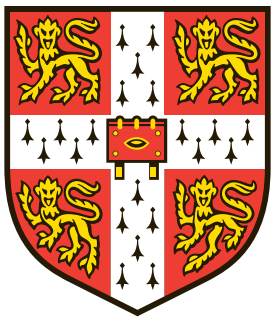
The Office of Stadhouder and the Preservation of Unity in the Dutch Republic, 1559 – 1672



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Declaration

This thesis is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text.

It is not substantially the same as any that I have submitted, or, is being concurrently submitted for a degree or diploma or other qualification at the University of Cambridge or any other University or similar institution except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text. I further state that no substantial part of my dissertation has already been submitted, or, is being concurrently submitted for any such degree, diploma or other qualification at the University of Cambridge or any other University or similar institution except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text.

It does not exceed the prescribed word limit for the relevant Degree Committee.

Pauline A. Kiesow
September 2019

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Summary

The Seven Provinces of the United Netherlands, also known as the Dutch Republic, was a compound state in which sovereignty was shared between its towns, provinces, and the States General. The Union of Utrecht of 1579 was one of the Republic's principal founding documents, yet paradoxically grounded the state in the diverging values of provincial independence and national unity. Unique to the Dutch republican system was the office of stadhouder, which at times has been described in modern scholarship as an 'enigma' or as 'peculiar'. Despite a wealth of historical studies on the Dutch Republic and on the Princes of Orange, who in the majority of the Republic's provinces were typically appointed to the stadhoudership, no thorough analysis exists of the exact constitutional position of the office itself, nor of its practical functioning within Dutch politics or of its representation in popular culture.

The present study addresses this lacuna in the scholarship by presenting a detailed overview of how the office of stadhouder developed from the beginning of the Dutch Revolt into the state's Republican period. It argues that the inherent constitutional tension contained in the Union of Utrecht was embodied in the stadhoudership, which was subservient to provincial authority but simultaneously required by Articles 9 and 16 of the Union treaty to act as a mediator on both an inter- and supra-provincial level at times of political discord. This task of resolving conflict and preserving eendracht ('unity') within the Dutch state became the dominant feature of the role, both on a governmental level and in the stadhouder's popular image. While thus undertaking an interrogation of the constitutional tensions underpinning the stadhoudership, this study draws on material culture in a variety of forms, from constitutional documents to popular literature and art. The first part of the thesis predominantly engages with the constitutional position of the stadhouder within the governmental structure of the Dutch Republic, whereas the second section instead focuses on how the political culture surrounding the stadhoudership was reflected in contemporary popular literature and the visual arts. Overall, this thesis provides deeper insights into the different ways of negotiating tension between central and provincial power in early modern states.

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List of Abbreviations

ARA	Algemeen Rijksarchief of Belgium, Brussels
Archives	*Archives ou correspondance inedite de la maison d'Orange-Nassau*, ed. Guillaume Groen van Prinsterer, 2nd edition.
Atlas van Stolk	*Katalogus der Historie, Spot- en Zinneprenten Betrekkelijk De Geschiedenis van Nederland verz. door A. van Stolk Cz.,* 10 Vols. (Rotterdam, 1895).
BMHG	*Bijdragen en Mededelingen van het Historisch Genootschap*
BMGN	*Bijdragen en Mededelingen betreffende de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden*
Dagboeken FW	Willem Frederik, *Gloria parendi. Dagboeken van Willem Frederik, stadhouder van Friesland, Groningen, en Drenthe, 1643-1649, 1651-1654*, ed. J. Visser and G. N. van der Plaat (The Hague, 1995).
FM	Frederik Muller, *De Beredeneerde beschrijving van Nederlandsche historieplaten, zinneprenten en historische kaarten*, 4 Vols. (Amsterdam, 1963-1882).
KB	Koninklijke Bibliotheek, The Hague
Knut.	W.P.C. Knuttel, *Catalogus van de Pamfletten-verzameling berustende in de Koninklijke Bibliotheek* (The Hague, 1889-1920).
NAGN	*(Nieuwe) Algemene Geschiedenis der Nederlanden,* 15 vols. (Haarlem, 1977-83).
NL-HaNA	National Archives of the Netherlands, The Hague
PN Holl. Stell.	*Particuliere Notulen van de Vergaderingen der Staten van Holland, 1620 – 1640,* eds. Nicolaes Stellingwerf and Sijbrant Schot (The Hague, 1992).
Res. Holl.	Resolutions of the States of Holland

Res. St. Gen. OR	Resolutions of the States General, Oude Reeks (1576 - 1609)
Res. St. Gen. NR.	Resolutions of the States General, Nieuwe Reeks (1610 - 1625)
RKD	Nederlands Instituut voor Kunstgeschiedenis, The Hague (formerly the Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie)
RM PK	Prentenkabinet of the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

INTRODUCTION

The English diplomat Sir William Temple, who lived in the Dutch Republic between 1667 and 1671, published his experiences in the Low Countries in a book entitled *Observations upon the United Provinces of the Netherlands*.[1] In this book, Temple summarised that the 'main ingredients' of the composition of the Dutch state were: 'the freedom of the cities, the sovereignty of the provinces, the agreements or constitutions of the Union, and the authority of the Princes of Orange'.[2] The Princes of Orange had held a position of leadership in the Dutch Republic since the state's early development during the Dutch Revolt against its former Habsburg rulers. If Willem I of Orange had been the undisputed leader of the Revolt, the authority of his descendants stemmed largely from the accumulation of their separate position as captain-general of the Union's army and stadhouder of a majority of the state's seven provinces. Their position and status in the United Provinces were such that Temple's summary of 'ingredients' delineated their authority separately from the sovereignty of the provincial States.

The stadhoudership was a unique institution in the political systems of early modern Europe. In historical scholarship of the period, its uniqueness has been particularly emphasised in the works of Herbert Rowen. Rowen, who famously described the office as 'neither fish nor fowl', argues that 'in its everyday workings it [the stadhoudership] corresponded to no other political structure of the time, and political theory had no category into which it readily fitted'.[3] Despite, or perhaps because of, the enigmatic nature of the Dutch stadhoudership, few studies exist that provide a

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[1] William Temple, *Observations upon the United Provinces of the Netherlands,* ed. G. Clark (Oxford, 1972).

[2] Temple, *Observations,* p. 53.

[3] Herbert H. Rowen, 'Neither Fish nor Fowl: The Stadholderate in the Dutch Republic', in: *Ibid.* and Andrew Lossky, *Political Ideas and Institutions in the Dutch Republic* (Los Angeles, 1985); pp. 1-31; p. 3.

comprehensive analysis of the office. Instead, scholarship has predominantly focused on the lives of the Princes of Orange, rather than on the office itself.[4] Moreover, a significant number of the major biographies of the lives of the Princes of Orange, on which modern scholarship has been based, date from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. They not only necessarily fail to reflect the scholarship produced since then, but are also often noticeably influenced by their author's bias towards, or admiration of, its protagonist.[5]

Rare exceptions to this can be found in the work of Rowen, Adrianus Gabriëls, and Olaf Mörke. The latter's substantial study, entitled *'Stadtholder' oder 'Staetholder'? Die Funktion des Hauses Oranien und seines Hofes in der politischen Kultur der Republik der Vereinigten Niederlande im 17. Jahrhundert* (1997), studies the function of the stadhouders and their court on the political culture ('der politischen Kultur') of the United Provinces. At the heart of Mörke's monograph is the question how the heavily decentralised Dutch state could function so successfully, while its sovereignty was divided over strongly autonomous local and provincial autonomies with their own interests. In answer to this question, Mörke argues that the power and influence wielded by the stadhouders of the House of Orange and their princely court provided a 'unitas multiplex', or centralising

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[4] Stephen B. Baxter, *William III and the Defense of European Liberty, 1650-1702* (New York, 1966); P. J. Blok, *Willem de Eerste, Prins van Oranje* (2 Vols: Amsterdam, 1919-20); *Ibid.*, *Frederik Hendrik, Prins van Oranje* (Amsterdam, 1924); J. Eysten, *Het leven van Prins Willem II (1626-1650)* (Amsterdam, 1916); S. Groenveld, *De Prins voor Amsterdam. Reacties uit Pamfletten op de Aanslag van 1650* (Bussum, 1967); Pieter Geyl, *Orange and Stuart, 1641-1672* (London, 1969); A. Hallema, *Prins Maurits, 1567-1625: veertig Jaren strijder voor 's lands vrijheid* (Assen, 1949); N. Japikse, *Willem III: de Stadhouder-Koning* (2 Vols: Amsterdam, 1930-33); *Ibid.*, *De Geschiedenis van het Huist van Orange-Nassau* (2 Vols: The Hague, 1937-38); C.M. van der Kemp, *Maurits van Nassau, Prins van Oranje, in zyn leven, waardigheden en verdiensten* (4 Vols: Rotterdam, 1843); G. W. Kernkamp, *Prins Willem II* (Amsterdam, 1943); J. J. Poelhekke, 'Frederik Hendrik en Willem II', in: C. A. Tamse (ed.), *Nassau en Oranje in de Nederlandse Geschiedenis* (Alphen aan den Rijn, 1979); *Ibid.*, *Frederik Hendrik, Prins van Oranje: Een biografisch drieluik* (Zutphen, 1978); K. W. Swart, *William the Silent and the Revolt of the Netherlands* (London, 1978).

