CONTENDING REPRESENTATIONS I *The Dutch Republic and the Lure of Monarchy*

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The Dutch Republic and the Lure of Monarchy

Edited by *Joris Oddens, Alessandro Metlica and Gloria Moorman*

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REPRESENTING POWER IN THE SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY DUTCH REPUBLIC

In a 2008 volume devoted to *The Republican Alternative* in the early modern period, Michael North wondered whether early modern republican states can be said to have developed a 'republican art'. North concluded that while in monarchies 'art production and collecting fulfilled the task of glorifying the ruler or the dynasty and the splendour of their legacy', such 'motives were totally absent in […] the Dutch Republic'.[1] This book about the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic reaches a very different conclusion. The Dutch may not have had a king during this century, but their society continued to be pervaded by monarchical modes of representation. We have reached this conclusion after posing a somewhat different question: how was power represented in the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic, and how did this polity compare to monarchical states in this respect?

In the present volume we have examined this question from the perspective of representation rather than by focusing on a specific domain such as politics, ritual, literature, or the visual arts. The contributions to this volume are guided by the conviction that studying cultural representations of power as a separate sphere of artistic production, somehow detached from the sphere of political representation, means missing the point of how these representations were intended and understood in the early modern period. In this introduction, which draws on a rich and multidisciplinary body of work, we show that power in the Dutch Republic was represented by a plethora of political actors, and that cultural representations were integral to their representative claims. These actors included collegial bodies, as one would expect in a republic, but they also included many individual power-holders, of whom the stadtholders constitute only the most obvious example. These individuals, despite living in a republican state, were faced with a constant temptation to present themselves (or allow others to present them) as the symbolic embodiment of a body politic, which in the seventeenth century became the very essence of monarchical representation.

The seventeenth-century Dutch Republic emerged as a republican state in a Europe of monarchies. The monarchical model was dominant, and on the international stage the Dutch Republic mostly encountered monarchical states. It is unsurprising that, in scholarly work on seventeenth-century cultural representations of power, monarchies have been the norm.[2] In his introduction to the classic study in this field, *The Fabrication of Louis XIV* (1994), Peter Burke discusses various understandings of the concept of representation in seventeenth-century France: Louis XIV represented kingship, he represented God, and he represented the French state, or the French body politic. The Sun King was in turn represented by ambassadors, provincial governors, local magistrates, and by the queen; he was represented by portraits and on medals; and he was represented by the symbols on his coat of arms, by the image of the sun, or by the table laid for his meal.[3]

While there seem to be considerable differences between these various forms of representation, they share a symbolic dimension, in the sense that they need to be believed in to work.[4] This is clear in the case of the sun or the royal table representing the king. It seems less obvious, perhaps, in the case of the king's portrait or that of the ambassador. A portrait is a form of representation based on likeness. Yet it remains an interpretation of reality; it is never

1.1
Rembrandt van Rijn, *The Company of Captain Frans Banninck Cocq and Lieutenant Willem van Ruytenburch*, commonly known as *The Nachtwacht* ('Night Watch') (detail of fig. 1.19).

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1.2
Joseph Werner, *Allegory of Louis XIV as Apollo*, Versailles, Château de Versailles. 1664.
© RMN-Grand Palais (Château de Versailles). Reproduced with permission.

reality itself. An ambassador represents the king by virtue of having been authorized to substitute for him.[5] However, the ambassador chooses to represent his king in a certain way, so this representation too is an interpretation of reality. Moreover, the allegorical embedding of the image of the sun, the place where a portrait of the king is hung, or the diplomatic ceremonial in which the ambassador partakes all add symbolic meaning to representations of power. As Louis Marin has aptly put it, to represent power is to turn force into signs in order to have others believe in this force even if it is not exercised.[6]

The representational relationships introduced by Burke are multilayered: the ambassador represented the king, who in turn represented the body politic, but could also be seen representing Apollo on stage (fig. 1.2). Building on Burke's work, Edward Muir has extended the example of Louis XIV's stage performances to early modern monarchical states in general: in *Ritual in Early Modern Europe* (1997), he wrote that '[i]t was this mutually reinforcing effect of multiple representations that constructed the regality of early modern princes'.[7] For Muir, the ways in which Louis XIV's kingship was represented marked the culmination of a process that had begun with the Reformation: under the influence of the Reformers' theological criticism on the doctrine of transubstantiation and other religious rituals, there had been a shift from 'rites of enactment' to 'rites of representation' also in political ritual. Whereas regal ceremonies had originally been performative acts, they now became propagandistic events. In Muir's view, coronation ceremonies remained important because they left a powerful impression on the people, but they no longer had any constitutional significance.[8] This echoes a point made ten years earlier by Peter Burke, who saw, in both Catholic and Protestant regions, a 'repudiation of ritual' in seventeenth-century Europe.[9]

The idea of such a 'revolution in ritual theory' has since been challenged. Barbara Stollberg-Rillinger has convincingly demonstrated that, in the Holy Roman Empire, symbolic representations and ritual enactments of the political order remained indispensable up until the introduction of written constitutions.[10] In a recent book about the visual culture of the English monarchy after the Glorious Revolution, Julie Farguson has argued that art and ceremony 'were both vital in the presentation of monarchy during the early modern period in Europe'.[11] Another recent volume evinces that in the Habsburg Monarchy ritual moments such as coronations and inaugurations continued to be 'more than mere spectacle' until well into the nineteenth century.[12] For France, Paul Friedland has shown that the belief that the representation of the body politic was a process analogous to transubstantiation persisted until the start of the French Revolution.[13]

Nonetheless, French thinking about representation did evolve in crucial ways around 1600. Before Bodin, the body politic was thought to be represented by the king *and* his estates: the king was the head, and the estates formed the body. This representation was concretely embodied at the convocation of the Estates General.[14] This understanding of representation has been called *repraesentatio identitatis* (identity representation).[15] The idea of identity representation is thought to have been first applied to the sphere of politics by the fourteenth-century thinker Marsilius of Padua. In Marsilius's understanding of representation, the body of the citizens was represented – embodied – by a smaller group of citizens, usually the more distinguished members of the citizenry. These representatives themselves always belonged to the body politic they represented, so this understanding of representation always entailed a *pars pro toto* relationship. The fact that Marsilius claimed that political authority needed to be founded on popular consent has led some scholars to see in him an advocate of popular sovereignty.[16] However, by the people Marsilius meant the distinguished members of society, who represented the total body of the citizens not by means of consent, but rather through a representational relationship based on the idea of corporate identity. The representatives and the represented belonged to the same corporation and therefore a unity of wills existed between them: in other words, the representatives *were* the represented.[17]

The notion of identity representation has enjoyed particular popularity as a way to consider the relationship between rulers and ruled in the sixteenth century. It was the dominant conception of representation also in the English idea of king-in-parliament, where the king and Parliament together were considered the symbolic representation of the realm. During the political crisis of the 1640s, this idea gave way to the idea that Parliament alone could represent the body politic.[18] In as early as the 1570s, in France authors such as François Hotman and Théodore de Bèze had also insisted on the primacy of the estates rather than of the king. In the seventeenth century, however, the opposite idea became dominant: the king was the representative of God on earth and could alone represent the body politic; as is well-known, the French Estates General were not summoned between 1614 and 1789.[19] The French king was now thought to embody the body politic. *L'état c'est moi.* This understanding of political representation as embodiment remained indebted to the older conception of identity representation: its success continued to depend on a suspension of disbelief, on the part of both the representatives and the represented, with respect to the symbolic nature of the representational relationship that connected them.

Sovereignty and representation

If seventeenth-century France is the model *par excellence* of an early modern European state in which cultural representations of power centred around the king, the Dutch Republic may at first instance seem the ideal counter model. Of course, the Dutch Republic was not the only republican state in seventeenth-century Europe. Just as France represents one monarchical model, there was no single republican model, as considerable differences existed in how states such as Venice, Genoa, the Swiss Confederacy, and the Dutch Republic were governed and how rule in these states was legitimized.[20] What the seventeenth-century republics seem to have had in common, however, was an institutionalized ambiguity about the *locus* of sovereignty, which created a discursive space in which representative claims always met with counter-claims.[21] This is exemplified by a text that is considered crucial for the way sovereignty and representation were understood in the Dutch Republic throughout its existence, usually known in Dutch as the *Corte Vertooninghe* ('Short Exposition').[22] Commissioned by the provincial States of Holland, this text was drawn up in 1587 by François Vranck, in his capacity as *pensionaris* (chief town clerk) of Gouda. It was written in the context of a difference of opinion between the States and the party of Robert Dudley, the Earl of Leicester, whom the States General had offered the position of governor-general.[23]

At the core of this quarrel lay the question as to whether sovereignty ultimately resided with Leicester, with the States, or more broadly with the people. Later commentators have often seen the *Short Exposition* as an outright defence of the supremacy of the States, but the argument of this text is actually more complex. Vranck did indeed assert that sovereignty rested with the States, but he clarified that: '[the] delegates who thus assemble [in the assembly of the States of Holland in The Hague], represent the States of their country, which is not to say that they are the States in person, or by virtue of their own authority, but only by virtue of the mandate of their principals'.[24]

