Oh wonder of our age!
> Oh strut and foundation of state! How the fierce lion
> Of Holland will miss you in these times![1]

Christiaan Bongaard, a recent graduate of law at the University of Utrecht, penned these lines in the spring of 1702 on the occasion of the death of Prince William III of Orange, King of England, Scotland and Ireland, hereditary Stadtholder of Gelderland, Holland, Zeeland, Utrecht, Overijssel and Drenthe. Bongaard's funerary poem was one of over seventy known to have been published throughout the Dutch Republic that year, as part of a symbolic national outpouring of sorrow. The news had first reached Anthonie Heinsius, the Grand Pensionary of Holland, on 23 March, four days after William's death at Hampton Court from pneumonia.[2] Two days later, the States of Holland formally announced the death of William to the States General, by which time the news had already been reported in the newspapers.[3] For weeks, bells were rung several times a day in every Dutch town and village.

We cannot say that the expressions of grief were insincere, but the lamentations for William's death did not match up to the mourning for his English wife, Queen Mary, in 1695. Since her arrival in the Dutch Republic in 1677, Mary, always more gregarious than her husband, had been adored by the people of the Netherlands. At least 160 printed lamentations appeared in the Republic on her death, more than twice as many as for William seven years later. The poetry that grieved the death of William also gave the impression that its authors were more worried for the fate of the Republic than they were sorry at the passing of their Stadtholder.

[1] Christiaan Bongaard, *De Orange son verduysterd door de ontijdige dood van Willem de III* (Utrecht: Herman Hardenberg, 1702), f. A2.

[2] A. J. Veenendaal Jr, *De Briefwisseling van Anthonie Heinsius, 1702–1720*, 19 vols (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff/Instituut voor Nederlandse Geschiedenis, 1976–2001), I, p. 1.

[3] *Oprechte Haerlemse Saturdaegse Courant*, no. 12 (Haarlem: Abraham Casteleyn, 25 March 1702); *Amsterdamse Saturdaegse Courant*, no. 36 (Amsterdam: Willem Arnold and widow A.D. Oossaan, 25 March 1702).

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A persistent theme in the eulogies was that William had departed the world at a frighteningly uncertain time. Since the death of the childless Carlos II of Spain in November 1700, the threat of renewed European conflict, which had only just ended with the Treaty of Rijswijk in 1697, was real once more. By early 1702, it was obvious that the principal allies of the Nine Years' War (the Dutch Republic, England and the Holy Roman Emperor) would join together to fight France in the War of the Spanish Succession. One author who grieved for William included the following lines in his poem:

> And you, Oh States of the United Netherland
> Even if the death of your saviour is bitter
> Do not succumb, do not let your courage fade
> The Dutch Ship of State has been tossed
> On fierce winds before, but through your rule
> Will sail dutifully to a haven secure.[4]

The Republic and England duly declared war on France in May 1702, and on 31 May the States General issued a general day of prayer. The prayer day text commented on the 'glorious memory' and death of William, the 'wise and brave commander' of the Dutch army and navy, but the inhabitants of the Republic were urged to pray not for William's soul, but for the country, faced with a new and terrible war, and also recently tormented by destructive floods.[5]

The already tepid public commemoration of William was also dampened by the recognition that the regents of the Republic had taken William's death as an opportunity to regain the power that they had lost in the turbulent days of 1672. In this they were assisted by the fact that no further formal funerary arrangements were required of them: although he was a Dutchman through and through, the King of England had been buried in Westminster, alongside his wife, rather than in the Republic. In April 1702, the tight cord that William had twisted around the Republican constitution swiftly came undone. Utrecht and Gelderland formally repealed William's *regeringsregelementen* of 1674 and 1675 less than a month after his death, while in Zeeland, William's deputy Willem Adriaan van Nassau, Lord Odijk, was ousted from the States as deputy of the 'First Noble', the late prince.[6] Of greatest consequence was the decision, made by all provinces where William had been Stadtholder, to leave this post vacant. While William had ended the First Stadtholderless period in 1672, his death inaugurated the second exactly thirty years later.

It was a momentous decision because it went decisively against William's express wishes that his heir, Johan Willem Friso, the fourteen-year-old Stadtholder

[4] Gerardus van der Gheest, *Lycksang gesongen ter gedagtenis van Willem de Derde* (Tiel: Jan van Leeuwen, 1702), p. 8.
[5] Kist, *Neêrland's Bededagen*, II, pp. 282–3.
[6] See Chapter 10.