[5] The respective biographies written by C. M. van der Kemp and Stephen Baxter, for example, are marked by a strong admiration for their research topic, whereas Pieter Geyl's studies of the stadhouders reflect his strong preferences for the politics of Holland and the *staatsgezinde* party.

force, which bound all levels of the Dutch state together. In his argument, Mörke focuses principally on what he considers to be the office's foundational paradox – that is, the presence of a monarchical element in a republican constitution – and the role of the princely court in the political scene of the United Provinces. Accordingly, one of his main concern lies with the functioning of princely versus provincial sovereignty within a republican state, or, in his words, the ambiguity of the fact that 'die niederländische Republik lebte von Beginn an mit einem fürstlichen Hof in ihrem politischen Zentrum Den Haag.'[6]

Gabriëls's monograph *De heren als dienaren, en de dienaar als heer. Het stadhouderlijk stelsel in de tweede helft van de achttiende eeuw* (1990), too, concentrates on the power and influence wielded by the stadhouderly court (which the author considers to be 'quasi-monarchical') and its expansive system of patronage. Instead of presenting the stadhoudership as a focal point for overcoming localised political interest, Gabriëls posits that by 1750s the stadhouder and his court became increasingly closely associated with exclusive oligarchism, nepotism and corruption. This work, however, limits itself to a description of the dynamics between the stadhouder and regents in the final decades of the Dutch Republic, and provides little insight into the origins of the office.[7]

Herbert Rowen has produced a series of articles on the stadhouders of the Dutch Republic, which culminated in his monograph *The Princes of Orange: The Stadholders in the Dutch Republic* (1988).[8] With this study, Rowen aimed to provide an overview of the stadhoudership of all the Princes of Orange, from the Dutch Revolt to the collapse of the Republic in 1795. However, the ambitious scope of his study, combined with the necessary constraints of the single-volume monograph form, results in a sweeping

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[6] Olaf Mörke, *'Stadtholder' oder 'Staetholder'? Die Funktion des Hauses Oranien und seines Hofes in der politischen Kultur der Republik der Vereinigten Niederlande im 17. Jahrhundert* (Münster, 1997), p. 11.

[7] A. J. C. M. Gabriëls, *De heren als dienaren, en de dienaar al sheer. Het stadhouderlijk stelsel in de tweede helft van de achttiende eeuw* (The Hague, 1990).

[8] Rowen, 'The Revolution that wasn't: the *coup d'état* of 1650 in Holland', in: *European Studies Review* (1974: Vol. 4), pp. 99-117; *Ibid.*, 'Neither Fish nor Fowl' (1985); *Ibid.*,*The Princes of Orange: The Stadholders in the Dutch Republic* (Cambridge, 1988).

overview of the development of the office throughout the history of the Dutch Republic, thus eschewing close engagement with his material. Indeed, the analysis accords greater weight to extant historiographical accounts of the Princes of Orange than to primary sources. Although the study has merit as a comparative study between the stadhouders produced by the House of Orange, it provides few insights of its own and is undermined by repeated minor errors and instances of over-simplification.

This dissertation, then, seeks to address this remarkable gap in the historiography of one of the United Provinces' most important institutions. It will provide a comprehensive analysis of the office on a constitutional level and a detailed exploration of its position and functioning in the political scene of the Republic. In shedding new light on the intricacies of the office itself, and thereby on the fabric of the seventeenth-century Dutch state, it will provide a deeper insight into the strategies employed to negotiate the fundamental tension between central and provincial powers in early modern Europe.

If studies of the stadhoudership itself are few and far between, there is a rich vein of scholarship that engages with the office's position in the framework of the constitution of the Dutch Republic. Broadly, these studies can be divided into two categories: the first principally concerns itself with the place of the stadhoudership in the context of republican political thought, whilst the second approaches it in its more pragmatic declension, as a tool with which the Princes of Orange challenged the sovereignty of the provinces. Both approaches seek to explain the occurrence of tension or conflict between the Princes of Orange and the provincial States. They focus either on the office's paradoxical development into a semi-monarchical position in a republican state, or emphasise the ambitions of the Princes of Orange to claim greater sovereignty than that of a mere vassal.

In their important studies on the political thought of the Dutch Republic, Martin van Gelderen, Wyger Velema, and others have situated the stadhoudership in the humanist tradition of early modern republican thinking. Contemporary mainstream republicans thus viewed the stadhoudership as the 'monarchical element' in the

Aristotelian concept of the *respublica mixta* as the ideal balanced republican state.[9] This vein of scholarship posits that, with the advent of Stadhouderless Period of the 1650s (and the Commonwealth Period in England), there emerged a new strand of republicanism based on the idea of 'republican exclusivism'. Notably inspired by the Hebrew Bible, the theory of 'republican exclusivism' argued that 'pure' republicanism was the only legitimate form of government in the eyes of God.[10] In the Dutch Republic, the main proponents of these ideas were Johan and Pieter de la Court, regarded as 'the main representatives of the radicalisation of Dutch republicanism in the decades following the Peace of Westphalia'.[11] In this context, the debate surrounding the necessity and desirability of the office of stadhouder was thus fundamentally a conflict between two opposing schools of republican thought.

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[9] E. O. G. Haitsma Mulier, *The Myth of Venice and Dutch Republican Thought in the Seventeenth Century* (Assen, 1980); G. O. van de Klashorst et al (eds.), *Bibliography of Dutch Seventeenth-Century Political Thought: An Annotated Inventory, 1581-1710* (Amsterdam, 1986); Martin van Gelderen, *The Political Thought of the Dutch Revolt (1555-1590)* (Cambridge, 1992); Ernst Kossmann, *Political Thought in the Dutch Republic: Three Studies* (Amsterdam, 2000); Martin van Gelderen, 'Aristotelians, Monarchomachs and Republicans: Sovereignty and *respublica mixta* in Dutch and German Political Thought, 1580-1650', in: *Ibid.* and Quentin Skinner (eds.), *Republicanism: A Shared European Heritage* (2 Vols: Cambridge, 2002), Vol. 1, pp. 195-217; Wyger Velema, "That a Republic is better than a Monarchy': Anti-Monarchism in Early Modern Dutch political thought', in: *Ibid.,* pp. 9-25.

[10] Lea Campos Boralevi, 'Classical Foundational Myths of European Republicanism: The Jewish Commonwealth', in: Martin van Gelderen and Quentin Skinner (eds.), *Republicanism: a shared European heritage* (2 Vols: Cambridge, 2002), Vol. 1, pp. 247-61; Eric Nelson, "Talmudical Commonwealthsmean' and the Rise of Republican Exclusivism', in: *The Historical Journal* (2007: Vol. 50, No. 4), pp. 809-35; Eric Nelson, *The Hebrew Republic: Jewish Sources and the Transformation of European Political Thought* (Cambridge MA, 2010).