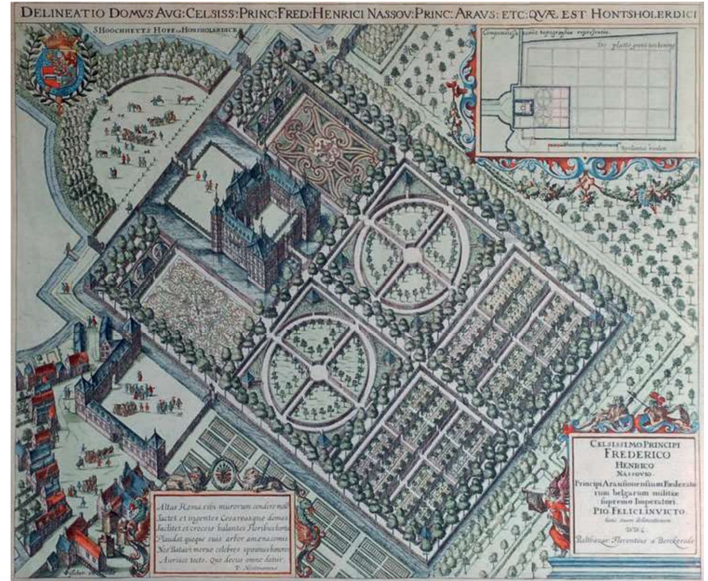
These principals consisted of the towns and the nobility, the two estates that were allowed to send delegates to the states assembly. By towns, Vranck referred more specifically to the town governments, which were in turn 'constituted by the most distinguished members of the citizenry'.[25] He stressed that these town governments not only had full authority to make decisions in matters of state, but that their decisions were always to be obeyed by the citizenry. This authority, according to Vranck, proved that '[the] city governments, together with the assembled nobility, indubitably represent the commonwealth and the entire body of the inhabitants.'[26]

Thus, we find in Vranck's *Short Exposition* two different conceptions of representation, even if for both of these conceptions the verb *representeren* is used. The type of representation by which the city governments and, to some extent, the nobles represented 'the commonwealth and the entire body of the inhabitants' is a form of identity representation.[27] Vranck's *Short Exposition* was a strongly rhetorical text, which therefore did not necessarily describe a political reality at the time of writing. It would help to shape, however, the political reality of the Dutch Republic for a long time to come. Until the late-eighteenth-century Dutch Revolution, the text was used to legitimize the oligarchic nature of the town governments. Some scholars have even argued that in Vranck's *Short Exposition*, absolutist state theory was for the first time applied in a non-monarchical state by attributing absolute power not to the monarch, but to local rulers.[28]

Perhaps it is more accurate to say that French absolutist theory and the oligarchic state theory of the Dutch Republic both built on the medieval conception of *repraesentatio identitatis*, but whereas Bodin combined this with the idea of indivisible sovereignty and concluded that the king alone could represent the body politic, Vranck remained more faithful to the original idea by asserting that the body politic was represented by the more distinguished members of the citizenry. The de facto outcome was indeed that in both states one level of government – be it the king or the local rulers – claimed absolute power.[29] In both states, this claim was upheld throughout the seventeenth century and in fact until the end of the eighteenth century, when the revolutionary idea was introduced that political representation was not possible without democratic elections. In this respect, the trajectories of France and the Dutch Republic shared more similarities than a crude monarchy-republic dichotomy would seem to suggest.

The type of representation by virtue of which, in Vranck's text, the delegates of the meeting of the States of Holland in The Hague represent the towns and nobles is what we may call representation as delegation.[30] The delegates of the cities and knighthoods (*ridderschappen*) in provincial states assemblies acted – in most matters – with an imperative mandate from their principals, and the same holds true for the delegates of the provincial states assembled in the States General. In most historical scholarship this type of representation is considered characteristic of the Dutch Republic's political system. While it may not at first seem so symbolically charged, the fact remains that in actual practice, despite the mandate, the delegates still had considerable agency when it came to exercising their representative role. Moreover, as Bert Drejer has recently shown, contemporary theorists did not always distinguish sharply between identity representation at the local level and the system of delegation at the supralocal level. Rather, advocates of the claim that sovereignty was vested in the provincial states – which became the dominant view after the mid-seventeenth century – underscored this claim by emphasizing that the provincial states themselves represented the entire body politic.[31] In this view, not the mechanism of delegation but a more symbolic understanding of representation prevailed after all. Firmly embedded in Vranck's formulation from its very outset, representation of the different provincial bodies politic could be fully realized only at the level of the provincial states assemblies, because only there did the constituent parts – the cities and the knighthoods (which in turn represented the inhabitants of the countryside) – come together, as happened in France in the figure of the king. Unlike in France, however, the interpretation that the nobility and especially the cities ultimately retained part of the sovereignty was never abandoned entirely.

A similar ambiguity persisted in the relation between the various provincial states assemblies and the States General. When the Dutch Republic was still *in statu nascendi*, the claim that sovereignty resided in the States General was not yet considered problematic; Holland and the 'Generality' (*Generaliteit*) were often considered one and the same. In 1587, around the time when Vranck wrote the *Short Exposition*, the *landsadvocaat* (chief civil servant) of Holland Johan van Oldenbarnevelt even went as far as to defend the supreme power of the States General over that of the States of Holland.[32] Only when the other provinces started to guard their autonomy more vigorously did this view become controversial. Meanwhile, until the end of the Dutch Republic, the States General continued to exert sovereignty over the so-called 'Generality Lands' - territories conquered by the Dutch Republic that did not belong to any of the provinces - as well as over overseas territories that fell under the authority of the East and West Indies Companies.[33] Moreover, the States General represented the external sovereignty of the Dutch Republic: the institution of the States General was presented to foreign powers as the equivalent of the prince in a monarchical state. Whereas ambassadors or diplomatic delegations of monarchical states represented the monarch, Dutch diplomats abroad were representatives of the States General. Temporary diplomatic missions, often with plenipotentiary status, were usually led by deputies (*gedeputeerden*) of the States General, who thus belonged to the sovereign body they represented.[34] Within the Dutch Republic, too, the States General could be represented by committees or delegations recruited from its own midst, which in some cases were authorized to take decisions in its name. In times of war, the States General appointed 'deputies-in-the-field' with plenipotentiary powers.[35]



1.3
Balthasar Florisz. van Berckenrode,
Bird's-eye View of Honselaarsdijk Palace near
The Hague, Van Sandick Archief. c. 1635–52.
Wikimedia Commons. Public domain.

Symbolic representation

Besides the cities, the knighthoods, the provincial states assemblies, and the States General, the stadtholders of the House of Orange-Nassau also held a claim to sovereignty. Since the fifteenth century, the title of *stedehouder* or *stadhouder* (literally 'place-holder' or 'lieu-tenant') had been given to those provincial officials who represented the overlords of the Netherlands in absentia, and served under the governor-general based in Brussels.[36] In 1559 the Habsburg Lord of the Netherlands Philip II had appointed William of Orange as Stadtholder of Holland, Zeeland, and Utrecht. Soon after, William became the leader of the rebellion against his overlord. He fled to his ancestral castle in Dillenburg in 1567, but upon his subsequent return to the Netherlands (1572), an assembly of the rebelling Holland towns reappointed him as Stadtholder of Holland and Zeeland, ignoring the claim of Philip's appointee, the Count of Bossu. The stadtholder thus effectively became a representative of the States. Theoretically, each province could have its own stadtholder, but in practice stadtholders were shared by multiple provinces. All stadtholders appointed after that belonged to two different branches of the Orange-Nassau dynasty (figs 5.11, 6.5, 7.5).

As sovereign princes of the French principality of Orange, the stadtholders of the Orange branch outranked their relatives, the counts (later princes) of Nassau-Dietz, who were stadtholders of the northern provinces of Friesland and Groningen (fig. 7.5).[37] Beyond their territories in France and the German lands, the Orange stadtholders held many titles and considerable territory in the Netherlands as well, which added to their status as the highest nobles in the Dutch Republic. In the 1580s the Oranges had moved their court to The Hague; initially this court was comparable in size to that of the medieval counts of Holland, but over the course of the seventeenth century it grew to match that of significant German principalities.

Of all the stadtholders, William of Orange came closest to being elevated to the status of sovereign of the Dutch provinces.[38] In the early 1580s, Holland and Zeeland planned to give him the title of count, but these plans were abandoned when William was murdered in 1584. William's successors were not exactly averse to the idea of assuming sovereignty over the provinces and at times actively aspired to it. Maurice

1.4
Willem Outgerszoon Akersloot
after Adriaen Pieterszoon van de Venne,
Portrait of Frederick Henry,
Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum. c. 1628.
Public domain.

1.5
Anthony van Dyck,
Portrait of William II and Maria Stuart,
Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum. 1641.
Public domain.

of Nassau, William of Orange's second son, came to combine the stadtholdership of Holland, Zeeland, Utrecht, Guelders, and Overijssel with the military ranks of captain-general of the army and admiral-general of the fleet. Maurice and his successors called themselves captain-general of the Union ('kapitein-generaal der Unie'), in due reference to the political and military Union of Utrecht established by the rebellious provinces in 1579.[39]

Maurice's half-brother Frederick Henry, who became the third Orange-Nassau stadtholder in 1625, established a more ceremonial court culture, built palaces and gardens, acted as a patron of the arts, and arranged a marriage between his son William and Mary Henrietta Stuart, the daughter of Charles I (figs 1.3–5).[40] He procured from the various provinces the promise that William would succeed him as stadtholder, while the States General stipulated that his son was to inherit the military command. In the countless propagandistic prints and laudatory poems that appeared during Frederick Henry's stadtholdership, his military role of defender of the republic was emphasized alongside his princely virtues and the importance of the Orange dynasty.[41] The state portraits of Frederick Henry and his family, painted by their court painter Gerard van Honthorst and leading European portraitist Anthony van Dyck, resemble contemporary state portraits of the English royals, and reflect his monarchical allure (fig. 7.5).[42]

Born and raised in this courtlier atmosphere, Frederick Henry's son, who had succeeded his father in 1647 as William II, resorted to violent means to tilt the internal balance of power in his favour. This proved counter-effective. When in 1650 the fourth Orange-Nassau stadtholder tried - in vain - to subdue the city of Amsterdam and died shortly afterwards, the five provinces that he had served decided to leave the office of stadtholder vacant. Only in the 'Year

of Disaster' 1672, when the Dutch Republic faced armed attacks at all its borders, was his son William Henry reinstalled as Stadtholder William III (fig. 5.11). Two years later, the stadtholderate was declared hereditary in Holland, Zeeland, and Utrecht, formalizing the bond between the office and the Orange dynasty. William III was even offered the position of sovereign by the province of Guelders, but he refused because the patricians of Holland would never have allowed this. Despite this he was to become, in everyday political practice, the most powerful stadtholder.[43]

Whereas the Oranges served individual provinces, they could as a result of their supreme command of the army – a position retained by the sovereign in monarchical states – nonetheless claim to represent the entire Republic of the Seven United Provinces. As Pauline Kiesow has recently emphasized, moreover, the Union of Utrecht also established the obligation of the stadtholders to act as mediator in the case of conflicts within and between the provinces, a responsibility that had equally fallen to the Habsburg stadtholders.[44] In the many popular representations of the Orange stadtholders in circulation, these themes were consistently underlined.[45] It is unsurprising, therefore, that to many inhabitants of the Dutch Republic the stadtholders, rather than the political assemblies, embodied the state, much as a sovereign would in a monarchy.