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of Friesland and Groningen, would follow in his footsteps. Friso, the sole living male progeny of the Frisian branch of the Nassau family, had been named by the childless William as the successor to all his domains and titles. Yet the States of Gelderland, Holland, Zeeland, Utrecht and Overijssel did not even contemplate the appointment of Friso. It is also striking that Friesland and Groningen made no efforts to have their Stadtholder appointed elsewhere: they only fought his corner in his desire to be appointed as a general of infantry and to receive a seat at the Council of State, ventures in which they found staunch opposition from Holland and Zeeland.[7]

The abandonment of the Stadtholderate was a public political process. On 25 March, the States of Holland issued a declaration to the States General in which they expressed their burning desire to 'join hands' with the other provinces of the union to 'heal this deep wound' of the death of their 'supreme head'. However, the issue of replacing the 'supreme head' went provocatively unaddressed, and instead Holland called for 'love, unity and harmony' to be sustained between the provinces. The declaration, together with warm responses from the other provinces, was printed as a pamphlet by the *Statendrukker*, Paulus Scheltus, for all to read.[8]

The speed with which the provinces acted indicates that serious thought had been given to the succession long before William's demise. Many regents, including some who were appointed by William, felt little obligation to his testament, and their desire to restore their own rule surpassed the gratitude they might have felt for the prince's role in saving the Republic in 1672.[9] After the show of unity in 1688, the relationship between William and the provinces had changed rapidly. The prince became embroiled in a serious public conflict with Amsterdam in 1690 over his insistence on being sent the nominations to their magistracy while he was in England, whereas Amsterdam wished to send them to the States of Holland.[10] Of course, William had a history of political strife with Amsterdam, but his near continuous absence from the Republic in the 1690s (he divided his time mostly between England and campaigning in the Southern Netherlands) also meant that his rule was personified during this period by the lengthy and ruinously expensive Nine Years' War. This was exacerbated by the mismanagement of his cronies, such as Lord Odijk, who he had appointed to prominent posts. In Holland, Grand Pensionary Heinsius began to take the

[7] Ronald de Graaf, *Friso. Het tragische leven van Johan Willem Friso, 1687–1711* (Amsterdam: Boom, 2021). See more broadly on this issue Marijke Bruggeman, *Nassau en de macht van Oranje: De strijd van de Friese Nassaus voor erkenning van hun rechten, 1702–1747* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2007).
[8] *Verklaringen van de respective provincien gedaen ter vergaderinge van haer hoogh mog., tot onderhoudinge van eendracht* (The Hague: Paulus Scheltus, 1702).
[9] See also Chapters 10 and 11.
[10] Wouter Troost, 'The Image of William III in Amsterdam after His Ascent to the English Throne: The Case of the Sheriffs' Election in 1690', *Dutch Crossing*, 40 (2016), 206–18.

reins firmly in hand, which also allowed for a smooth transition of power when William died.[11]

That William's death was a dramatic watershed was exemplified perhaps most clearly by the turn in the career of Romeyn de Hooghe, the self-styled 'Commissioner of His Majesty'. De Hooghe had been one of his most loyal supporters from the 1680s onwards.[12] Now deprived of his patron, he shrewdly adapted to the new regime. In 1705, he produced the laudatory title page engraving for the momentous biography of the brothers De Witt, written by Emanuel van der Hoeven (Figure 12.1). The biography, which could never have appeared during William's life, opened with the author's telling remark that 'I know, that the content [of the work] is esteemed by many, but that due to a certain obstacle, they did not dare utter such sentiments'.[13] Now that the 'obstacle' of the prince was gone, there was a resurgence of publications that evoked the ideology of the original True Freedom, as well as three reprints of Van der Hoeven's biography.[14]

In 1706, Van der Hoeven followed up with a more radical tract, the *Hollands aeloude vryheyd, buyten het stadhouderschap* (Holland's ancient freedom outside the Stadtholderate), for which De Hooghe once more provided a frontispiece. As the title indicated, this offered a strong justification for Stadtholderless government, arguing that Stadtholders were no different from counts, dukes or kings who had imposed themselves on the ancient republics of the Batavian lands. This was a less successful work, in part because there was little desire among the regent class in Holland to return ostentatiously to the ideology of the First Stadtholderless period. The antagonism of the True Freedom of De Witt was too fresh in the memory, which helps explain why the transition to the Second Stadtholderless regime, stocked with many former supporters of the prince as well as his opponents, could take place with relative ease. At least in Holland, there was broad consensus for true republican self-government as long as it came with modest trappings.

The situation was different in the provinces where William had cast a dominant shadow since the Disaster Year, and where he had allowed his clients to enrich themselves and govern with less regard for the local citizenry than was expected of the regent class. There was widespread rioting in Zeeland in 1702, where

[11] On Heinsius see Augustus J. Veenendaal Jr, 'Who Is in Charge Here? Anthonie Heinsius and His Role in Dutch Politics', in Jan A. F. de Jongste and Augustus J. Veenendaal Jr (eds), *Anthonie Heinsius and the Dutch Republic, 1688–1720: Politics, War, and Finance* (The Hague: Institute of Netherlands History, 2002), pp. 11–24; on the political strife of the 1690s and the machinations of William's allies, see Jan A. F. de Jongste, 'The 1690's and After: The Local Perspective', in De Jongste and Veenendaal Jr (eds), *Anthonie Heinsius and the Dutch Republic*, pp. 65–88.