[11] Arthur Weststeijn, 'The Power of 'Pliant Stuff': Fables and Frankness in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republicanism', in: *Journal of the History of Ideas* (2011: Vol. 72, No. 1), pp. 1-27; p. 2. See also: *Ibid.*, *Commercial Republicanism in the Dutch Golden Age: The Political Thought of Johan & Pieter de la Court* (Leiden, 2012); H. W. Blom and I. W. Wildenberg (eds.), *Pieter de la Court en zijn tijd. Aspecten van een veelzijdig publicist* (Amsterdam, 1986). Cf. James Hankins, 'Exclusivist Republicanism and the Non-Monarchical Republic', in: *Political Theory* (2010: Vol. 38, No. 4), pp. 452-82; Jonathan Scott, 'Classical Republicanism in Seventeenth-Century England and the Netherlands', in: *Republicanism*, Vol. 1, pp. 61-81; pp. 67-69; Wyger Velema, "That a Republic is Better than a Monarchy': Anti-Monarchism in Early Modern Dutch Political Thought', pp. 13-19.

Moreover, a significant number of studies have been dedicated to both the theoretical and practical question of the *locus* of sovereignty in the northern provinces of the Low Countries following their official renouncement of their sovereign, Philip II, with the Act of Abjuration of 1581. Had the highest sovereignty been devolved to the provincial States, or did it lie with the States General, the assembled body of these provinces? In this context, historians have often explained the conflicts as a struggle for power between the Princes of Orange and the provincial States, in which the former used (or abused) the offices of stadhouder and captain-general to reach higher levels of sovereignty in the state.[12] For example, if Rowen highlights the stadhouder's position as a 'semi-monarchical' element in the republic, he nonetheless emphasises that this should not be confused with the absolute sovereignty held by other monarchs of the period, such as Louis XIV. At the same time, however, he adds that the true authority of the stadhouders was greater than their juridical status as servants of the provincial States would suggest.[13] Rowen also frames 'the ambiguity upon which the Dutch Republic had always rested' as a constant struggle between the 'sovereignty of the States overlapping the leadership of the House of Orange', in which the Princes were quasi-monarchs. This line of scholarship is also reflected in the work of, among others, Pieter Geyl, whose *oeuvre* has consistently framed the Princes of Orange as the main political rivals of the States for power and sovereignty, and Jonathan Price.[14] Throughout his extensive *oeuvre*, Price has argued that the unique political system of the United Provinces was 'literally unworkable', and that therefore day-to-day politics were based on ongoing improvisations and

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[12] G. de Bruin, 'De soevereiniteit in de republiek: een machtsprobleem', in: *BMGN* (1979: Vol. 94, No. 1), p. 27-40; Maarten Prak, 'Republiek en vorst. De stadhouders en het staatsvormingsproces in de Noordelijke Nederlanden, 16e-18e eeuw', in: *Amsterdams Sociologisch Tijdschrift* (1989: Vol. 16, No. 2).

[13] Rowen, 'Neither Fish nor Fowl', p. 3.

[14] Geyl, *Orange and Stuart, 1641-1672; Ibid.*, 'Het stadhouderschap in de partij-literatuur onder De Witt', in: *Ibid.*, *Pennestrijd over staat en historie* (Groningen, 1971), pp. 3-71; *Ibid., Democratische tendenties in 1672* (The Hague, 1950); Jonathan L. Price, *Holland and the Dutch Republic in the Seventeenth Century: The Politics of Particularism* (Oxford, 1994); *Ibid., Culture and Society in the Dutch Republic in the 17th Century* (London, 1974).

manipulations of procedures in order to reach consensus.[15] In this political spectrum, he frames the stadhouder and the States government as being on opposite sides of the political spectrum, though admitting that frequent cooperation between the two was essential to achieve anything. Nevertheless, Price argues that the political power and influence held by the stadhouders made them a 'viable alternative to the States of Holland as the political leaders of the Republic, and power oscillated between these two poles of political authority throughout the seventeenth century'.[16] The ambivalent position of sovereignty in the Republic, Price concludes, moreover enabled the Princes to attain 'a quasi-monarchical position within the Dutch Republic'.[17] This approach has often criticised the Princes of Orange for using the stadhoudership as a mere tool to increase their own power, and has sought to explain major outbreaks of tension or conflict in the United Provinces as the result of this struggle over sovereignty between the provincial States and the Princes of Orange.

These approaches have been fundamental in shaping scholarly perspectives on the stadhoudership and have laid the groundwork for more recent work on the position of the Princes of Orange in Dutch government. For example, in their substantial work *1650: Hard-won Unity* (2004), Willem Frijhoff and Marijke Spies argue that the Princes of Orange 'hoped to force a new political balance and transform their office into that of a sovereign, ruling prince. Frederik Hendrik turned this striving into explicit policy, and the resulting tensions reached their first climax precisely in 1650'.[18] These perspectives are also at play in Helmer Helmers's recent study, in which he emphasises that the main source of tension in the Dutch Republic was 'the position of the prince of Orange vis-à-vis the States of Holland'.[19]

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[15] Price, *Holland and the Dutch Republic*, p. 3.
[16] Jonathan L. Price, *Dutch Culture in the Golden Age* (London, 2011), p. 12.
[17] Price, *Holland and the Dutch Republic*, p. 134.
[18] Willem Frijhoff and Marijke Spies, *1650: Hard-Won Unity* (London, 2004), p. 96.
[19] Helmers, 'Popular Participation and Public Debate', in: H. Helmers and G. Janssen, *The Cambridge Companion to the Dutch Golden Age* (Cambridge, 2018), pp. 124-46; p. 140.

This study, then, seeks to reinvigorate and challenge traditional scholarship on the stadhoudership by rejecting some of its long-established assumptions and providing new insights. In order to do so, I will provide a new contextual framework for the position of the stadhoudership in the constitution of the early modern Dutch Republic, focussing on the divergent interests that the office was supposed to serve. This thesis explores stadhouders as servants of provincial sovereignty, but, by virtue of the Union of Utrecht, as simultaneous servants of the interests of the union. Instead of attempting a 'coup' or seeking greater power, it was this tension that was at the core of the major Dutch domestic conflicts of the first half of the seventeenth century.

In order to achieve these aims, this thesis has been divided into two parts. Part I consists of the first three chapters and sets out the development of the stadhoudership from its origins under the Dukes of Burgundy and the Habsburg dynasty to the beginning of the Stadhouderless Period in 1651. Its main focus falls on the political and constitutional development of the office, thereby drawing on governmental documents, treaties, and state papers. At the heart of its analysis are both well-known sources, such as the Union of Utrecht treaty of 1579, and less frequently studied documents, such as the set of Instructions for the stadhoudership given to Willem I in 1559. The first chapter explores the drastic transformation of the office between 1559 – 1584. It rejects the traditional assumptions that the office was inherently conservative and static in nature. The second chapter examines the ways in which the stadhoudership was actively developed as a tool of mediation and conflict resolution under Maurits, Frederik Hendrik, and Willem II. It focusses principally on moments of transition where a new stadhouder acceded to office following the death of his predecessor, demonstrating a more complex dimension to the process of succession than has previously been suggested. Chapter 2 also looks at the first moment of conflict of 1618 – 1619, and the role of the stadhoudership therein. Chapter 3 explores the years leading up to the Stadhouderless Period, analysing the conflict of 1650 to demonstrate how the dual interests inherent to the stadhoudership were at its core. It subsequently provides a detailed analysis of the debate surrounding the office in the Great Assembly of 1651 to challenge the notion that this event served only to confirm the decision to leave the stadhoudership vacant.

Part II of this thesis, which consists of Chapter 4 and 5, seeks both to reinforce and illustrate the arguments made in the previous chapters. It draws on a less widely studied body of primary source material: popular literature and visual art. Both chapters provide an original insight into how the office was perceived in the popular arts, while tracing the political developments explored in Part I of this thesis. Chapter 4 and 5 thus not only compliment and strengthen the arguments made in the previous three chapters, but also shed fresh light on the perception of the office in contemporary literature and iconography. These chapters also engage with the debate surrounding the necessity of the stadhoudership during the First Stadhouderless Period of 1650 – 1672. Existing scholarship has largely studied this debate in terms of its rich pamphlet literature. Many such studies focus on the political rhetoric deployed by the Orangist party and their *staatsgezinde* opponents to argue in favour or against the stadhoudership.[20] Among the first to survey this debate were Pieter Geyl, who explores the party rhetoric used by De Witt and the States Party, and Gert Onne van de Klashorst, who analyses the arguments in favour of the stadhoudership made by the Orangists.[21] The popular impact and participation of the pamphlet debate during this period were later explored in greater detail by Michel Reinders, and again in his co-edited study with Femke Deen and David Onnekink.[22] In her 2010 monograph, *Orangism in the Dutch Republic in Word and Image, 1650-75*, Jill Stern studies the language of political rhetoric used by the Orangists during the Stadhouderless Period in support of Willem III and the restoration of the

[20] For an overview of the concept of 'party' and party politics in the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic, see D. J. Roorda, *Partij en Factie. De oproeren van 1672 in de steden van Holland en Zeeland, een krachtmeting tussen partijen en facties* (Groningen, 1978), pp. 1-10; and Simon Groenveld, *Evidente Factiën in den Staet. Sociaal-Politieke Verhoudingen in de 17e-eeuwse Republiek der Verenigde Nederlanden* (Hilversum, 1990).