Political representation in the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic retained an important symbolic dimension, as was the case in monarchical states. The power balance between the different institutions constantly oscillated over the course of the seventeenth century: no written constitution existed in the modern sense of the word, and constitution-like texts such as the treaty of the Union of Utrecht and Vranck's above-mentioned *Short Exposition* left considerable room for interpretation and could be cited in support of rivalling representative claims. As in monarchies, symbolic representation of power was performed through cultural representations. The degree to which institutions depended on the symbolic dimension was determined by the extent to which political representation was also legitimized in other ways, and by the expectations of those with whom they interacted.

The provincial states assemblies and the States General were made up of members of a patrician class (*regenten*), and they interacted, first and foremost, with other patricians through a regulated process of delegation, based on the principle of the imperative mandate. Compared to assemblies of estates elsewhere in Europe, these assemblies seem to have gone about their business with relatively little public ceremony, although this particular aspect certainly warrants more research.[46] The representative claim of local rulers had a stronger symbolic character inasmuch as it was directed to the urban and rural populations. The stadtholder was as powerful as he was believed to be by the inhabitants of the Dutch Republic and by the royal families and high nobility elsewhere in Europe. Envoys representing the States General on the international stage had no choice but to participate in a diplomatic theatre that revolved around the idea that ambassadors and other diplomats symbolically represented the magnificence of their prince.[47] This required that they present themselves with appropriate splendour (fig. 1.6). A stately embassy building at a prime location with luxurious furniture and tableware, good horses and coaches, generous dinners, a large staff, and fine clothes were all necessary, since an ambassador, as contemporaries put it, 'represents (the sovereignty of) the state'.[48]

1.6

Gerard ter Borch and Gerard van der Horst, *Entry of Envoy Adriaen Pauw and Anna van Ruytenburgh into Münster*, Münster, Stadtmuseum Münster. 1646. Wikidata. Public domain.

1.7
Pieter Post, 'City Hall of Maastricht', Maastricht. 1659–64. Photo by Michiel Verbeek. Wikipedia. Public domain.

The lure of monarchy

The ambiguity as to which power rested with whom led to internal instability. Yet, this ambiguity was also deemed necessary in a republican state faced with the fact that the monarchical model retained great appeal both at home and abroad. A defining characteristic of the Dutch Republic as a political entity was that its elites adopted a pragmatic approach in dealing with this ambiguity. There was, of course, clear anti-monarchical rhetoric in the representation of enemies of the Dutch Republic, which for some included the House of Orange.[49] However, as Marianne Klerk points out in her contribution to this volume, criticism of individual monarchs cannot be equated with republicanism. Few inhabitants of the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic categorically rejected the paradigm of single-person rule. Moreover, noble rank, a type of distinction that is emphatically monarchical, never lost its appeal. It is true that in the province of Holland, the nobility had little formal power, but the noble class still dominated the political process in most of the provinces, and features of noble distinction, such as titles, manors, coats of arms, venerable lineages, and the right to hunt continued to be much sought after, also by non-noble urban elites.[50]

As Arthur Weststeijn shows in his chapter, in the Dutch colonial context stadtholders as well as other power-holders such as colonial governors-general were eagerly represented as monarchical figures. Back in the Dutch Republic, state portraits of Maurice of Nassau were mass-produced by the The Hague workshop of Michiel van Mierevelt, from where they came to adorn the walls of the States General and several city halls (fig. 6.6).[51] In these contexts Maurice was represented as military commander-in-chief and not as sovereign, but not every visitor will have sharply distinguished between these two capacities, and perhaps that was exactly the point. By contrast, in Dutch embassy buildings, the coat of arms of the States General graced the spot under the dais where, in other embassies, a portrait of the monarch was hung.[52] In this case, ambiguity about the constitutional relationship between the States and the stadtholder was undesirable: it had to be clear that the States General was ultimately the sole negotiating partner in diplomatic affairs. That said, diplomatic missions representing the States General were often led by nobles or seigneurial lords rather than by urban citizens without titles, as this was appreciated by the kings who received them.[53]

The States General did not altogether refrain from using the prestige of the Nassau family on the European diplomatic stage. When foreign envoys came to The Hague, they were received by the Prince of Orange in his capacity as Stadtholder of Holland. This remained customary until Frederick Henry no longer wished to fulfil this role. Whereas he felt that it placed too much emphasis on his subordinate position, the states had found this custom appealing precisely because it had allowed them to capitalize on the stadtholder's princely status.[54] As emerges from the contribution of Lidewij Nissen, political institutions in the Dutch Republic also played an active role in the dynastic family politics of the stadtholders. This shows that they considered it a matter of state importance that the House of Orange-Nassau could compete with royal dynasties.[55] Meanwhile, the states made sure the dynastic marriages did not become fully-fledged state affairs and reminded the stadtholders of their place within the internal political system of the Dutch Republic. A comparable attitude can be discerned in individual political actors, as becomes clear in the chapter by Lauren Lauret and Ida Nijenhuis. On the one hand, members of the ruling elite realized that a connection with the powerful princes of Orange could prove essential for the advancement of their political career. On the other hand, as members of local and supra-local political institutions, they saw the monarchical tendencies of the stadtholders as a potential liability.[56]

Urban government in the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic came to rest with a patrician class that was convinced of its God-given authority, but nonetheless sought to consolidate the legitimacy of its rule through symbolic representation. As Peter Arnade demonstrates in his chapter, the cities held on to a civic tradition of representation that was deeply rooted in late medieval models. The power of the city and its rulers was expressed in visual arts and literature, and in public architecture, such as

gates, weigh houses, and town halls (fig. 1.7).[57] Amsterdam, by far the largest and most powerful city of the Dutch Republic, presented itself as a proud city state.[58] Other towns shared that aspiration, but executed it on a somewhat more modest scale.[59] The town halls in particular functioned as symbolic spaces where the power of the urban rulers was made present. The buildings had impressive exteriors and were richly decorated. Their decoration schemes combined allegorical personifications and mythological, biblical, and historical elements (figs 1.8–9). Almost always present was the theme of the administration of justice, exemplified by the judgments of Solomon, Cambyses, or William III, Count of Holland. The emphasis on justice resonates with an older European tradition of the representation of civic rule. The same may, of course, be said of references to other classical virtues, such as moderation, harmony, sincerity, perseverance, prudence, and vigilance. Particularly popular in the Dutch context were references to the Roman Republic (often including variations on the abbreviation S.P.Q.R.), and to the importance of peace.[60]

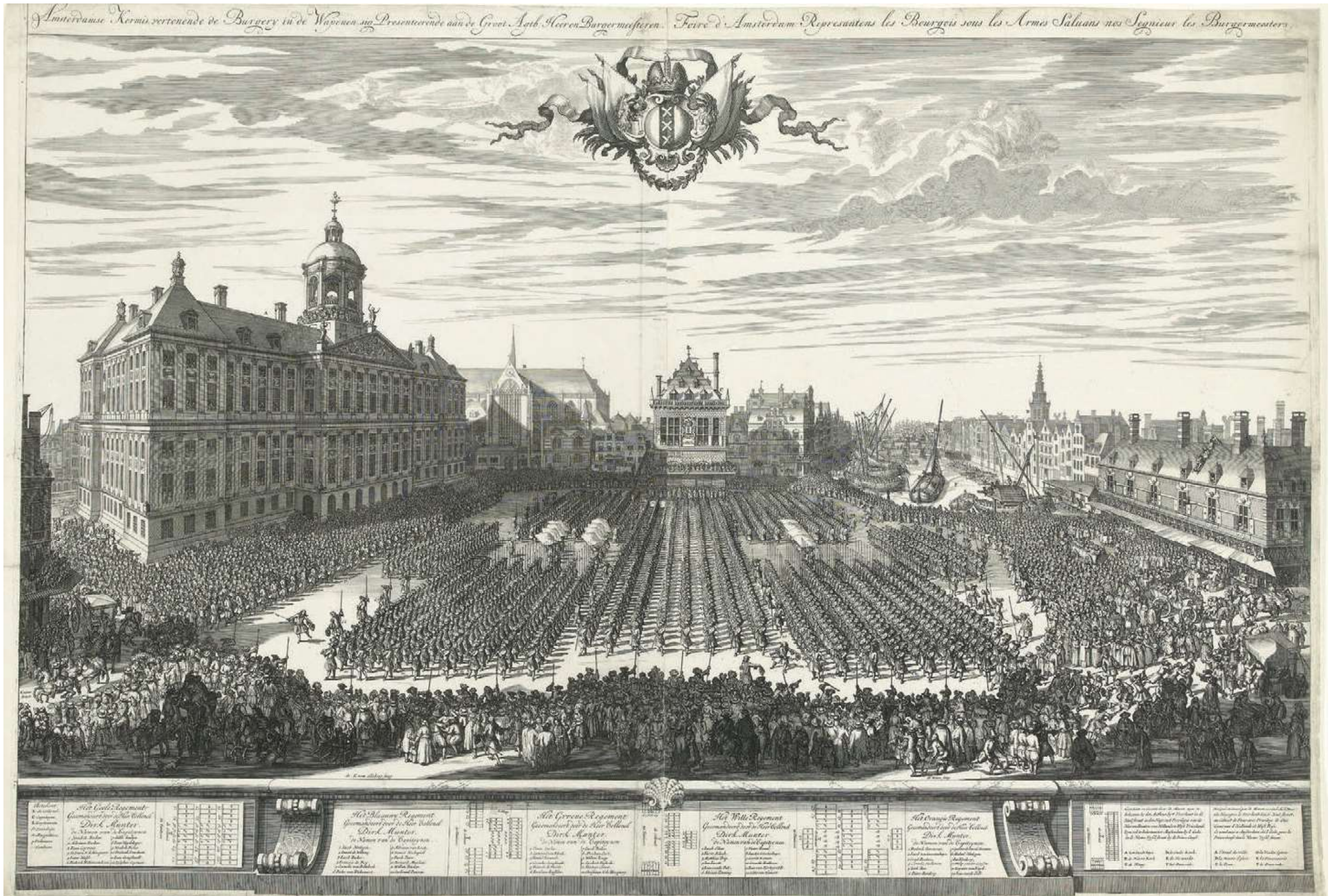
The idea of the town hall as the locus of symbolic power was brought to new heights with the building of the new Town Hall of Amsterdam in the 1650s. As shown in chapters 4 and 5 of this volume, this event inspired numerous multimedial representations.[61] Civic and national pride culminated in the cultural construction of the Town Hall as one of the wonders of the world. By means of the persisting tradition of city praise, in which the particulars of the literary portrait of a city were now adjusted to the scale of a single building,