[12] Van Nierop, *Life of Romeyn de Hooghe*, pp. 395–8.

[13] Emanuel van der Hoeven, *Leeven en dood der doorlugtige heeren gebroeders Cornelis de Witt en Johan de Witt* (Amsterdam: Jan ten Hoorn, 1705), p. 1.

[14] Published in 1708, 1709 (in French) and 1710.

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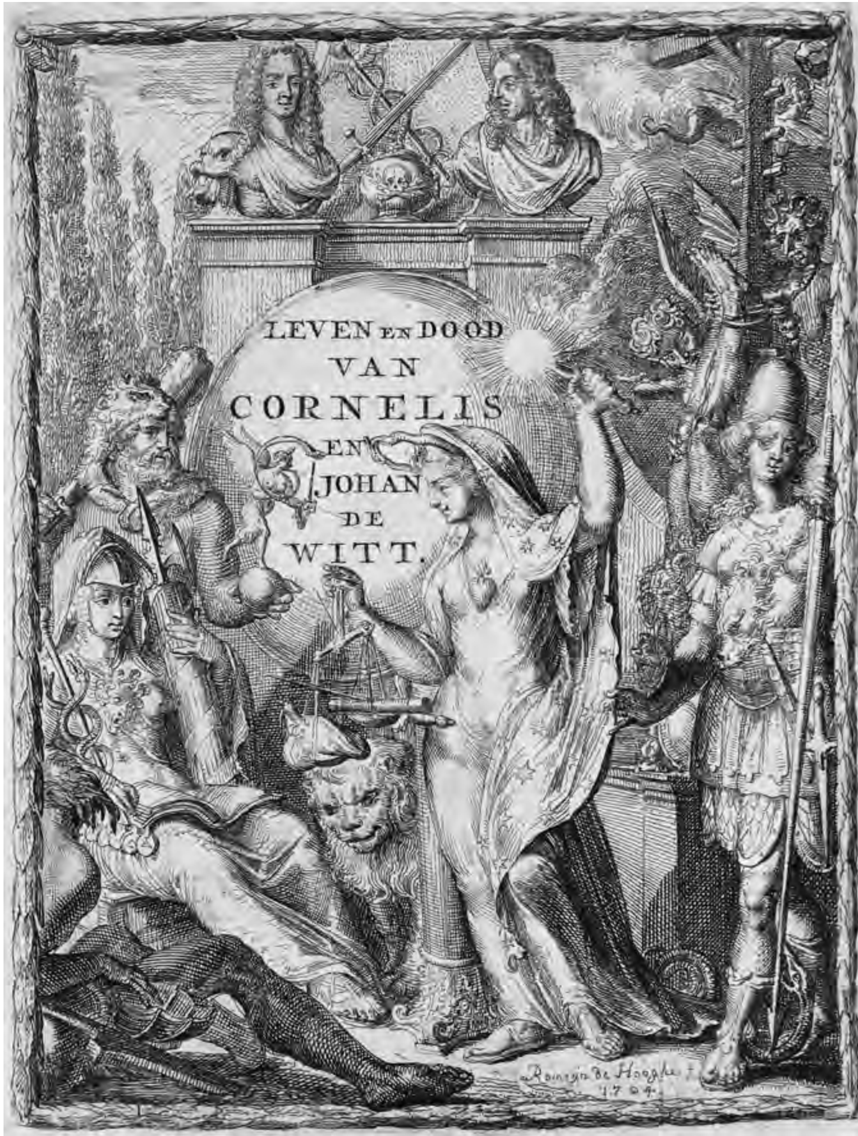

Figure 12.1 Romeyn de Hooghe, Frontispiece for *Leven en Dood van Cornelis en Johan de Witt*, 1705. Romeyn de Hooghe's tribute to the De Witt brothers. De Hooghe wrote a detailed description of the engraving that explained its allegorical praise for the republican government of the United Provinces.

anti-Orangist burghers occupied town halls, and former supporters of William were purged from the council. In Middelburg, Orangist militiamen fought back unsuccessfully in 1704. Troops from the States had to be called in to many towns in Utrecht and Gelderland throughout the first decade of the 18th century, including Amersfoort, Rhenen, Wageningen and Harderwijk, where fighting between citizens spiralled out of control.[15]

The worst violence took place in Nijmegen, where six men, including former burgomaster Willem Roukens, were executed after a failed coup that saw them storm the town hall in 1705, in an attempt to restore the regime that had been appointed by William. In most towns, the unrest was stoked by factions of regents, some of whom had been purged by William in 1672, but the alliances were never entirely clear-cut, as some formerly Orangist families had switched sides and allied with *Staatsgezinden* opponents from the days of De Witt. The turbulence was worsened by overlapping conflicts between the nobility and the towns, and between towns: the people of Zutphen embraced the political chaos to wage war on nearby Deventer to settle an old commercial dispute.