[21] Geyl, 'Het stadhouderschap in de partij-literatuur onder De Witt'; G. O. van de Klashorst, "Metten schijn van monarchie getempert'. De verdediging van het stadhouderschap in de partijliteratuur, 1650-1686', in: H. W. Blom and I. W. Wildenberg (eds.), *Pieter de la Court en zijn tijd* (Amsterdam, 1985), pp. 93-136. See also: Simon Groenveld, *De Prins voor Amsterdam. Reacties uit pamfletten op de aanslag van 1650* (Bussum, 1967).

[22] Michel Reinders, *Printed Pandemonium: Popular Print and Politics in the Netherlands, 1650-72* (Leiden, 2013); Femke Deen et al (eds.), *Pamphlets and Politics in the Dutch Republic* (Leiden, 2011).

stadhoudership.[23] Whereas Geyl and Klashorst concentrated their analyses of the political polemic on the theoretical arguments for and against the stadhoudership, Stern emphasises at the importance of the 'Orange myth' in popular culture, and argues how both language as visual symbolism based on this belief was frequently deployed in popular literature and art throughout the Stadhouderless period. In spite of the promising title of her work, however, Stern's main corpus of source material stems from the Knuttel collection of pamphlets at the *Koninklijke Bibliotheek* in The Hague, while her engagement with works of popular literature and, particularly, visual material remains limited.

The impact of popular literature and its place in early modern culture has been studied to much greater impact in other national contexts. This is especially true for early modern England; there exists a wealth of studies on the relationship between popular print and the political sphere of the English Civil War and the Commonwealth.[24] In light of the thriving art, printing and publishing industries in the early modern Dutch Republic, it is all the more surprising that few such analyses exist. Indeed, Kevin Sharpe has remarked that the neglect of visual material by other historians has 'puzzled him'. Many historians, he argues, do not regard this type of source material as 'real historical evidence or as having any bearing on 'politics', thereby 'fundamentally representing the seventeenth-century past by isolating politics from the culture of humanism, from the literary and visual arts, from poets and painters immersed in courts and politics'.[25] Aligned with Sharpe's thesis, Part II of this dissertation focusses predominantly on a body of source material stemming from popular literature and arts, many of which have received little to no attention in the historiography of the stadhoudership. In examining this neglected area, these chapters not only provide new perspectives into the position of the

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[23] Jill Stern, *Orangism in the Dutch Republic in word and image, 1650-75* (Manchester, 2010).

[24] See, for example: C. J. Summers and T. Pebworth (eds.), *The English Civil Wars in the literary imagination* (Missouri, 1999); Adam Fox, *Oral and Literature Culture in England, 1500-1700* (Oxford, 2000); Jason McElligott, *Royalism, Print and Censorship in Revolutionary England* (Woodbridge, 2007); Edward Holberton, *Poetry and the Cromwellian Protectorate: culture, politics, and institutions* (Oxford, 2008).

[25] Kevin Sharpe, *Reading Authority and Representing Rule in Early Modern England* (London, 2013), p. 13. Cf. Kevin Sharpe, *The Personal Rule of Charles I* (New Haven, 1993).

stadhoudership; they also argue for the value of the study of popular culture in providing fresh insights into the wider political dimensions of early modern society.

In order to keep a study as broad a concept as the stadhoudership of the Dutch Republic within the institutionally imposed limits of a PhD thesis, I had to place some restrictions on both its scope and ambition. One such restriction is that this study focusses predominantly on the stadhoudership held by the Princes of Orange, and not of that of the northern provinces, held by the Counts of Nassau-Dietz. Though acknowledging that, throughout the period that this thesis covers, there were always two stadhouders in the Dutch Republic (the period of 1650 – 1672 notwithstanding), mentions of 'the' stadhoudership therefore refer almost invariably to the stadhoudership of the Princes of Orange. Moreover, there is a considerable focus on the stadhoudership of Holland and Zeeland. This is partly due to the necessity of restricting the reach of the topic, but also because this dominant province was at the heart of every major political development and conflict involving the stadhoudership during the period explored in this thesis.

Writing a thesis on a foreign topic in English can be challenging, and a few comments on the use of terminology might therefore be helpful. I use the common practice in English translation for geographical places, personal names, and titles. The exceptions to this are Dutch given names and the word 'stadhouder', which I have kept in their original language. I have, however, anglicised the title 'of Orange,' due to its direct linguistic association to the political and cultural movement of Orangism. These choices have sometimes resulted in an uncommon mix of Dutch and English (e.g. 'stadhoudership' or 'Willem of Orange'), but I felt this was necessary in order to preserve both the accessibility of the thesis as well as the original Dutch etymology of some of its key concepts.

Chapter 1

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE STADHOUDERSHIP FROM THE HABSBURG PERIOD TO THE ACT OF ABJURATION, 1559-1582

1.1 Introduction

This chapter will analyse how the office of stadhouder evolved from a Habsburg institution under Charles V to a governmental office subservient to the sovereign provinces of the Dutch Republic. Existing scholarship has predominantly emphasised the stadhoudership's conservative nature and accordingly neglected to consider the profound nature of the office's transformation during the early years of the Dutch Revolt. Rather than viewing it as a relic from the Habsburg era, this chapter will explore the crucial importance of this period to the development of the stadhoudership. For the role of the office in Dutch government, as well as its position vis-à-vis the provincial States (which would remain unchanged throughout the history of the United Provinces), in fact developed significantly during the 1560s, '70s, and '80s. This change was effected through a series of political agreements and formal treaties, of which the most important were: the Union of Dordrecht in June 1575, the offer of 'High Authority' by Holland and Zeeland to Willem of Orange in July 1575, and the Union of Delft in April 1576. I will analyse these political developments in respect of how they shaped the stadhoudership. I will then demonstrate the importance of the Union of Utrecht of 1579, which tasked the stadhoudership with the duty of mediation and conflict-resolution on both an inter- and intra-provincial level, thereby giving the office unprecedented power. However, this chapter will also demonstrate that the Union of Utrecht, together with the Act of

Abjuration of 1581, came to integrate a fundamental conflict of interest into the stadhoudership.

1.2 The stadhoudership in the early years of the Dutch Revolt (1559 – 1567)

The office of stadhouder was introduced during the fifteenth century as a feature of local government in the Low Countries, when large parts fell under the rule of the Dukes of Burgundy. The Dukes, being physically absent from their Dutch lands most of the time, appointed various councillors to act as their local representatives to oversee the government of one or more Dutch '*gewesten',* or provinces. This practice continued for several decades, and was formalised with the title of 'stadhouder' by Philip the Good's appointment in 1448 of Jan III van Lannoy as the stadhouder for the provinces Holland, Zeeland, and Friesland. The document that announced the appointment stated that Lannoy would act as Philip's 'lieutenant en nosdiz pais, contez et seignouries de Hollande, Zellande et Frise'.[26] The word for 'lieutenant', deriving from the Latin *locum tenens,* was subsequently translated in the Dutch vernacular of the local administrators as 'stedehouder': '*stede'* ('to stand in for' or 'instead of') for 'lieu', and '*houdend'* ('keeping' or 'to keep') for 'tenant'.[27] The announcement was thus registered in Holland's own records as 'stedehouder mijns genadichs heeren van Bourgongen in sijnen landen van Holland, Zeeland ende Vriesland' ("stedehouder' of my esteemed Lord of Burgundy for his lands of Holland, Zeeland, and West-Friesland').[28]

From the mid fifteenth century the Burgundian Netherlands were ruled through an increasingly centralised system of provincial government, with the main centre of power