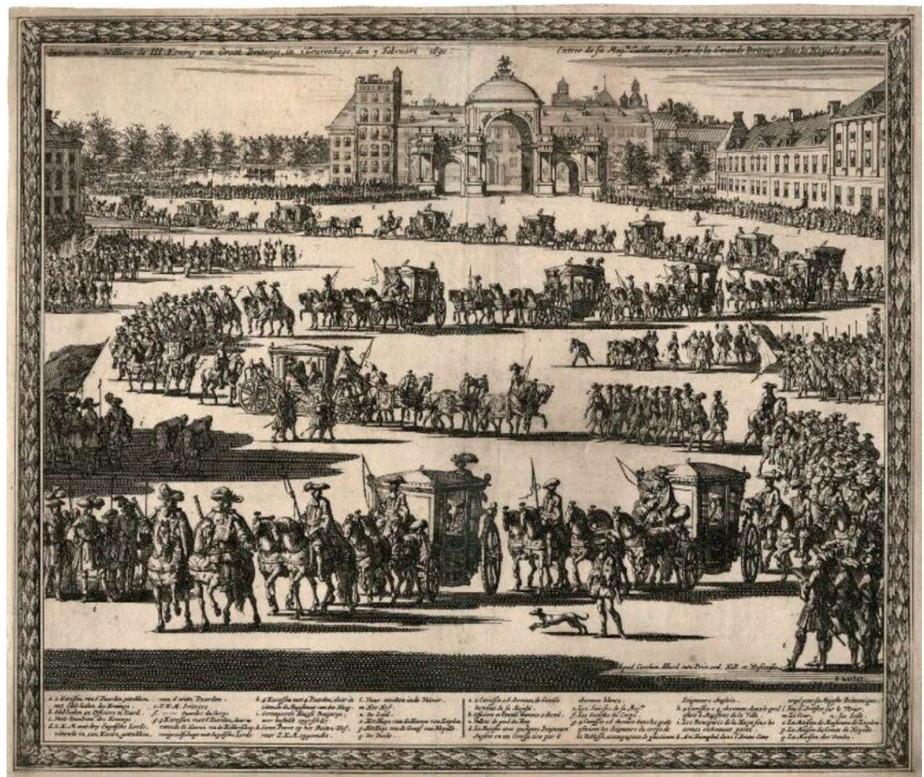
1.8

Romeyn de Hooghe, *The City of Alkmaar Pledges Loyalty to the Virgin of Holland*, Alkmaar, Stedelijk Museum Alkmaar. 1694. Beeldbank Stedelijk Museum Alkmaar.

1.9

'Council Room', City Hall of 's-Hertogenbosch, 's-Hertogenbosch. Featuring *Justice and Concord* (1646), by Theodoor van Thulden and Wall Tapestries (1679) by Maximiliaan van der Gucht. Courtesy of Margriet van Eikema-Hommes. Photo: Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands. Reproduced with permission.





1.10

Daniel Marot, *Annual Parade of the Amsterdam Civic Guards*, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum. 1686. Public domain.

1.11

Jan Luyken, *Entry of William III into The Hague in 1691*, London, National Portrait Gallery. 1691. Reproduced under Academic License.

1.12

Entry of Frederick Henry into The Hague after Having Occupied the City of Groenlo. The Hague, Haags Gemeentearchief. 1627. © Collectie Haags Gemeentearchief. Reproduced with permission.

1.13

Hendrik Winter, *Inauguration of Johan Huydecoper as Lord of Maarsseveen and Neerdijk*, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum. 1641. Public domain.

the majestic Town Hall was turned into the personification *par excellence* of civic splendour.[62] As the crowning glory of the Dutch Republic, its most important city and that city's rulers, it gained a monarchical aura on a par with that of royal palaces across Europe.

A recurrent ritual in urban society was the annual march through town of its civic guard (fig. 1.10). On this occasion, the city proudly showed itself to inhabitants and visitors alike.[63] In the past, cities had also seen the ceremonial entries of the Lords of the Netherlands, but in a republican state there was no place for such symbolic negotiations of the constitutional relationship between sovereign and city.[64] This did not mean that the tradition of the joyous entry disappeared altogether. A particularly famous example of how it found renewed purpose in the seventeenth century is the royal visit to Amsterdam of the French Queen-Mother Marie de' Medici in 1638, discussed in several chapters of this volume. This visit gave rise to myriad representations, in the shape of waterborne spectacles, triumphal arches, *tableaux vivants*, fireworks, paintings, engravings, poems, and a festival book.[65] The celebratory reception provided Amsterdam's rulers with a perfect opportunity to display the city's pride and power. The city was presented as equal to its regal visitor, and as a centre of commerce that, connecting all corners of the world, had risen to a position of global eminence.

Yet the visits of the stadtholders or their family members were cloaked in ceremony as well. In her chapter, Suzanne van de Meerendonk discusses the entry of William of Orange into Amsterdam in 1580, when the city still saw William as their future sovereign. In 1691, William III was received in The Hague (fig. 1.11). This entry marked his first return to the Dutch Republic after he had left to accept the English crown. It would be the only time a Stadtholder-Prince of Orange could be celebrated as king on Dutch soil. The entry of William III into The Hague, which is the topic of a recent study by Alexander Dencher, was to become the grandest entrance in the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic. It was staged more like the triumphal entries of ancient Roman military victors than as the joyous entries the Low Countries had witnessed before. The entry was offered to the stadtholder-King by local rulers and the States of Holland. Initially, William III refused to accept the offer, but retrospectively this refusal appears to have been mostly strategic. His new royal status notwithstanding, William wanted to be seen as counter-image of the Sun King, and as a stadtholder who cared about the *res publica*. In triumphal arches, medals, prints, and poetry, William's recent military victories in Ireland and Scotland were emphasized. In this way, he anticipated foreseeable accusations of wanting to usurp the sovereignty of the Dutch Republic.[66]

In the long century that passed between these entries of William I and William III, stadtholders were most joyously received when they had won military victories in their capacity as captain-general (fig. 1.12).[67] Other important ceremonial moments were the entries of the future brides of the stadtholders and the ensuing urban celebrations of their marriages. In her chapter, Nissen discusses the marriage of William II and Mary Henrietta Stuart in Amsterdam in 1642 and that of William Frederick of Nassau-Dietz and Frederick Henry's daughter Albertine Agnes at the Frisian court in 1653. Sometimes entries took place at the request of urban rulers, who used them to make statements about their position in domestic and international politics. In Van de Meerendonk's contribution we for instance read about the visit to Amsterdam of Mary Stuart in 1660, this time as widow of William II and Princess Royal of England, and in the presence of her young son William Henry of Orange, the future William III. Even during this occasion, at the height of the stadtholderless period, the House of Orange-Nassau was a central theme in the customary procession of state carriages. The visit to the city of the then fifteen-year-old William Henry in 1666, the topic of Laura Plezier's chapter, did not pass unacknowledged either. In current scholarship visits to Amsterdam or The Hague often take centre stage, but ceremonial entries also took place in other towns.[68]

Meanwhile, as Arjan Nobel has recently pointed out, the tradition of the joyous entry also flourished in the Dutch countryside from the late sixteenth century onwards (fig. 1.13). The countryside was divided into seigneuries owned by lords and ladies of noble descent, by urban citizens, or by a city or a province. The stadtholder-princes of Orange-Nassau, too, were lords of many seigneuries. New lords ceremoniously entered their seigneury, swore an oath, and received gifts. Such entries in fact retained something of their earlier function of constitutional negotiation between ruler and subjects, as the lord was often presented with requests on the part of the villagers. If the 'lord' was a province, an entry could also be organized for officials representing the provincial states, such as the *schout* (sheriff) or the *baljuw* (steward), or for a provincial delegation.[69] The rural practice of the joyous entry, in which political actors from across Dutch society took part, shows the persistence of the monarchical model of representation. It also once again confirms that the individuals who represented collective political bodies were to be treated with the symbolic reverence that was due to their principals, blurring the boundaries between republican and monarchical forms of power.