The drawn-out conflicts of 1702–8 that threw Zeeland, Utrecht, Gelderland and Overijssel into chaos were especially fierce because so many ordinary citizens were involved. In many towns, citizens formed voluntary brigades to protect their new local government, to overthrow their old regents or to foment change in neighbouring communities. This was not just a dispute among the elite, but also a citizen movement. There was widespread resentment in many towns, such as in Nijmegen, that the prince had ignored the traditional rights of the broader citizenry to have a say in their own government.[16] After almost thirty years, there were plenty of inhabitants who had profited from this less participatory arrangement, but they had ruled thanks to the looming threat of the Stadtholder's wrath rather than genuine consent. Although they fought to retain their positions, their cause was seriously disadvantaged because they could only rely on limited popular support.

Both sides of the conflict also took to the press. Over 300 printed proclamations, ordinances, petitions and polemical pamphlets commenting on the disorders are known to have been produced between 1702 and 1707.[17] The themes of these publications mirror those that we have encountered earlier, in the Ommelander Troubles and in the aftermath of the Disaster Year.[18] Citizens circulated printed

[15] A. H. Wertheim-Gijse Weenink, *Democratische Bewegingen in Gelderland, 1672–1795* (Amsterdam: Van Gennep, 1973), pp. 35–90; W. F. Wertheim and A. H. Wertheim-Gijse Weenink, *Burgers in verzet tegen regenten-heerschappij: Onrust in Sticht en Oversticht* (Amsterdam: Van Gennep, 1975).

[16] See for example the *Justificatie van het recht, dat de magistraat der stadt Nymegen van ouds heeft gehad om hare magistraat, ende vrye keure van dien by haar selfs te doen* (s.l.: s.n., [1702]).

[17] See the Knuttel pamphlet collection in the Royal Library in The Hague, nos 14827–79, 14972–15044, 15170–287, 15399–413, 15585–612, 15694–709.

[18] See Chapters 7 and 10.

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petitions demanding political change and vilified in pamphlets the 'Old Crew' that had been lifted to power by William. Yet as soon as they managed to infiltrate the town hall, they printed formal placards and ordinances that sought to legitimise their new authority. The result was rival declarations, as both parties attempted to bolster their cause locally as well as to elicit the support of the increasingly anxious regents in Holland, who had experienced similar despair through the frequent bickering of the magistrates of Groningen and the Council of Ommelanden in the 17th century.

As the development of the political conflict in the early 1700s suggests, there were ultimately more structural continuities than changes in the Republic after William's death. Firstly, the prince's role had been critical in the planning of another war against France, which turned out to be even longer and more expensive than the Nine Years' War. The regents of the Republic fought the War of the Spanish Succession to a financially ruinous conclusion in 1713, not so much to honour the prince's legacy, but out of a widely shared fear of French imperial domination, and the dangerous prospect of the absence of a strategic barrier between the Republic and France.[19] Some figures on town councils may have changed, and many urban communities in the Republic enjoyed a greater degree of self-government than they had between 1672 and 1702, but the overall make-up of the Republic changed very little. Structurally, the Dutch Republic was the same confederation in 1702 as it had been in 1600 and 1650, and that it would be in 1740. Even the rates of provincial contributions to the federal budget had not changed since 1616, and they would only be revised at the end of the 18th century. This should remind us that for all his power and influence, William III did not change the fundamental political structure of the Republic.

The critical elements of state communication described in this study also persevered long after 1702. They played a major role in sustaining support for the War of the Spanish Succession, which saw persistent efforts on the part of the authorities to publicise military victories, organise prayer days (no fewer than twenty-five between 1702 and 1713) and publish a wealth of placards and ordinances to organise and explain the war effort. In part thanks to these efforts, the public remained broadly supportive of the war for its duration, despite the accompanying heavy burdens on the Dutch economy.[20]

Archival evidence suggests too that Dutch authorities, at all jurisdictional levels, printed more ordinances in the 18th century than in the seventeenth. Every Dutch municipal archive that I inspected for this study holds more 18th-century than 17th-century placards. In some, there were only a handful of 17th-century items but great stacks for the eighteenth. There is a possibility that this contrast

[19] Olaf van Nimwegen, *De veertigjarige oorlog, 1672–1712* (Amsterdam: Prometheus, 2020); and Onnekink, *Reinterpreting the Dutch Forty Years War*.
[20] Haks, *Vaderland & Vrede*, *passim*, esp. chs 2–3, 5–6.

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is caused by survival bias, and that 18th-century state publications have simply survived better, but that seems improbable. Unlike other industries, the Dutch print trade remained a bulwark of the Dutch domestic economy and international commerce deep into the 18th century.[21] The authorities continued to make extensive use of the press for their communication strategies and in the process remained one of the best clients of the wider print trade.