[26] Commission letter of Jan van Lannoy; original in ARA, Archief Grafelijkheidsrekenkamer, inv. nr. 1 f. 23; cited in B. de Lannoy and G. Dansaert, *Jean de Lannoy, le Bâtisseur (1410 - 1493)* (Paris-Brussels, 1937), pp. 273-274.
[27] Mario Damen, *De staat van dienst: de gewestelijke ambtenaren van Holland en Zeeland in de Bourgondische periode (1425 – 1482)* (Hilversum, 2000), pp. 53-56.
[28] Cited in Damen, *De staat van dienst*, p. 56.

located in Brussels.[29] In 1477, however, the Low Countries became part of the vast Habsburg realm through the marriage of Mary of Burgundy and Maximilian I of Austria. As the Habsburg Empire expanded in size and power, Holy Roman Emperor Charles V (1519 - 1556) formalised the office of stadhouder as a means of governing the various provinces of the Low Countries *in absentia* through his chosen representatives. These provincial stadhouders were directly accountable to a Governor General, whose court was based in Brussels, and who ruled the northern and southern Netherlands on Charles' behalf. This federalised system of government was preserved when Charles abdicated in 1555 in favour of his son Philip II. The stadhouders were traditionally selected from the foremost noblemen in the Low Countries, and at the time of Philip's succession the most prominent among these was Willem, Prince of Orange and Count of Nassau. Willem of Orange had been a confidant of Philip's father Charles, and had risen to considerable prominence during the former monarch's reign. It was therefore not surprising when, on 9 August 1559, Philip bestowed on Orange the stadhoudership of the provinces Holland, Zeeland, and Utrecht, and the towns Voorne and Den Briel. The Prince took his oath as stadhouder on 28 August in Brussels in front of Philip's half-sister Margaret of Parma, who ruled as the residing Governor General.

Orange's appointment as stadhouder in 1559 is significant, because the documents accompanying his appointment have often been perceived as laying out the foundation for the office in the Dutch republican period. Nicolas Japikse was the first to argue that these documents, which consisted of a formal Commission to the office in Philip's name, and an accompanying set of Instructions that outlined the duties and prerogatives of the stadhoudership, served as a *de facto* 'blue print' for the stadhoudership until the eventual collapse of the Dutch Republic in the late eighteenth century.[30] This argument has later unquestioningly been accepted by, among others, Jan Poelhekke and Herbert Rowen.[31] Considering the historical significance bestowed upon the stadhouder's Commission and

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[29] Rowen, *The Princes of Orange,* pp. 1-2.
[30] Japikse, *De Geschiedenis van het Huis van Oranje,* pp. 131-33.
[31] J.J. Poelhekke, *Geen Blijder Maer in Tachtig Jaer: verspreide studiën over de crisis-periode 1648-1651* (Zutphen, 1973), p. 10; Rowen, *The Princes of Orange,* pp. 35-6.

Instructions of 1559, it is surprising that no detailed historical analysis exists of either document. The extensive Instructions that Willem of Orange received upon his appointment to the stadhoudership, which contained 46 separate articles, in particular has remained understudied, with eminent historians in the field, such as Pieter Geyl, Martin van Gelderen, and Jonathan Israel overlooking the document and its importance.[32] A thorough study of these two sets of documents, however, can provide us with a detailed insight of both the contemporary perception and the legal status of the office at that time. Moreover, it also makes clear that the Instructions, though significant insofar that it was the last time the duties and responsibilities of the stadhoudership were formally outlined in detail, describe a very different office from what it would grow into during the history of the Dutch Republic.

Let us first turn to the 1559 Commission to the stadhoudership given to Willem of Orange by Philip II. The relatively short document is just under two pages, and formally charged Orange with the stadhoudership of the provinces of Holland, Zeeland, and Utrecht. The Commission, as well as the Instructions, were written in French, the language of the Habsburg court in Brussels, and the former thus announced that Willem was named 'en l'éstat de gouverneur et lieutenant général de noz contez de Hollande, Zélande et pays Utrecht'.[33] The 'général' was added to the office because Willem was appointed stadhouder of several provinces at the same time. The Commission further gives a general overview of the rights and responsibilities of the office, and emphasises the stadhoudership's 'historic place' in the governmental structure of the Low Countries. It thus charged Willem to fulfil the office 'as it has been done since many years' ('*anchièneté*'), and by doing 'everything in the same form and manner' as his predecessors. The Commission also emphasised the notion that the stadhouder acted as a representative

[32] Pieter Geyl, *The Revolt of the Netherlands, 1555-1609* (London, 1962); Van Gelderen, *The Political Thought of the Dutch Revolt*; Jonathan Israel, *The Dutch Republic. Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall 1477-1806* (Oxford, 1995).

[33] Commission appointing Willem I of Orange as Stadhouder of Holland, Zeeland, and Utrecht; 9 August 1559, Ghent. The original document can be found in the Rijksarchief in Brussels (ARA). The quotes from the document in this dissertation are taken from: L.P. Gachard, *Correspondance de Guillaume le Taciturne* (6 vols., Brussels, 1850-1857) vol. I, pp. 487-490; p. 488.

of the monarch, and therefore instructed that all the subjects of the provinces to which Orange was appointed stadhouder should 'give address and assistance' to Willem as they would to Philip himself ('*comme a nous meismes*').

A more detailed account of the exact nature of the stadhoudership is provided by the set of Instructions that accompanied Willem's Commission. The Instructions was a lengthy document of 46 articles, which set out the office's responsibilities and limitations in detail. The most noticeable element among these articles is the extent to which the political independence and decision-making powers of the stadhouder are rigorously limited, reflecting nothing of the authority that the office would have during the Dutch republican period. These strict limitations included the office holder's physical whereabouts: the first article stated that the stadhouder was required to be continually resident in the lands that were under his governance, and was only allowed to leave under exceptional circumstances and with permission of the Governor in Brussels. Moreover, the second article emphasised that no actual sovereignty rested with the office itself, but that in all cases he was subject to the authority of the Governor. Article II thus stated:

> That the said Prince of Orange will be obliged to obey and comply with the letters, commands, and ordonnances of the said Duchess, having superintendence and authority, even as does His Majesty, alone over all the governments of his aforementioned lands.[34]

Furthermore, the Instructions specifically prohibited the stadhouder from issuing official documents on behalf of the king, such as passports or letters of safe conduct, and the office holder was equally forbidden to give out any privileges, boons, or pardoning criminals sentenced to death, as all these powers were declared to be the sovereign's

[34] 'Instruction pour le Prince Doranges Conte de Nassauw &c. Chev. De l'ordre &c. Commil se aura a conduyre & regler au gouvernement des pays de Hollande, de Zeelande, de Westfrize & Dutrecht, La Briele & Voorne, auquel le roy l'a commis & institué', 9 August 1559, Ghent, cited in: Jan Wagenaar, *Amsterdam, in zyne opkomst, aanwas, geschiedenissen, &c.* (13 Vols: Amsterdam, 1762), Vol. 3, pp. 482-512:
'Que le dit prince Doranges sera tenu dobeyr & obtemperer aux lettres commandemens & ordonnances de la dite duchesse ayant superintendence & auctorite comme a mesmes sa mate. seulle sur tour les gouvernemens de ses dits pays.'

privilege. All of these prerogatives, however, would later become a part of the stadhoudership in the Dutch Republic, which demonstrates how significantly the office was to evolve from its Habsburg origins. The 1559 Commission also prohibited the stadhouder from starting new major building initiatives, or involving himself in any way in the financial management of Philip's domains, which was to be left to the King's personal accountants. In fact, of the 46 articles that made up the Instructions, 15 were devoted exclusively to outlining the office's restrictions.

Moreover, Herbert Rowen has stated that the right to appoint municipal authorities was inherited from the period of Willem of Orange's stadhoudership under Philip, which was a prerogative that Rowen described as one of the 'main sources of power' of the stadhoudership in the time of the Dutch Republic.[35] However, a closer look at the actual Instructions demonstrates that this prerogative was in fact far more limited at this time than Rowen has suggested. The articles stated that the right to appoint many of the important governmental positions remained exclusively with Philip himself, and, though the stadhouder did have a say in the appointment of a town's magistrates, article 39 emphasised that this was still subject to Margaret's approval, as Willem was obliged to present his nominations to the Governor 'in order to see if she wants some not to be considered [for the post] or others to be put forward'.[36]

However, one feature in Willem's set of Instructions would in the following decades grow into one of the main *raisons d'être* of the stadhoudership: the office's prerogative to mediate in cases of conflict or political disputes. Articles 29 and 33 specified that Willem was to resolve any disputes that might occur among town governors, and to bring them to an agreement:

> *Article 29*
> When he will be informed of any inquiries, disputes or legal proceedings between towns or communities which might sow dissent, he will inform the

[35] Rowen, *The Princes of Orange,* p. 4.
[36] 'Instruction pour le Prince Doranges', 9 Aug. 1559.