1.14

Daniel Drappentier, 'Medal of Honor of the States General (as after 1661), featuring the Coats of Arms of the States General and the Seven Provinces and the Motto *Res Parvae Crescent Concordia* ("Unity makes Strength"),' Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum. 1691–93. Public domain.

1.15

Jan de Baen, *Portrait of Gisbert Cuper, Former Burgomaster of Deventer and Deputy to the States General*, Deventer, Historisch Museum Deventer. c. 1681–89. Collection De Waag Deventer. Reproduced with permission.

Portraits of power

Whereas urban patricians actively contributed to the personality cult surrounding the princes of Orange, they initially seem to have been cautious about personalizing their own power. Rich citizens in the Dutch Republic displayed their wealth through conspicuous consumption, stately urban architecture, and sumptuous country estates.[70] This is not the same, though, as demonstrating political power. Urban citizens who remained outside the ruling elite (for instance because they did not belong to the Dutch Reformed Church) manifested themselves in similar ways. Unlike in Venice, another oligarchic republic, political office-holders in the Dutch Republic did not dress differently from other citizens.[71] The distinction between patricians and the rest of urban society was presumably expressed first and foremost in their day-to-day interaction and during ritual moments. The most common of such moments was the Reformed church service, in which the seating order – with special pews for members of the urban government, but also for members of higher colleges of state, officers of the army and the civic guards, board members of corporations, and university professors – reflected the socio-political order of the city.[72] Ceremonial entries, public weddings, and funerals, too, were moments in which this order could be staged.[73] More than four decades after the publication of Richard Trexler's groundbreaking work on renaissance Florence, an overarching study of the ritual aspects of public life in the Dutch cities still remains to be written.[74]

Much better served by scholars is the burgeoning business of seventeenth-century Dutch portraiture. Large numbers of men and women had themselves immortalized, be it in individual portraits, pendant pieces, family portraits, or as part of history paintings. Having a portrait painted was no prerogative of the ruling elite; portraits could therefore be cultural representations of many things, varying from marital bonds and professions to noble status or urban citizenship. The Dutch Republic did not develop a tradition of official portraits. Only occasionally do we find in portraits obvious references to political offices: in a portrait of the Deventer scholar and patrician Gisbert Cuper, for instance, a depiction of a city maiden symbolized his membership in the city government, while a medal of honour of the States General referred to the fact that he represented the province of Overijssel in that assembly (figs 1.14–15).[75] More often, the holding of offices, or membership in the patrician class, was expressed in subtler ways.[76]

It has often been remarked that notwithstanding the vivid tradition of group portraiture that emerged in the

Dutch Republic, official group portraits of local governing bodies were a rare phenomenon; the few extant examples, mostly produced in minor towns, are few and far between (fig. 1.16).[77] Of the provincial states assemblies and the States General, no official paintings are known at all. There were probably practical reasons for this. The most powerful office at the urban level, the college of burgomasters, rotated every year in most cities.[78] Deputies sent to the supralocal assemblies could be called back at any time. It has also been suggested that 'the seats of real political power remained unpictured' because seventeenth-century Dutch citizens were 'highly sensitive to the abuses of power in any form'.[79] An explanation more in line with the thrust of this volume is that it was deemed problematic to capture in painting the hierarchical relation between, for instance, the college of burgomasters and the city council, as each institution had its own views on this relationship.

The famed Dutch group portraits were not commissioned by political bodies, but in the context of the many urban corporations, such as philanthropic institutions, civic guards, and urban guilds, and incidentally also of supra-local corporations such as water boards.[80] Corporate institutions were characterized by a relatively straightforward internal hierarchy: charitable institutions had a board of governors (*regenten*), guilds were governed by a board of *overlieden* or *dekenen*, and civic guards had a military chain of command, with at the top a council of officers (*krijgsraad*) (fig. 1.17). Most group portraits depict these governing boards; only within the genre of civic guard paintings were compositions that included ordinary militiamen customary as well. Hence, the group portraits of the governing boards of almshouses, orphanages, old people's homes, correctional institutions, or guilds as well as those of the officers of the civic guard are all representations of power-holders of sorts. For many of these portraits, however, the representation of power as such does not seem to have been the primary goal. The group portraits that were hung on the walls of charitable institutions symbolized abstract principles such as mercy or civic duty. A popular type of militia painting was that of the banquet. Depictions of communal meals of the officers of the civic guard symbolize the friendship and unity of the militia, and by extension of the urban community at large. Bartholomeus van der Helst famously painted a banquet portrait of the company of Captain Cornelisz Jansz Witsen and Lieutenant Johan Oetgens van Waveren to celebrate the peace of Münster in 1648. This painting, one of the last militia paintings, symbolizes peace and reconciliation (fig. 2.10).[81]

Civic guard paintings, however, were not just about representing abstract principles. In many of these portraits, the internal hierarchy within the represented collective was made visible using attributes or choosing a certain composition: leading officers could be distinguished from ordinary militiamen. The captain and, to a lesser extent, the lieutenant stand out. As early as 1588, Cornelis Ketel completed the artistically groundbreaking piece now known as *Company of Captain Dirck Jacobsz Rosecrans and Lieutenant Pauw*, which is in fact a standing full-length state portrait of the three central figures in the painting, the two highest officers and the ensign, embedded in a group portrait of their company (fig. 1.18). Ketel seems to have been ahead of his time, as the full-length group portrait foregrounding the leading officers became the standard formula for civic guard paintings only during the 1630s and 1640s, when it was employed in now world-famous pieces such as Van der Helst's portrait of the company of Captain Roelof Bicker and Rembrandt's depiction of the company of Frans Banning Cocq, best known as *The Night Watch* (fig. 1.19).

The representation of captains in the civic guard portraits reflected their symbolic power in the urban communities of the Dutch Republic. They were the leading officers of a company; all companies in turn served under the command of one colonel, who was often a member of the city government, or acted as its representative in the *krijgsraad*. As Paul Knevel pointed out almost three decades ago in his landmark study of the civic guards in the province of Holland, the captains had a more autonomous position within urban society and enjoyed great prestige among the citizenry (figs 1.20–21). Both in public life and in the militia portraits, their self-fashioning was more flamboyant and their clothing more extravagant than that of members of the city government. During the civic guard's annual parade, or during ceremonial entries, the captains took centre stage.[82] In contrast to other institutional group portraits, the civic guard paintings in which they featured so prominently were hung in public spaces: the buildings of the civic guards were gathering places for the urban citizenry, but they also functioned as representative spaces where visitors to the cities were shown around.[83] It was often the captains themselves who took the initiative for a group portrait on the occasion of their promotion to the office of colonel or burgomaster.[84] It seems that in this way they hoped to preserve the prestige which they had enjoyed in their previous role by making it permanently present.

According to Knevel, the captains of the civic guard were regarded, even more so than the members of the city government, as embodying the civic community at large.[85] It is important to ask why it was, exactly, that the captains could – and did – perform this symbolic role, all the while being formally subservient to the cities' rulers. An interesting parallel may be drawn here with the position of the stadtholders at the supralocal level. Both figures derived their symbolic

1.16

Gerard ter Borch, *City Government of Deventer*, Raadhuis Deventer, Deventer. 1667. Collection Museum De Waag. Reproduced with permission.

1.17

Nicolaes Elias Pickenoy, *The Governors of the Spinhuis (House of Correction), Amsterdam.* Amsterdam Museum. 1628. Public domain.

1.18

Cornelis Ketel, *The Company of Captain Dirck Jacobsz Rosecrans and Lieutenant Pauw*, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum. 1588. Public domain.

1.19

Rembrandt van Rijn, *The Company of Captain Frans Banninck Cocq and Lieutenant Willem van Ruytenburch,* commonly known as *The Nachtwacht* ('Night Watch'), Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum. 1642. Public domain.

1.20

Abraham Delfos after Joris van Schooten, *The Six Captains of the Leiden Civic Guards in 1650* (eighteenth-century drawing after a lost seventeenth-century painting). Leiden, Museum De Lakenhal. c. 1797. Public domain.

1.21

Jan Albertsz Rotius, *The Company of Captain Claes Willemsz Jager*, Hoorn, Westfries Museum. 1655. Reproduced with permission.

power not primarily from their constitutional position, but rather from their military status. Furthermore, in both cases, it could be in the interest of collegial governing bodies to allow them to take up this role, or even – within certain limits – to actively stimulate it. In the interaction with other states and with their own citizens, these governing bodies were faced with a need for power figures that could symbolically fill the void left by the Lords of the Netherlands. The political history of the Dutch Republic in the seventeenth century may well be read as an ongoing debate about the extent to which this need was to be met.

True freedom

In this history, the mid-century marks a turning-point. After the signing of the Peace of Münster (1648) the significance of the civic guards declined. As a result, the captains of the guards lost some of their symbolic power. The death of William II gave rise to the stadtholderless regime of 'True Freedom' (1650–72). At the political centre in the Hague, the medieval Binnenhof complex, where building activity usually reflected changes in the balance of power, the States of Holland presented their plans for a grand new assembly hall for which part of the living quarters of the now-deceased

1.22
Anonymous after Hendrik Hondius, *View of the Binnenhof in the Hague Featuring the Recently Completed 'Stadtholderian Quarters' (Stadhouderlijk Kwartier)*, The Hague, Haags Gemeentearchief. c. 1640. Haagse Beeldbank.
Reproduced with permission.

1.23
Pieter Post, Assembly Hall of the States of Holland and Westfriesland (current Assembly Hall of the Dutch Senate), The Hague, 1650–66. Wikipedia. Public domain.