A greater use of print did not displace other strategies at the disposal of government. In the early 18th century, we can find the first concrete archival evidence of the use of town criers in some smaller Dutch towns and villages, including Rhenen and Veenendaal (Utrecht), Abbekerk, Brielle, Edam and Weesp (Holland), Winschoten (Groningen) and Culemborg (Gelderland).[22] Detailed instructions for criers, the likes of which were discovered for Leiden and Leeuwarden, remain scarce into the 18th century. We rely instead on incidental references to criers in notarial or judicial archives. Thus we know that there was a crier in Rhenen in 1708, Jan d'Arras, because his son (Jan d'Arras the younger) had a violent altercation with a local prisoner of war (a 'Gentleman Du Camp').[23] Later in the century, in 1763, the Steenwijk crier Jannis Christoffels was punished by the local magistrates for making a proclamation while he was drunk.[24] These scattered references do not prove that criers were not employed in these small communities earlier in the Republic, but it does demonstrate that such roles remained critical to state communication deep into the 18th century.

While their communication strategies were not altered in the 18th century, the social and economic reality in which Dutch authorities found themselves was changing considerably. The population of the Republic continued to enjoy a high standard of living in the 18th century, yet there was a relative and absolute decline in many sectors of industry and commerce, especially from the 1720s onwards.[25] Some industries, such as pipe making, sugar refining and paper making, flourished and grew, but the Dutch fishing, whaling, Levantine and textiles trade all diminished significantly over the course of the 18th century. The

[21] Pettegree and Der Weduwen, *Bookshop of the World*, ch. 16. More broadly see Annie van Goinga, *Alom te bekomen: Veranderingen in de boekdistributie in de Republiek, 1720–1800* (Amsterdam: De Buitenkant, 1999).

[22] Regionaal Archief Zuid-Utrecht, Wijk bij Duurstede, Stadsbestuur Rhenen (152), inv. 170–1; WFAH, Abbekerk, akten notaris Muus Dool, 1740–1750, inv. 137.52; Streekarchief Voorne-Putten, Brielle, Rechterlijk Archief Brielle (031A), inv. 4075; Waterlands Archief, Purmerend, Geheugen van Regio Waterland, inv. 3 (3 March 1713); RHCW, Notaris Theodorus Elout te Weesp, deel 5, allerhande akten, 1719–1720 (GAW138-5233), inv. 6; GAG, Kerspel Winschoten, 1627–1855 (27), inv. 11; Regionaal Archief Rivierenland, Tiel, Archief van het stadsbestuur van Culemborg, 1318–1813 (0826), inv. 116.

[23] Regionaal Archief Zuid-Utrecht, Wijk bij Duurstede, Stadsgerecht Rhenen (066), inv. 20, 15 October 1708.

[24] Gemeentearchief Steenwijkerland, Steenwijk, Gebeurtenissen Steenwijkerland (68), inv. 6, f. 640.

[25] Israel, *Dutch Primacy*, pp. 377–404; De Vries and Van der Woude, *First Modern Economy*, pp. 681–3; Diederik Hermans, 'Economic Decline and the Urban Elite in Eighteenth-Century Dutch Towns: A Review Essay', *Urban History Yearbook*, 16 (1989), 78–81; more broadly see Johannes de Vries, *De economische achteruitgang der Republiek in de achttiende eeuw* (Leiden: Stenfert-Kroese, 1980).

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East Indies trade, despite a greater volume of commerce, became less profitable in the face of falling profit margins and stiffer competition; over time, the Dutch also lost their stranglehold on the Baltic carrying trade. The integrated nature of the Dutch economy meant that virtually all provinces suffered from these economic downturns. Especially hard hit were the maritime provinces of Friesland, Groningen, Holland and Zeeland. The population of major manufacturing centres, such as Leiden, Haarlem and Delft, halved between 1688 and 1749.[26] While the populations of France and England increased over the course of the 18th century, the population of the Dutch Republic stagnated. Population growth in the countryside of Gelderland, Overijssel and North Brabant, where agriculture made up for some of the economic losses of Dutch shipping, somewhat compensated for urban depopulation. Yet this revitalisation of rural industry did not replenish the Republic's coffers, as the provinces continued to look to urban communities for most of the revenue from excise duties.[27]

Decreasing tax revenues were especially problematic because the Republic was burdened with colossal debt, the result of forty years of almost unbroken warfare on a scale that the Netherlands had never seen before. In 1708, the Republic had 119,000 troops on its payroll (more than one soldier for every twenty inhabitants), up from 40,000 in peacetime. Although the army was reduced to 40,000 again in 1715, the public debt of the Republic had by then quadrupled since 1672.[28] In the following years, 60 per cent of Holland's revenue went to servicing its provincial debt.[29] Even more troubling was that Friesland and Groningen stopped contributing to the federal budget for the first decade after the peace, arguing (rightly) that the contribution rates set in 1616 were prejudiced against them.[30]

As the burden of debt weighed heavily on the minds of the regents, the provinces came together between November 1716 and September 1717 in a series of extraordinary meetings that echoed the *Grote Vergadering* of 1651, in an attempt to reform the Republic and ameliorate its situation.[31] Simon van Slingelandt, the secretary of the Council of State, emerged as the leading advocate for change. Slingelandt privately professed an aversion to the Second Stadtholderless regime, referring to the 'unbridled freedom fashionable nowadays'.[32] He offered an alternative voice among the regent class, noting that the idea that the provinces