> Duchess of it, and his advice for managing the situation, when it is convenient. […]
>
> *Article 33*
> And when there is some dispute between the governors of towns, he will resolve to bring them to agreement if possible, otherwise he will inform the Duchess so with her help to achieve this.[37]

However, also as a mediator, the stadhouder was relatively limited in his authority, as any conflicts that were beyond the scope of a single town would have to be referred to the Governor (although the stadhouder would be allowed to submit his advice).

Although the set of Instructions given to Willem I in 1559 thus described a significantly different position than the stadhoudership would have during the years of the Dutch Republic, the document was the last instance in which the duties and responsibilities of the office were formally outlined in such detail. The years that followed, however, would see the office drastically transform in response to the turbulent political developments that started the Dutch Revolt.

1.3 The stadhoudership and the First Free States' Assembly (1572)

In the years that followed Orange's installation as stadhouder, tension grew in the Low Countries between some of its inhabitants and their ruler in Spain. The increasing influence of Calvinism throughout especially the northern Netherlands was met with fierce oppression by the devoutly Catholic Philip, who thereby neglected the pleas by local lords, among whom was Willem of Orange, for a softer approach. The Dutch Revolt can be said to have begun in earnest in 1566, when many of the nobles grouped together under the leadership of Orange and petitioned Margaret of Parma for the religious persecution to be halted.[38] At the same time, the Iconoclast Fury swept through the

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[37] 'Instruction pour le Prince Doranges', 9 Aug. 1559.
[38] Herbert H. Rowen, 'The Dutch Revolt: what kind of Revolution?', in: *Renaissance Quarterly* (1990: Vol. 43, No. 3), pp. 570-590; p. 572.

churches of the Low Countries, destroying many Catholic statues, paintings, and liturgical furnishings.[39] Philip responded by sending a large army headed by the Duke of Alva, who replaced Margaret as the new Governor and military leader of the Low Countries. Alva tried to restore order by crushing any form of religious and political dissent. He soon founded a 'Council of Troubles' (quickly nicknamed the 'Council of Blood'), and imposed heavy taxes upon trade. Meanwhile, Orange, who had fled to his ancestral home in Dillenburg in April 1567, had gathered forces around him, and together with his brother launched two military invasions from Germany in the hope of challenging Alva's regime. It is important to note that Orange's resistance was formally phrased as aimed against the rule of the Duke of Alva, and not against Philip II. Although the invasions failed, Orange had established himself as the focal point of rebellion against the Habsburg regime. In 1572 he undertook another unsuccessful invasion in an attempt to break Alva's power, but this time decided to stay in Holland, the heart of the Revolt, and lead the rebellion from there.[40]

However, Orange's position in Holland upon his return from exile, or indeed any claim of his on formal authority, was ambiguous. After Orange's departure, Philip had on 17 June 1567 appointed Maximilian of Hénin-Liétard of Bossu as the new stadhouder of Holland, Zeeland, and Utrecht, without issuing a formal discharge of Orange from the office. Herbert Rowen has rightly argued that when Willem returned to Holland, his only

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[39] For an overview of the *'Beeldenstorm'* in the Low Countries, see: J. Scheerder, *De Beeldenstorm* (Bussum, 1974), and, more recently; P. Arnade, *Beggars, Iconoclasts, and Civic Patriots: The Political Culture of the Dutch Revolt* (Ithaca NY, 2008). Henk van Nierop offers a more local study with his *Beeldenstorm en burgerlijk verzet in Amsterdam 1566-1567* (Nijmegen, 1978). An overview on the historiography of the *'Beeldenstorm'* is offered by Anne-Laure van Bruaene et al, '*Beeldenstorm:* Iconoclasm in the Sixteenth-Century Low Countries' in: *BMGN* (20016: Vol. 131, No. 1), pp. 3-14. For an overview on the experience of Catholic communities in the early modern Dutch state, see: Judith Pollmann, *Catholic Identity and the Revolt of the Netherlands, 1520*-1635 (Oxford, 2001); C.H. Parker, *Faith on the Margins: Catholics and Catholicism in the Dutch Golden Age* (Cambridge 2008); and Benjamin Kaplan et al (eds.), *Catholic Communities in Protestant States: Britain and the Netherlands, 1570-1720* (Manchester, 2009).

[40] For two insightful studies of Willem of Orange's life and time as leader of the Dutch rebellion, see: Olaf Mörke, *Wilhelm von Oranien (1533-1584): Fürst und 'Vater' der Republic* (Stuttgart, 2007); and K. Swart, *William the Silent and the Revolt of the Netherlands* (London, 1978).

formal entitlement on authority was based on 'a vague claim as the most important nobleman in the Low Countries and an even vaguer assertion of his status as a sovereign prince in faraway Orange'.[41] Orange, however, asserted that due to the lack of a formal discharge he was still stadhouder, and sought to strengthen this claim by calling an assembly of all the rebelling towns in Holland to be confirmed as such. This gathering, which has since become known as the '*Eerste Vrije Statenvergadering*' ('First Free States' Assembly'), took place on 19-20 July 1572, and, as will be shown below, witnessed the first significant shift in the relationship between stadhouder and provinces, thereby paving the way for the gradual transformation of the stadhoudership from a monarchical to a republican office.

The meeting was officially called by Dordrecht, the oldest of Holland's towns. It was the first official assembly held in defiance of Philip II, who formally held the right to call for such meetings, and it was attended by most of the province's cities.[42] Willem himself sent his deputy, Filips van Marnix van St-Aldegonde (1540-1598) to speak on his behalf, as he was in his army camp near Venlo at the time of the assembly. Marnix was a prominent Calvinist nobleman who had been in Orange's service since 1571, and the Prince had given him an extensive list of instructions to be read out to the gathering.[43] These instructions clearly show how important it was for Willem to strengthen his uncertain claim on the stadhoudership, as they charged Marnix to 'insist' that the assembled States of Holland 'unanimously decide to recognise His Highness as

[41] Rowen, 'What kind of Revolution', p. 577.

[42] The Assembly was attended by representatives from Dordrecht, Alkmaar, Edam, Enkhuizen, Gorinchem, Gouda, Haarlem, Hoorn, Leiden, Medemblik, Monnickendam, and Oudewater, as well as by the commander of the *Watergeuzen* ('Sea Beggars'), Willem van der Marck, lord of Lumey. There were no representatives from Amsterdam and Delft, as these towns were still loyal to the king at that time. The full notes of the meeting can be found at: NL-HaNA, Staten van Holland na 1572, 3.01.04.01, inv.nr. 324B.

[43] For a comprehensive study of this close advisor to Willem of Orange, see: Henk Duits and Ton van Strien (eds.), *Een intellectuele activist: studies over leven en werk van Philips van Marnix van Sint Aldegonde* (Hilversum, 2001).

stadhouder of the king over Holland, Zeeland, Friesland and the bishopric of Utrecht'.[44] The request was based on Willem's insistence that the stadhoudership was 'the office to which he was lawfully and duly appointed by His Royal Majesty, and from which he was never dismissed in the manner required by the customs and rights of the country'.[45] The Prince also demanded full authority over all future military proceedings, and justified this demand by emphasising that he sought this authority not for personal glory, but in order to fight for the privileges and freedoms of the provinces, as he declared himself solely committed to 'recover' the 'ancient liberty' of the Low Countries, by which he meant 'the old privileges, rights, and liberties of the towns, which have by Alva's tyranny been withdrawn and separated'.[46]

It is worthwhile to reflect a moment on Orange's claim that he should be recognised as stadhouder simply because he had never been officially dismissed as such by the king. Even though a formal dismissal had indeed never been issued, the argument was still rather feeble, as Philip had replaced him with the Count of Bossu as the new stadhouder only weeks after Orange's departure from the Low Countries. Moreover, historians such as Herbert Rowen and Jonathan Israel have argued that Willem's self-chosen exile and subsequent acts of open rebellion against the Habsburg government in

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[44] 'Instructie ende bericht voor Joncher Philips van Marnix, here van St Aldegonde etc. gecommitteerde mijn genadigen here ende vorst, den Prince van Orangien, om de stadt van Dordrecht van zijne V.G. wegen te trecken ende aldaer in de versamelinghe der staten sulck uyt te richten als zijne V.G. hem bevolen ende belast heeft', 13 July 1562, in: R.C. Bakhuizen van den Brink, *Cartons voor de geschiedenis van den Nederlandschen vrijheidsoorlog* (2 Vols: Den Haag, 1898), Vol. 1, pp. 190-94. Translation into English taken from Kossmann and Mellink, *Texts,* pp. 98-101.