1.24
Artus Quellinus, *Portrait Bust of Andries de Graeff*, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum. 1661. Public domain.

stadtholder had to make way (figs 1.22–23). This monumental space, as well as the new meeting hall of the *Gecommiteerde Raden*, one of the States' executive bodies, were decorated with an allegorical motif emphasizing the importance of adhering to the virtues of love, loyalty, concord, and peace.[86]

Yet during the stadtholderless period, too, the need for personified power continued to be felt. In Amsterdam, the (self-)representation of the rich and powerful burgomasters took on less circumspect forms. After the Peace of Münster, and even more after William II's failed siege, they commissioned works of art in which they were compared to the consuls of the Roman Republic, fighting against tyranny. They had poets and playwrights such as Gerard Brandt, Jan Vos, and Joost van den Vondel sing praise to them in poems or during their visits to the city theatre, a municipal institution that had been founded in 1638.[87] Artus Quellinus, a classicist sculptor originally from Antwerp, received several commissions for marble busts representing them (fig. 1.24).[88] These sculpted portraits seem to have been intended for the representative spaces of the burgomasters' private homes rather than for government buildings, but much public activity took place there as well. In the burgomasters' room of the new Town Hall, the ceiling was decorated with their coats of arms.[89] In The Old Church, a public space *par excellence*, a stained-glass window was installed with the coats of arms of all burgomasters who had served in the past, going back to the establishment of the Calvinist regime in 1578 (fig. 1.25).[90] This was done at the initiative of Cornelis de Graeff, who in the early 1650s held the so-called 'magnificat', the term contemporaries reserved for the most powerful burgomaster.[91]

1.25

Jan van Bronchorst and Pieter Jansz., Stained-Glass Window with the Coats of Arms of Amsterdam Burgomasters in Office since 1578, Amsterdam, Oude Kerk. 1650. © Oude Kerk Amsterdam. Photo: Gert Jan van Rooij. Reproduced with permission.

1.26

Ferdinand Bol, *Portrait of Lieutenant-Admiral Michiel Adriaenszoon de Ruyter*, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum. 1667. Public domain.

During the third quarter of the seventeenth century, the Dutch Republic fought multiple naval wars with England. As there was no longer a stadtholder holding the office of admiral-general, the focus of personalized representation of military power shifted to the lieutenant-admirals of the Dutch Republic's five colleges of admiralty, and especially to the lieutenant-admiral who came to exercise the supreme command. This period saw the rise of the genre of the admiral's portrait (fig. 1.26).[92] These portraits depicted admirals in armour or – more commonly – in civilian clothes, armed with attributes such as a baton and a weapon, against the background of a seascape with one or more warships. Maritime painting had been a popular genre already in the first half of the seventeenth century, when it had served the purpose of symbolically representing the Dutch body politic and making claims about the position of the Dutch Republic in the sphere of international politics.[93] The formula of the admiral's portrait no doubt benefited from this local tradition, but it also seems to have taken inspiration from older portraits of Venetian fleet admirals.[94] Many of the admiral's portraits came to adorn the walls of the admiralties' buildings.[95] Moreover, the States General and the admiralties commissioned in these years a series of tombs for deceased admirals (fig. 1.27). These funerary monuments commemorated the admirals' heroic embodiment of the Union, but also added to the civic prestige of the cities where they were erected.[96] No admiral was admired more than Michiel Adriaenszoon de Ruyter, whose fame would reach its apex in 1673, when the military

1.27
Rombout Verhulst, 'Funerary Monument to Maarten Harpertsz. Tromp in the Old Church in Delft', Delft, Oude Kerk. 1655. © Oude Kerk Delft. Reproduced with permission.

status of lieutenant-admiral-general was created for him. The state funeral De Ruyter received after his death in 1676 rivalled the funerals of the stadtholders (fig. 1.28).[97]

History did not have a heroic ending in store for Johan and Cornelis de Witt.[98] The brothers De Witt hailed from a patrician dynasty native to Dordrecht, where their father had held the office of burgomaster multiple times. Cornelis followed in his father's footsteps by becoming first councillor and later burgomaster as well. As the oldest city of Holland, Dordrecht ranked first in the States assembly of this province. This meant that it had the right to provide candidates for the office of *raadpensionaris* (grand pensionary). From 1653 onwards, Johan de Witt held this position. In the absence of a stadtholder, he succeeded in using the position of grand pensionary – the province's highest-ranking civil servant, the office previously known as *landsadvocaat* – to become the most powerful statesman in the Dutch Republic. During the Second Anglo-Dutch War (1665–67), Johan got his brother Cornelis appointed as 'deputy-at-the-fleet', a prestigious new office with full plenipotentiary powers.[99] In that capacity Cornelis represented the States General at the Dutch fleet in the Spring of 1667, when – under the command of lieutenant-admiral De Ruyter – it sailed along the Thames and the Medway towards Chatham, the site of the most important English naval base. Here the Dutch fleet would, famously, destroy and capture so many warships that England was forced to end the war. De Ruyter and his officers had initially opposed this military operation because they deemed it too risky. But the De Witt brothers had insisted, and Cornelis was ultimately received as a hero upon returning to his hometown of Dordrecht.

Markedly, Dordrecht's city council also commissioned a large commemorative painting from the artist Jan de Baen (fig. 1.29). This work prominently features Cornelis, who is placed at the front, while the raid on the Medway is depicted in the background. Divine Fama sounds glory's trumpet and *putti* crown Cornelis with the laurel wreath, the Apollonian symbol reserved for victorious military commanders, which in the seventeenth century was often associated with Louis XIV and the stadtholders of the House of Orange, among other princes. Cornelis is pictured boasting the attributes of the military leader: he wears a breast-plate up front, and a harness stands next to him. In his right hand, Cornelis holds a baton of command with which he points towards himself in a self-conscious gesture, reconfirming that he is soon to be crowned the victor of the military operation. Of special significance, too, is the hat depicted just behind one arm. In seventeenth-century Dutch portraits, hats functioned as symbols of political office-holding.[100] In this painting, the hat seems to symbolize Cornelis's position as representative of the States General.

Besides this work, De Baen painted a portrait of Cornelis in the tradition of the admiral's portrait (fig. 1.30). This work came to serve as the pendant of a portrait of his brother. De Baen portrayed Johan de Witt with in the background the new assembly hall of the States of Holland,

1.28

Jan Luyken, *Funeral Procession for Michiel de Ruyter in Amsterdam in 1677*, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum. 1685. Public domain.

which at the time had recently been completed; it had in fact been De Witt who had put forward its architect Pieter Post (fig. 1.31).[101] De Baen represented the grand pensionary in his capacity as office-holder, following a Venetian tradition of official portraits.[102] Within the context of the Dutch Republic, however, the aspiration to present its sitter as the embodiment of the States assembly of the leading province of Holland makes this work unique. Equally exceptional was the fact that De Baen's painting glorifying Cornelis de Witt was hung in the official setting of Dordrecht's town hall.[103]

The year 1672 marks the fall of the brothers De Witt. Their anti-Orangist, pro-French politics turned against them when Louis XIV invaded the Dutch Republic. Cornelis was accused of having conspired to murder Prince William III of Orange. The brothers became the object of popular anger. Following several earlier assaults, they were lynched in The Hague on 20 August. Their corpses were mutilated, torn to pieces, and even partially eaten by the mob. Much has been written about what was, within the Dutch context, an exceptional political murder.[104] But one aspect has, so far, remained out of the limelight.

The tragic event had, in fact, been foreshadowed a few months prior to the lynching. A crowd broke into the town hall of Dordrecht and ripped to shreds De Baens's painting of Cornelis de Witt as victor of Chatham; Cornelis's painted head was nailed to a gallows. In The Hague, a crowd gathered at the studio of Jan de Baen and demanded that he hand over what must have been copies of the two state portraits of Johan and Cornelis.[105] Both these actions and the lynching itself indicate a fixation on the brothers' bodies. As early modern violence was, as a rule, charged with symbolic meaning, we may well assume that this fixation was more than mere coincidence.[106] This is confirmed by descriptions of the murder in contemporary pamphlets.[107] It does not seem far-fetched to assume that

1.29
Jan de Baen (copy after), *The Apotheosis of Cornelis de Witt*, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum. After 1667. Public domain.

the actions of the crowds were, at least in part, a response to the way in which the two statesmen had been represented.

It has been pointed out that, together, the paintings represent the brothers' claim to the political as well as the military primacy of the Dutch Republic, and that with this claim, they had symbolically put themselves in the place of the stadtholder.[108] The representative claim that emanates from the paintings, however, is even bolder than that. Johan is represented in his portrait as embodying the States of Holland. The representations of Cornelis can indeed be understood as a claim to surpass the military leadership of the stadtholder prior to the regime of True Freedom. Yet it is crucial to also consider Cornelis's role as deputy-at-the-fleet, and how this is equally expressed in his representation. In this capacity, Cornelis represented the States General; hence, he could symbolically claim to embody the body politic of the Dutch Republic at large. Together the brothers thus embodied the body politic at the level of the Dutch Republic and at that of its most powerful sovereign province, while they also presented themselves as successor of the stadtholder in his capacity as military commander of the Union.

In the chapter by Margriet van Eikema Hommes and Tatjana van Run, we read how the Amsterdam burgomaster

1.30

Jan de Baen, *Portrait of Cornelis de Witt*, Dordrecht, Dordrechts Museum. 1667. On loan from the Cultural Heritage Agency, 2014. Reproduced with permission.

1.31

Jan de Baen, *Portrait of Johan de Witt*, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum. After 1667. Public domain.