[26] Israel, *Dutch Republic: Rise, Greatness and Fall*, p. 1007.
[27] 't Hart, 'The Dutch Republic', pp. 76–91.
[28] Israel, *Dutch Republic: Rise, Greatness and Fall*, pp. 971, 985; E. H. M. Dormans, *Het tekort: Staatsschuld in de tijd der Republiek* (Amsterdam: NEHA, 1991), pp. 145–6.
[29] Prak and Van Zanden, 'Tax Morale and Citizenship', p. 152.
[30] J. Aalbers, *De Republiek en de vrede van Europa* (Groningen: Wolters-Noordhoff, 1980), pp. 1–25, esp. pp. 3–4.
[31] See Chapter 8.
[32] Bert Drejer, 'Representative Government in the Dutch Provinces: The Controversy over the Stadtholderate (1705–1707) and Simon van Slingelandt', *Contributions to the History of Concepts*, 15 (2020), 76–96, here 88.

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had always been sovereign was nonsense: sovereignty had lain with lords, counts and dukes, rather than representative assemblies. Van Slingelandt urged his fellow regents to centralise, granting more power to the States General and the Council of State (to which he had been appointed by William III in 1690). None of his proposals were heeded: the only decision that was taken at the *Tweede Grote Vergadering* was a reduction in the size of the army, from 40,000 to 34,000 troops.[33] Van Slingelandt, a talented administrator, ended his career as Grand Pensionary of Holland (1727–36), yet the writings in which he sketched out potential reforms to the structures of government were never published in his lifetime. The States kept a watchful eye to ensure that he did not attempt to alter its constitution or attempt any reforms. His thoughts on Dutch government and the republican constitution appeared in print only in the very different political context of the 1780s.

The post-war period was beset by a crippling paradox: the Republic remained wealthy, but its inhabitants felt poorer. In general, private wealth continued to be comparatively high on a European scale. The regents had ensured that the tax burden had increased more for the wealthy than for the poor during the wars with France (an altruism uncharacteristic of ruling elites), and excise duty rates were kept stable, as most of the war was funded by credit, forced loans and property taxes.[34] Nevertheless, the broader economic downturn saw middle-class prosperity decline, and the gap between poor and wealthy widen noticeably. Charitable giving collapsed in Utrecht and Zwolle after the Disaster Year and never recovered in the 18th century, leading to a greater burden on local government to finance poor relief.[35] There was a marked increase in organised rural crime in the late 17th and early 18th centuries, with well-established gangs terrorising the countryside in Holland, Zeeland and the Generality Lands.[36] While Holland had seen only two serious food riots before 1693, there were a further twenty-two before 1744. There was also a marked increase in tax riots from the 1690s onwards, and especially in the early 1710s, late 1720s and early 1730s.[37]

That taxes were not increasing greatly, but tax riots were, is a strong indication that the effects of urban decay and industrial decline were being felt. Popular resentment was fuelled by the fact that the regent class remained prosperous, as they were insulated from the economic downturn by their increasing reliance on investments in property and state bonds, rather than commerce and manufactures.

[33] On Slingelandt see A. Goslinga, *Slingelandt's Efforts towards European Peace* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1915); Aalbers, *De Republiek en de vrede van Europa*; and Drejer, 'Representative Government'.
[34] Wantje Fritschy, 'The Poor, the Rich, and the Taxes in Heinsius's Times', in De Jongste and Veenendaal Jr (eds), *Anthonie Heinsius and the Dutch Republic*, pp. 242–58.
[35] Teeuwen, *Financing Poor Relief through Charitable Collections*, p. 150.
[36] Florike Egmond, *Op het verkeerde pad: Georganiseerde misdaad in de Noordelijke Nederlanden, 1650–1800* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 1994).
[37] Dekker, *Holland in beroering*, pp. 23–4, 34–5.

The profile of tax farmers was also changing, and the excise duties were gradually being raised more by wealthy speculators than by middle-class citizens. In 1674, the magistrates of Amsterdam issued for the first time an ordinance that expressly forbade the harassment of tax farmers, legislation which was reissued five times during the following decades.[38] Around the end of the 17th century, we can also discern the appearance of a variety of satirical ordinances that mimic tax edicts, by calling for an excise duty on various lengths and sizes of people's noses.[39] Although these were meant as light-hearted entertainment, they also provide some resonant commentary on the increasingly burdensome nature of excise duties on the less financially secure portions of the Dutch population.