[45] 'Instructie ende bericht', 13 July 1572:
'dat zij eensamer ende gelijcker handt besluyten te bekennen sijne v.G. voer den generalen gouverneur ende lieutenant des Conincx, over Hollandt, Zeelandt, Vrieslandt ende Sticht van Vuytrecht alzoo hij te voeren geweest, ende daer toe van de Co. Ma. Wettelijck ende behoerlijck is gecommitteert geweest, sonder dat naederhandt eenyge wettelijcke ende der costumen ende rechten des landts gelijckformighe afstellinge oft veranderinge sy naegevolght.' Translation to English taken from: E.H. Kossmann and A.F. Mellink, *Texts concerning the revolt in the Netherlands* (Cambridge 1974), p. 98.

[46] 'Notulen van de Eerste Vrije Statenvergadering', 19-20 July 1572; NL-HaNA, Staten van Holland na 1572, 3.01.04.01, inv.nr. 324B; 'Instructie ende bericht', 13 July 1572.

Brussels should be regarded as his *de facto* 'resignation' as Stadhouder.[47] However, Willem's claim on the stadhoudership on the grounds he had never been formally dismissed is even weaker than has thus far been recognised. When he abandoned the Low Countries to withdraw to his German lands, Willem had consciously (and very publicly) breached the first article of the Instructions he had received in 1559 upon his installation as stadhouder of Holland and Zeeland. As mentioned earlier, this article stated that under no circumstances was the stadhouder to leave his domains, unless he was expressly sanctioned to do so by the land's Governor in Brussels. Orange's actions had been in direct opposition of his Instructions, and could thus legally be interpreted as his wilfully forsaking his position as stadhouder.

Despite the various legal shortcomings of Orange's request, the Assembly at Dordrecht agreed to all the Prince's requests: with Alva's Spanish troops being a constant threat to the poorly organised alliance of rebelling towns, the gathered States were in dire need of both the military and the political leadership that the Prince of Orange could provide. The office of stadhouder, developed by the Dukes of Burgundy and the Habsburgs as a local focus point of governance and military command, provided the most traditional and institutionalised method through which such leadership could be exercised. And thus on 20 July 1572 the members of the Assembly pledged to send immediate financial aid to support Willem's armies, and declared:

> unanimously and with one accord to recognize His Highness, My Lord the Prince of Orange, as the Governor-General and Stadhouder of the King for Holland, Zeeland, West Friesland and the bishopric of Utrecht, since His Excellence had previously been lawfully and duly appointed thereto by His

[47] For example: Rowen, 'What kind of Revolution?', and Israel, *The Dutch Republic.* In his notably pro-Orangist work, Bakhuizen supported the notion that Willem's flight to Germany had not changed his legitimate position of authority as stadhouder: 'het is waar, in 1567, toen hij het land verliet, had er geen wettelicke ende der costumen ende rechten des Lande gelycksamige afstellinge ofte verandering in zijne betrekking als stadhouder plaats gehad', in: R.C. Bakhuizen van den Brink, *Studien en schetsen over vaderlandsche geschiedenis en letteren,* (Amsterdam, 1860) Vol. 1, p. 511.

> Royal Majesty without there being any lawful dismissal or alteration in conformity with the customs and privileges of the province.[48]

The decision by the assembled States of Holland to formally accept Willem's claim to the stadhoudership was in direct defiance of Philip's sovereignty. After all, the choice to recognise Orange as their stadhouder was more than a mere refusal to accept the authority of the Count of Bossu, as until then the appointment of a person to the office of stadhouder had always been the exclusive prerogative of the monarch. However, by choosing the Prince of Orange as stadhouder rather than accepting the King's selected candidate, the rebelling towns had asserted this prerogative for themselves. Yet it is important to note that the States' assembly still only 'recognised' Willem as stadhouder, and only based on the argument that he had never been dismissed from the office. The States had thus not formally claimed the actual authority to appoint a stadhouder, and Willem remained 'the representative of his Highness' the King of Spain, while their rebellion was officially only aimed at the rule of the Duke of Alva.[49]

Nevertheless, the outcome of the First Free States' Assembly reveals much about the office of stadhouder and its role in the relationship between the Prince and the States of Holland at that time. The Prince of Orange sought to validate and reinforce his authority as the leader of the Revolt as well as find financial support for the military campaign. Meanwhile, the rebelling towns of Holland needed someone who could provide them with political and military leadership to successfully carry on the Revolt. The office of stadhouder was the political means through which both these goals could be achieved.

The 'First Free Assembly' of the States of Holland had delivered on all of Orange's main objectives: the States' representatives had renewed their financial commitment to the Rebellion against the Alva regime, and the Prince himself was officially recognised by

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[48] 'Notulen van de Eerste Vrije Statenvergadering', 19-20 July 1572.

[49] 'Notulen van de Eerste Vrije Statenvergadering', 19-20 July 1572. See also: Horst Lademacher, 'Stände und Statthalter zur zeit des Prinzen Wilhelm I. von Oranien (1572-1584)', in: *Archiv fur Kulturgeschichte* (1958: Vol. 40), pp. 222-50; p. 225.

them as their stadhouder. A trend exists in historiography, which goes back to Jan Wagenaar's *Vaderlandsche Historie* (1752), to believe that in the months following the Assembly, Orange's political authority grew so expansively that it resembled that of a sovereign monarch. Wagenaar argued that Willem wielded 'no less power, than the King [in his capacity] as Count of Holland and Zeeland, could have had himself'.[50] Since then, his argument has been followed by, among others, Petrus Blok and Koenraad Swart, who argued respectively that Willem effectively functioned as the 'sovereign lord' and 'head of state' of Holland and Zeeland.[51] Compared to the set of Instructions for the stadhouder's office in 1559, Orange's authority in the rebelling provinces in the 1570s was indeed more extensive, as his prerogatives, especially in such fields as tax collection, military command, and foreign policy, had notably increased. It would, however, be a mistake to surmise from this, as Swart has done, that it was the stadhoudership itself which had become drastically more powerful in the period after 1572.[52] For a more accurate evaluation of the power dynamics in the 1570s between the Prince of Orange and the States of Holland, we return once more to the original documents which formalised their fluctuating relationship.

As I have showed previously, the powers of the stadhoudership as outlined in the Instructions of 1559 were narrowly circumscribed, and were mostly submissive to the superior authority of Philip's appointed Governor in Brussels. But as most of Holland and Zeeland were by the 1570s in open rebellion against the Habsburg regime, and after openly defying Philip's choice of stadhouder, it was obvious that Willem neither could nor desired to function under the higher sovereignty of Brussels. A close look at Orange's instructions for Marnix for the Assembly in Dordrecht, as well as at the meeting's proceedings, quickly reveal that Willem did in fact not ask to be confirmed as a stadhouder in these precise words: instead, he asked to be recognised as the 'generalen gouverneur ende lieutenant des Conincx'.[53] The lieutenancy referred to here was a

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[50] Jan Wagenaar, *Vaderlandsche Historie* (10 Vols: Amsterdam, 1749-1754) Vol. 7, p. 3.
[51] Blok, *Geschiedenis van het Nederlandsche Volk,* Vol. 2, p. 102; Swart, *Willem van Oranje*, p. 55.
[52] Swart, *Willem van Oranje*, p. 38.
[53] 'Instructie ende bericht', 13 July 1572; Notulen van de Eerste Vrije Statenvergadering.