Andries de Graeff, an ally of the De Witts and the younger brother of the previously mentioned Cornelis de Graeff, also became the object of popular indignation in 1672. Technical analysis of the series of ceiling paintings in the reception room of his monumental canal house has revealed that throughout the Year of Disaster, De Graeff had the artist Gerard de Lairesse change the paintings multiple times, thus distancing himself from the regime of True Freedom and emphasizing his own heroic role as well as that of the city of Amsterdam in the ongoing war. As Van Eikema Hommes and Van Run write, it was, for a member of a patrician dynasty such as De Graeff, very important that the paintings conveyed the right message. In light of what happened to the De Witt brothers, he may even have perceived it as a matter of life and death.

Conclusion

The case of the De Witts epitomizes the thrust of this volume. If cultural production and political thought and practice are brought into direct conversation with one another, this leads to sharper insights into the political culture of a particular period. This volume shows that throughout the seventeenth century symbolic representation retained a crucial role in establishing, affirming, and challenging the political order of the Dutch Republic. Whereas this point has been made for monarchical states, cultural representations in the Dutch context are still relatively often considered as mere illustrations of constitutionally predefined power. The latter view is possible only if the status of written constitutions is projected onto canonical political texts such as the treaty of the Union of Utrecht; while it is true that these texts served constitutional functions, they were also enigmatic and open to multiple interpretations.

In the Dutch Republic, no less so than in a monarchical state like France, power had to be enacted by way of symbolic representation. Not only did political institutions uphold rivalling claims to sovereignty, but the power struggle amongst these institutions created opportunities to concentrate power in offices that on paper were subservient, and imbued these offices with a monarchical aura. The most obvious candidate for this was the office of stadtholder, but, as we see in this introduction and elsewhere in this volume, it also happened to positions as diverse as governor-general in the colonies, seigneurial lord, captain of the civic guard, lieutenant-admiral, grand pensionary, and deputy-at-the-fleet. Collegial governing bodies such as the Amsterdam college of burgomasters established a practice of recognizing a primus inter pares, which also opened doors to representations of power more along the lines of those traditionally adopted for single rulers. As much of the power of individual office-holders in the Dutch Republic was informal rather than vested in them by a constitution or granted by God, symbolic representation was essential to consolidate it.

Political actors in the Republic therefore took symbolic representation extremely seriously. In their mutual interactions, but also in diplomatic encounters with other states, they rigidly observed practices of seating order and préséance.[109] A second key insight of this volume, however, is that the political establishment of the Dutch Republic did, at the same time, have a pragmatic attitude towards using symbolic representation. The Dutch Republic had to hold its own in a world of monarchies. On the international stage, monarchical representation was very much the standard, in Europe but even more so beyond the confines of Europe, where the republican form of government met with little understanding. Meanwhile, the inhabitants of the Dutch Republic never quite lost their zest for single-person rule. The collegial governing bodies of the Dutch Republic gave in to these demands by allowing personality cults to form around individual power-holders. In popular prints, *tableaux vivants*, processions, and theatrical performances, such contemporary power-holders were freely compared to historical and mythological kings.[110]

This happened especially in wartime and preferably around military leaders, but it was inevitable that such leaders also gained political authority. What this could lead to became clear, notably (though by no means exclusively), in 1618, when Stadtholder Maurice of Nassau, during the year in which he inherited the title of Prince of Orange, ended a religious and political conflict with Holland's powerful *landsadvocaat* Johan van Oldenbarnevelt by having him sentenced to death. The example of the De Witt brothers shows that there were also limits to how far such personality cults could be taken. Ultimately, the princes of Orange were aware of these limits. It is certainly no coincidence that the most extravagant representation of the Orange dynasty produced in the seventeenth century, the decoration programme commemorating the life and military deeds of Stadtholder Frederick Henry in the reception room of Amalia of Solms's summer residence near The Hague, was not the prince's own doing but a posthumous tribute by Amalia to her late husband (fig. 10.5).[111]

If we return, in sum, to how the representation of power in the Dutch Republic compares to that in monarchical states, a nuanced answer has now become possible. The idea that power was constructed by a 'mutually reinforcing effect of multiple representations', as Muir put it, is also applicable to the Dutch Republic.[112] There was an almost infinite number of representatives at all levels of government, and their representative claims were reinforced by symbolic representation. On this level, the Dutch Republic markedly resembled

the monarchies that surrounded it, even if power flowed in different directions. On another level, compared to monarchies, there was more ambiguity in the power structures of the Dutch Republic. This drove artists to seek creative solutions when producing cultural representations of power. This very creativity, then, must certainly be part of the reason why, nowadays, we think of the seventeenth century as a golden age of Dutch cultural production. On a third level, there turns out to be more similarity with monarchical states than some students of cultural representations have been ready to acknowledge. Individual leadership and notions of dynasty continued to have great symbolic value in the Dutch Republic, and the idea that individual rulers could embody communities, which was the guiding principle of monarchical states, never quite lost its alluring appeal.

1 North, 'Republican Art?', p. 205. In a similar vein, see Scheller, 'Art of the State'.
2 See for instance Burke, *The Fabrication of Louis XIV*; Ellenius, ed., *Iconography, Propaganda, and Legitimation*; as well as Sharpe's trilogy *Selling the Tudor Monarchy*; *Image Wars*; and *Rebranding Rule*; and Farguson, *Visualising Protestant Monarchy*.
3 Burke, *The Fabrication of Louis XIV*, pp. 8–10.
4 Stokke and Selboe, 'Symbolic Representation', p. 59.
5 Theorists of representation have called this representation as substitution: Hofmann, *Repräsentation*, pp. 116–90; Mulieri, 'Hasso Hofmann', pp. 135–38.
6 Marin, *Politiques de la représentation*, p. 74.
7 Muir, *Ritual in Early Modern Europe*, p. 273.
8 Muir, *Ritual in Early Modern Europe*, pp. 163–90, 272–79.
9 Burke, *The Historical Anthropology*, pp. 223–38.
10 Stollberg-Rillinger, *Des Kaisers alte Kleider*.
11 Farguson, *Visualising Protestant Monarchy*, p. 5.
12 Van Gelder, ed., *More than Mere Spectacle*.
13 Friedland, *Political Actors*, pp. 8–9 and *passim*.
14 Friedland, *Political Actors*, pp. 32–38.
15 Hofmann, *Repräsentation*, pp. 191–285; Mulieri, 'Hasso Hofmann', pp. 138–40; Weller, 'Political Representation', pp. 107–08.
16 See Mulieri, 'Marsilius of Padua', p. 624. Ernst Kossmann has made a similar point about the concept of popular sovereignty in the political thought of the Dutch Revolt: Kossmann, 'Volkssouvereiniteit', p. 5.
17 Mulieri, 'Hasso Hofmann', p. 139; Mulieri, 'Marsilius of Padua'.
18 Brito Vieira and Runciman, *Representation*, pp. 20–22; Manow, *Im Schatten des Königs*, pp. 37–38; Seaward, 'Representation and Personation'.
19 Friedland, *Political Actors*, pp. 46–51.
20 See for instance Maissen, *Die Geburt der Republic*; Viggiano, 'Politics and Constitution'; Bitossi, 'Governing in a Republican State'; and Onnekink, 'The Body Politic'. Cf. also *Contending Representations* volumes 2 and 3, on the Republics of Venice and Genoa respectively.
21 Cf. also Frijhoff and Spies, 1650, pp. 218–19; Zucchi, 'Republics in Comparison', p. 369; Weeber, *Republiken als Blaupause*, pp. 11–12. About the idea of representative claim-making, see Saward, *The Representative Claim*.
22 The full title is *Corte verthooninge van het recht byden ridderschap, edelen ende steden van Hollandt ende Westvrieslant van allen ouden tyde in den voorschreven Lande gebruyckt tot behoudenisse vande vryheden, gerechticheden, privilegien ende loffelicke gebruycken vanden zelve Lande*. A modern English edition is 'Short Exposition'. References are to the text as printed in Bor, *Vervolgh der Nederlandsche Oorlogen*.
23 See Geyl, 'An Interpretation of Vrancken's deduction'; Van Gelderen, *The Political Thought*, pp. 204–12.
24 [Vranck], 'Corte Vertoninge', p. 57: '[de] ghecommitteerde alsulcx by den anderen vergaderende, representeren de Staten vanden selve lande, niet dat syluyden in hare persoonen, oft uyt hare autoriteyt de Staten zijn, maer alleen uyt crachte vande commissie van hare principalen'.
25 [Vranck], 'Corte Vertoninge', p. 56: 'gheconstitueert zijnde vande notablste wten midde vande gantsche burgerye'.
26 [Vranck], 'Corte Vertoninge', p. 57: '[de] collegien van de Magistraten ende Raden vanden steden ghevoecht by de vergaderinghe van den Edelen, ontwijfelijcken representeren den gantschen staet ende 't gehele lichaem vande lantsaten'.
27 See also Pollmann, 'Eendracht maakt macht', pp. 146–47.
28 Secretan, *Les privilèges*, p. 110; Maissen, *Die Geburt der Republic*, p. 116.
29 It should be clear that, in both cases, claiming absolute power was not the same as having it. The literature on the limits of French absolutism is vast. See for instance Collins, *The State in Early Modern France*. See for forms of political participation in Dutch cities: Van Nierop, 'Popular Participation'; Prak, 'Corporate Politics'.
30 Mulieri, 'Marsilius of Padua', pp. 631–36.
31 Drejer, 'Representative Government', p. 80.
32 De Bruin, 'De soevereiniteit in de Republiek', p. 28.
33 Thomassen, *Instrumenten van de macht*, 1, p. 151.
34 Thomassen, *Instrumenten van de macht*, 1, p. 282.
35 Thomassen, *Instrumenten van de macht*, 1, pp. 162–69.
36 See about the office of stadtholder: Rowen, 'Neither Fish nor Fowl'; Rowen, *The Princes of Orange*; Prak, 'Republiek en vorst'; Mörke, *'Stadtholder' oder 'Staetholder'?*; Kiesow, *The Office of Stadholder*.
37 William I had inherited the principality of Orange from his cousin René of Chalon. After William's death in 1584, the title of Prince of Orange went to his oldest son, the Catholic Philip William. Only in 1618, when Philip William died, could his half-brother Maurice, who had succeeded his father as stadtholder, call himself Prince of Orange. The dynasty of Nassau-Dietz was formed in 1606, when John VI of Nassau-Dillenburg died and his titles and estates were distributed among his five sons. Ernest Casimir thus became the first Count of Nassau-Dietz.
38 Van Stipriaan, *De Zwijger*, p. 605
39 The States General did not formally approve of the title captain-general of the Union in the case of Maurice, but it did for his successor Frederick Henry.
40 Keblusek and Zijlmans, eds, *Vorstelijk vertoon*. The marital union between the Houses of Orange and Stuart also resulted in considerable support for the royalist cause during the English Civil War. See Helmers, *The Royalist Republic*.
41 Kolfin, 'Voor eenheid, victorie'.
42 Tiethoff-Spliethoff, 'Representatie en rollenspel'.
43 De Bruin, *Geheimhouding en verraad*, pp. 341–46.
44 Kiesow, 'The Office of Stadholder', pp. 38–39.
45 Stern, *Orangism in the Dutch Republic*; Craft-Giepmans and others, eds, *Stadhouders in beeld*; Kiesow, 'The Office of Stadholder', chapters 4 and 5.
46 See for now De Bruin, *Geheimhouding en verraad*; and Nijenhuis, 'Republikanische Repräsentation?'. For a comparative perspective: Neu, Sikora, and Weller, eds, *Zelebrieren und verhandeln*; and Stollberg-Rillinger, 'Les assemblées des états'.
47 See about this challenge: Helmers and Lamal, 'Dutch Diplomacy'.
48 Heringa, *De eer en hoogheid*, pp. 85–88.
49 See for instance Geyl, 'Het stadhouderschap'; Velema, '"That a Republic is better"'; Sawyer, 'Medium and Message'; Warren, ed., *Paper Knives*.
50 On nobility in the Dutch Republic, see: Van Nierop, *Van ridders tot regenten*; Streng, 'De adel in de Republiek'; Gietman, *Republiek van adel*; Van der Laarse, *Arcadiërs van de Republiek*. See about the process of 'aristocratization' among urban elites: Kooijmans, 'Patriciaat en aristocratisering'; Roorda, 'Het onderzoek'; De Jong, 'De regenten'.
51 Ekkart, De Oranjeportretten; Verhave and Jansen, 'De portretten van prins Maurits', pp. 110–16.
52 Ebben, 'Het Staatse ambassadegebouw', p. 49.
53 Heringa, *De eer en hoogheid*, p. 78.
54 Heringa, *De eer en hoogheid*, pp. 391–92; Mörke, 'Het hof van Oranje', p. 71.
55 On the convergence of dynastic and provincial interests, also see Nissen, 'Staging the Nassau-Dietz Identity'.
56 See for the Frisian branch of stadtholders: Janssen, *Princely Power*.
57 Ottenheym, 'Tot roem en sier'; Van der Ploeg, 'Representatieve aspecten'; Ottenheym, 'The Mediaeval Prestige'.
58 Spies, 'Kunsten en wetenschappen'.