Contemporaries were aware that there were serious issues affecting Dutch society. While peace was warmly welcomed in 1713, there was a general tone of exhaustion and cynicism in the habitual celebrations.[40] As Adam Sundberg has recently demonstrated, a public discourse of decline became commonplace in the early 18th-century Republic.[41] A States General prayer day in 1717 commented on the 'heavy burdens of the past war', while every prayer day between 1718 and 1722 noted thanks for 'calm and peace' but also contained references to 'reduced commerce, industry and prosperity', in addition to a recent outbreak of devastating cattle plague and frequent flooding.[42] Terrible weather and flooding had afflicted the Republic for much of the period between 1680 and 1720, culminating in the severe Christmas Flood of 1717, which hit much of Groningen and Friesland and killed several thousand people there, besides causing terrible damage that further exacerbated the financial difficulties of the two provinces.[43] The rinderpest that tore through the Republic between 1713 and 1720 was responsible for the loss of between 120,000 and 300,000 cattle, almost halving the herd in some provinces.[44] Given the reliance of the Dutch rural economy on the dairy industry, as well as the importance of the cattle excise to provincial revenue, this was an unprecedented blow to Dutch households, the economy and the income of the state.

The authorities, as was expected of them, responded to these crises. The

[38] Dekker, *Holland in beroering*, pp. 32, 134.
[39] Rozanne Versendaal, 'Feestneuzen, of bij de neus genomen? De ontstaansgeschiedenis, gebruikscontexten en functies van neusboekjes in de vroegmoderne Lage Landen', *Jaarboek voor Nederlandse Boekgeschiedenis*, 29 (2022), 298–335. An example is *Neusboekje van Mannen, Vrouwen, Vrijers en Vrysters, waer in men sien kan, wat yder voor sijn Neus-gelt moet geven* (Leeuwarden: Gerrit Koumans, 1718).
[40] Jensen, *Vieren van vrede*, pp. 89–107.
[41] Adam Sundberg, *Natural Disaster at the Closing of the Dutch Golden Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022), *passim*, esp. pp. 47–8. See more broadly the special issue of *History of European Ideas*, vol. 36, no. 2 (2010), on contemporary perceptions (and their historiographical ramifications) of the 18th-century decline of the Dutch Republic.
[42] Kist, *Neêrland's Bededagen*, II, p. 306–10; Dekker, *Holland in beroering*, p. 132.
[43] Sundberg, *Natural Disaster*, pp. 92–3.
[44] Sundberg, *Natural Disaster*, p. 58. A second severe cattle plague occurred between 1744 and 1764, for which see Sundberg, *Natural Disaster*, pp. 212–50.

proclamation registers and council resolutions of Dutch municipalities of the early 18th century portray concerned magistracies. As with earlier outbreaks of plague, the authorities had an array of quarantine measures that they turned to, and that required extensive communication. On 18 April 1718, the magistrates of Zierikzee announced to their citizens that 'God Almighty has determined to inflict upon us the death of the cattle on this our island' and then listed a variety of measures to be taken to stop the spread of the disease. The placard issued with the text of the proclamation was, as remained the common phrasing, to be 'published and affixed everywhere where it should be done'. Another placard on the same subject was issued ten days later.[45] Dyke repair required a more complex response, and this was made more troublesome by the emergence in the early 1730s of a marine mollusc that infested the wooden poles used to support dykes throughout Zeeland, Holland and Friesland.[46] After a period of hesitation, Dutch authorities began to solicit assistance from their inhabitants to tackle this novel problem. This appeal for public input made particular use of newspapers, a medium that would continue to expand in the 18th-century Republic.[47] While newspapers became cheaper and were published with greater frequency in more locations, the principles of news publishing established in the 17th century, especially the injunction not to comment on domestic politics, remained at the core of the newspaper market. This too was a prominent point of continuity into the era of the Second True Freedom.

The first half of the 18th century was a time of persistent challenges, but not of collapse. For almost four decades after William III's death, the Dutch Republic remained an important, wealthy and relatively stable power in Europe, and its authorities did their best to manage the unenviable position in which they found themselves. The Second Stadtholderless regime was finally undone by a new war with France in the 1740s. The similarities with 1672 were as obvious to contemporaries as they are to the historian. A young prince of Orange, William IV (the posthumously born son of Johan Willem Friso), was deliberately kept out of power for several decades, while popular clamour for his elevation gathered pace from the late 1720s onwards.[48] William's marriage in 1734 to Anna, daughter of George II of England, restored the ancient Orange ties with England and resulted in the same pressure on the regents of the Republic as had been exercised by Charles II in the 1660s.[49]

[45] ZAZ, Stad en Gemeente Zierikzee 1275–1939 (5022), inv. 293, ff. 1–4.

[46] Sundberg, *Natural Disaster*, pp. 122–64; J. Mouthaan, 'The Appearance of a Strange Kind of "Seeworm" at the Dutch Coast, 1731–1735', *Dutch Crossing*, 27 (2003), 3–22.

[47] Joop W. Koopmans, 'The Early 1730s Shipworm Disaster in Dutch News Media', *Dutch Crossing*, 40 (2016), 139–50, esp. 141–2.

[48] The definitive biography of William IV is Fred Jagtenberg, *Willem IV: Stadhouder in roerige tijden, 1711–1751* (Nijmegen: Vantilt, 2018).