[59] See for instance Bedaux, Groot, and Hagen, 'Allegorieën van goed bestuur'; and Van de Meerendonk and others, 'Striving for Unity'.
[60] De Jong, 'Visible Power?'; Brenninkmeijer-De Rooij, '"Ansien doet ghedencken"'.
[61] See Fremantle, *The Baroque Town Hall*; Goossens, *Treasure wrought*; Vlaardingerbroek, *Het paleis van de Republiek*; Bussels, Van Eck, and Van Oostveldt, eds, *The Amsterdam Town Hall*.
[62] On seventeenth-century city praise, see Verbaan, *De woonplaats van de faam*.
[63] Knevel, *Burgers in het geweer*, p. 277.
[64] See for instance Hurlbut, 'Symbols for Authority'; Van Bruaene, 'Vorstelijk onthaald'; Damen and Overlaet, 'Weg van de staat'.
[65] See also Snoep, *Praal en Propaganda*, pp. 39–76; Blocksom, 'Procession, Pride and Politics'; Van de Meerendonk, 'Public Displays of Affection', pp. 77–132.
[66] Dencher, 'Commemorating Conquest'. See also Dencher's contribution to this volume.
[67] Knevel, *Burgers in het geweer*, p. 282; Kolfin, 'Voor eenheid, victorie', p. 94.
[68] Knevel, *Burgers in het geweer*, pp. 280–83.
[69] Nobel, 'Heerlijkheden in Holland', pp. 38–41.
[70] See for instance Burke, *Venice and Amsterdam*; De Jong, *Een deftig bestaan*; Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches*; Zandvliet and Lesger, *De 250 rijksten*; Kuiper, 'Onderzoek naar de buitenplaats'.
[71] Groeneweg, 'Regenten in het zwart'.
[72] Van Swigchem, Brouwer, and Van Os, *Een huis voor het woord*, p. 227; De Jong, *Een deftig bestaan*, p. 126.
[73] See about funerals: Janssen, 'Political Ambiguity'; Hollewand, 'Funeral Consumption', pp. 13–15; Snoep, *Dood en begraven*, p. 15; Stoter, '"Soo Godt belieft"'; Nissen, 'Staging the Nassau-Dietz Identity'.
[74] Trexler, *Public Life in Renaissance Florence*.
[75] Veenendaal, 'Bijdrage'; Sanders, *Het present van staat*, p. 217.
[76] On portraits serving political functions, see Dudok van Heel, 'Toen hingen er burgers'; Woodall, 'Sovereign Bodies'; Adams, *Public Faces*; Oddens, 'You can Leave your Hat On'. For a general overview, see Ekkart, 'Het portret in de Gouden Eeuw'.
[77] Middelkoop, 'Schutters, gildebroeders', 33, n. 120.
[78] Middelkoop, 'Schutters, gildebroeders', p. 28.
[79] Adams, *Public Faces and Private Identities*, p. 256.
[80] See Riegl, *Das holländische Gruppenporträt*; Haak, *Regenten en regentessen*; Carasso-Kok and J. Levy-Van Halm, eds, *Schutters in Holland*; Jonker, 'Public or Private Portraits'; Middelkoop, 'Schutters, gildebroeders'. In fact, there is only one extant group portrait of a water board, dating from 1644: Busch, *Vergaard-bewaard-beheerd*, pp. 60–61. We would like to thank Milja van Tielhof for pointing this out to us.
[81] Knevel, 'Armed Citizens', pp. 95–97; Levy-Van Halm, 'De Haarlemse schuttersstukken', p. 105.
[82] Knevel, *Burgers in het geweer*, pp. 132–33.
[83] Knevel, 'Armed Citizens', p. 91.
[84] Tümpel, 'De Amsterdamse schuttersstukken', p. 92.
[85] Knevel, *Burgers in het geweer*, p. 133.
[86] Ebben, 'De Staten-Generaal', pp. 46–52; Knevel, 'Het Binnenhof', pp. 80–81; Bolten, 'Interieur van betekenis', pp. 96–106.
[87] Geerdink, *De sociale verankering*; Frijhoff and Spies, 1650, p. 447. See on the city theatre of Amsterdam: Worp, *Geschiedenis*; Oey-de Vita, *Academie en schouwburg*.
[88] Scholten, 'Quellinus's Burgomasters'.
[89] Faber, Huisken, and Lammertse, *Van Heeren, die hunn' stoel*, p. 19; Middelkoop, 'Schutters, gildebroeders', p. 30.
[90] Middelkoop, 'Schutters, gildebroeders', p. 31.
[91] Dudok van Heel, 'Amsterdamse burgemeesters', p. 145.
[92] Souren, 'Verfraaide zeehelden in opdracht', p. 20.
[93] Onnekink, 'The Language of the Sea'.
[94] Casini, 'Immagini di capitani generali'.
[95] Souren, 'Verfraaide zeehelden in opdracht'.
[96] Scholten, *Sumptuous Memories*, pp. 169–177.
[97] Prud'homme van Reine, *Rechterhand van Nederland*, pp. 332–37.
[98] See about the De Witt brothers: Rowen, *John de Witt*; Panhuysen, *De ware vrijheid*.
[99] De Bruin, *Geheimhouding en verraad*, pp. 262.
[100] Oddens, 'You can Leave your Hat On'.
[101] Ebben, 'De Staten-Generaal', p. 46.
[102] On the Venetian tradition of depicting office-holders see Chambers, 'Merit and Money'; Nichols, *Tintoretto*, pp. 139–59.
[103] Ekkart, 'De portretten', p. 27.
[104] See for instance Reinders, *Printed Pandemonium*; Prud'homme van Reine, *Moordenaars van Jan de Witt*.
[105] Ekkart, 'De portretten', p. 27.
[106] Cf. Zemon Davis, 'The Rites of Violence', and for the Dutch Republic, Rudolf Dekker, *Holland in beroering*; Oddens, 'Restoring the Moral Order'.
[107] Reinders, *Printed Pandemonium*, chapter 6.
[108] Panhuysen, *De ware vrijheid*, pp. 344–45.
[109] Heringa, *De eer en hoogheid*; Cafagna, 'Il potere dei gesti'; Nijenhuis, 'Republikanische Repräsentation?'; Gerritse, 'De aanzienlijkheid der Republiek'.
[110] See on such comparisons in plays: Duits, *Van Bartholomeusnacht tot Bataafse opstand*.
[111] Peter-Raupp, *Die Ikonographie des Oranjezaal*; Van Eikema Hommes and Kolfin, eds, *De Oranjezaal*.
[112] See note 7.