[49] P. Geyl, *Willem IV en Engeland tot 1748* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1924).

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When the Republic was unwittingly dragged into war with France to honour its alliance with Britain and Austria during the War of the Austrian Succession (1740–8), the poor state of its army also invoked memories of the spring of 1672. A crushing defeat in the Southern Netherlands in 1745 saw French troops at the Dutch border, leading to a minor invasion of the Generality Lands in the spring of 1747. One regent stammered prophetically to the French ambassador that '[y]ou're ruining us, you're making a Stadtholder'.[50] Widespread popular unrest saw William IV declared Stadtholder within weeks of the French incursion. In a nice point of historical continuity, in Zierikzee, the crowd was led by the granddaughter of the woman who had led the Orangist riot in that town in 1672.[51] In Dordrecht, the grandson of Cornelis de Witt had to walk around town with orange frills on his clothes so that he would not be thrown into a canal, as happened to several less cautious regents.[52]

William IV had longed to become Stadtholder as much as William III had, but unlike his more distinguished predecessor, William IV was less able to exploit his new-found position. He was extremely uncomfortable at being thrust into the Stadtholderate by the people and baulked at popular jokes made in England that described him as 'Prince Mob'. He was immensely respectful of his country's republican constitution. While his supporters on the streets of Dutch towns looked to the prince for military victory and political reform, William offered neither of these, essentially wishing to defer to the regents for the government of the Republic. Within a year, there was an eruption of violent rioting in most Dutch provinces, including William's 'home provinces' of Friesland and Groningen, attempting to bring about the change that their prince had not offered them. The greatest ire of the revolutionaries was reserved for the tax farmers, whose houses were looted in a furious frenzy throughout the Republic, but there were also widespread demands, articulated most clearly in Amsterdam, for the radical reform of the election of magistrates and officers of the civic militias.[53]

In July 1748, Willem Bentinck van Rhoon, William IV's closest ally, wrote in a memorandum that '[t]he foundation of all government is the confidence which the people place in those who govern them. This confidence is now utterly extinguished here.'[54] Discontent and hardship were nothing new to the Republic. What had changed by 1748 was a widespread sense that the political bond between the regents and their citizens, the expectation that the regents looked after the

[50] Geyl, *Willem IV en Engeland*, p. 213.
[51] Dekker, 'Women in Revolt', p. 353.
[52] Rowen, *Princes of Orange*, p. 165.
[53] P. Geyl, *Revolutiedagen te Amsterdam: (augustus–september 1748): Prins Willem IV en de doelistenbeweging* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1936); Jan A. F. de Jongste, 'The Restoration of the Orangist Regime in 1747: The Modernity of a "Glorious Revolution"', in Margaret C. Jacob and Wijnand W. Mijnhardt (eds), *The Dutch Republic in the Eighteenth Century: Decline, Enlightenment, and Revolution* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992), pp. 32–59.
[54] Cited in Rowen, *Princes of Orange*, p. 172.

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commons rather than themselves, had been broken. The rise of the infamous 'Contracts of Correspondence', formal agreements by which regent families distributed offices among themselves in a bid to reduce elite strife in the years after William III's death, further contributed to the notion that political officeholders merely existed to serve themselves.

When this misbalance was not addressed, the population of the Republic reclaimed a prominent role in restoring their republican ideal, one that was once more complete with a Stadtholder at the fore. The irony was that the result disappointed many. Major tax reform was undertaken, with the abolishment of the *gemene middelen* and tax farming in Holland. Yet William IV's cautious nature saw him renege on the more popular democratic reforms demanded by his supporters. In the process, the revolution of 1748 left everyone unsatisfied and sowed the seeds of the deep political division of the Patriot movement later in the 18th century.

In hindsight, one can argue that structural overhaul was required to revitalise the Dutch Republic, but to most contemporaries, including William IV, a steady republican ship was all that was required to return to the prosperity of the 17th century.[55] In 1748, the author of *Ontroerd Holland* (Holland disturbed), an account of revolts and uprisings in the province from 1299 onwards, commented without irony on the recent 'happy change in government' while admonishing his readers that 'nothing is better . . . than unity . . . supported by the good and just rule of the regents, and a willing love and subservience of the people'.[56] He could have stolen the words out of the mouths of his fellow Dutchmen a century earlier, but then the words would have rung truer. It is a harsh truth of the history of communication, as the regents of the Republic found in the 18th century, that while a medium can be perfected, it is of little influence when the message no longer resonates.

[55] On the intellectual continuities of Dutch republicanism in the 18th century and the appeal to republicanism on all sides of the political debate, see Velema, *Republicans*, esp. pp. 1–2, 13, 23–4, 78–91; and Oddens, Rutjes and Weststeijn, 'Introduction: Republican Decline in Context', p. 7.

[56] *Het ontroerd Holland. Of kort verhaal van de voornaamste onlusten in de Vereenigde Nederlanden*, 3 vols (Harderwijk: Willem Brinkink, [1748–50]), I, ff. *4r, A1r.

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