position of military command, although this was later erroneously translated by Ernst Kossmann and A. F. Mellink as 'stadholder'.[54] Specifically, Willem had at the First Free States' Assembly thus not merely asked to be recognised as stadhouder, but to hold the authority *over* the stadhoudership that had traditionally belonged to the monarch, via his Governor General in Brussels. This was a necessary and practical move, as the limitations defined by the Instructions of 1559 made the stadhoudership itself too constrained for the full political and military leadership that Willem required at a time of war. However, this did not mean that, after 1572, the stadhoudership in the rebelling provinces had simply usurped all of the power and authority that had previously been seated in Brussels, as has been suggested by some historians.[55] The reality was that these powers were assumed by Willem of Orange himself, not by the office of stadhouder. Thus from 1572 Willem held an improvised mix of sovereignty in the rebelling provinces which combined the powers of the stadhoudership as well as the authority *over* the stadhoudership which had traditionally rested with the Governor General of the Low Countries. This is further evidenced by Articles 3, 4 and 5 of Willem's Instructions to the Assembly in Dordrecht, in which he asserted the right to appoint his own local (sub-)stadhouders; a prerogative which had traditionally belonged to the authority of the Governor General or the king.[56] Immediately after the Assembly, Willem acted on his new prerogatives by appointing the notorious *geuzen* leader Willem de Lumey as his stadhouder for the 'Zuider-Kwartier' (the southern part of Holland), while he made Diederik Sonoy his stadhouder for Enkhuizen and the 'Noorder-Kwartier' (the northern part).[57]

It is important to emphasise that this improvised fusion of authority now held by Willem was bestowed upon him by the States of the rebelling provinces. Although the provincial States, formally limiting themselves to only 'recognise and acknowledge' Orange's authority, had not yet openly asserted themselves as rivals for the supreme

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[54] Kossmann and Mellink, *Texts,* p. 98.

[55] Rowen, *The Princes of Orange*, pp. 17-18; Swart, *Willem van Oranje*, p. 38.

[56] 'Instructie ende bericht', 13 July 1572.

[57] For a brief overview of Lumey's short but disastrous time in office as Willem's stadhouder in South Holland, see: Swart, *Willem van Oranje*, pp. 50-52. Diederik Sonoy remained in this office until 1588, when Maurits of Orange succeeded him as stadhouder of all of Holland.

sovereignty that was based in Brussels and Madrid, the fact remained that the Prince's elevated powers had come from the States' meeting at Dordrecht rather than from the King. More than ever before, the government of Holland and Zeeland became increasingly shared between the Prince of Orange and the progressively assertive States' assemblies.[58] This developing power dynamic is evidenced in a letter from Willem to Filips van Marnix, in which Orange described the government of the rebelling provinces to consist of 'moy et les estats'.[59]

1.4 The stadhoudership and the 'High Authority' (1572 – 1577)

While Willem of Orange was (re-)installed as stadhouder of Holland and Zeeland at the First Free States assembly in 1572, the Revolt by the rebelling northern provinces against Spain intensified. Following a stagnation of the success of the Spanish Army of Flanders, Philip II replaced the Duke of Alva in November 1573 with Luis de Requesens as his new Governor General in Brussels. De Requesens, though more moderate in his politics than Alva, reinvigorated the Spanish military campaign.[60] The following months brought some significant defeats, as well as several victories for the Dutch rebel forces. Willem's troops conquered the important port of Middelburg in February 1574, and in October that year the city of Leiden was successfully relieved after a long siege. However, the city of Haarlem had fallen to the Spanish in July 1573 after a siege of seven months, and on

[58] Rowen, *The Princes of Orange*, pp. 16-17.

[59] Willem of Orange to Philip of Marnix of Aldegonde, 28 Nov. 1573 in: Groen van Prinsterer (ed.), *Archives ou Correspondance inédite de la Maison d'Orange-Nassau*, 1e série (henceforth: *Archives*), Vol. 3, p. 88.

[60] Though the Dutch Rebellion is often romanticised as a fight against 'the Spanish', Alva's troops in fact consisted of a wide variety of nationalities. See: Geoffrey Parker, *The Army of Flanders and the Spanish Road, 1567-1659. The logistics of Spanish victory and defeat in the Low Countries' Wars* (Cambridge, 1972, 1975); Fernando González de León, *The Road to Rocroi. Class, culture and command in the Spanish Army of Flanders, 1567-1659* (Leiden, 2009).

14 April 1574 two of Willem of Orange's brothers were killed during at the lost Battle of Mookerheyde, which deeply affected the Prince.[61]

Partly as a result of the varying results of the war effort and its heavy financial burden, the relationship between Willem and the States of Holland and Zeeland increasingly strained. Shortly after Alva's arrival in the Low Countries, Holland had collected 271,000 guilders in taxes per year. However, contemporary records of the States of Holland show that by the mid 1570s the tax revenues to finance the war effort amounted to 210,000 guilders per month.[62] This monumental financial effort by the provinces was not made without a certain level of reluctance, and Orange continuously found himself asking the States for more money. However, the significant increase in the States' financial contributions on which Willem depended for the continuation of the military campaign also led to an increased desire from the States to have a greater say in government policies and war strategies.[63] The resulting tug of authority between stadhouder and States meant that the 1570s witnessed a series of attempts to formalise the style of government among the rebelling provinces, in order to reflect the rapidly changing political situation in the northern Low Countries. This particularly concerned a constant improvisation around the way in which the political authority between Willem

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[61] By spring 1574 Willem of Orange was very low in spirits, following the defeat at the Mookerheyde and subsequent loss of his brothers, combined with serious financial worries about being able to continue the military campaign. In a private letter to his brother Count Jan of Nassau, he wrote: 'I must confess to you frankly that I am so perplexed by such a great multitude of affairs and by grief and melancholy too, because of the loss […] of my brothers, whom I firmly believe to be dead, that I hardly know what I do. … The ordinary expenses which we have to bear if we want to defend the country are so enormous that I see very little chance of providing for extraordinary wants, if we don't find some one to come to our aid. … It is high time that some princes and potentates offered to assist us, and if there is no one willing and if for lack of help we are lost, in the name of God, so be it!'. The Prince of Orange to Count Jan of Nassau, Dordrecht, 7 May 1574, in: *Archives*, Vol. 4, pp. 385-386. Translation into English taken from Kossman and Mellink, *Texts,* pp. 112-115.

[62] This amount was raised through the combined efforts of Holland and Zeeland, but did not include contributions from Haarlem and Amsterdam, which were still in Spanish hands. See: Resolutions of the States of Holland (Res. Holl.), 15-17 March 1576.

[63] Wagenaar, *Vaderlandsche Historie*, Vol. 7, p. 5.

of Orange, in his capacity as stadhouder, and the States of Holland and Zeeland was to be divided. As the States sought to increase their political influence on the Revolt, Willem sought to increase his political autonomy. However, Willem continued to need the States' support both to maintain his position as stadhouder, and for their financial support of the war effort. At the same time, the States relied on Willem to act as a political and military leader who coordinated the campaign against Spain. Both parties, therefore, had to find a middle ground between their respective desire for authority, and the need for cooperation.

The first notable event in this period was the row between Willem and the States of Holland in the autumn of 1574, which resulted in the referral of the 'High Authority' upon the former. The tension that had been building up between the rebelling provinces and their stadhouder came to an abrupt explosion when on 20 October 1574 Willem, dismayed with the state of affairs, threatened to resign from his office. He informed the States of Holland that 'the issues of the Land's Government had to be put in order', and that he saw no other means of doing this than 'that the States themselves took on the whole Government, [and] release him from a burden, which he had not accepted out of own interest or honour, but to serve them'.[64] This statement is noteworthy, because it not only reflects the extent of Orange's frustration at the political situation, but, more importantly, it is the first time that the stadhoudership is described as subservient to the provincial States, rather than being placed over them on behalf of the King. However, it must be emphasised that Orange's words reflected sentiment rather than reality, as the States, although valuing their increased autonomy in matters of government, still depended on their stadhouder for his leadership in the rebellion against Spain.[65] The States therefore asked him on 12 November 1574 'in all humbleness' to remain in his position, and declared that they bestowed upon him 'complete power, authority, and supreme command, in the capacity of Governor or Regent'.[66]

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[64] Res. Holl., 20 October 1574.
[65] Wagenaar, *Vaderlandsche Historie*, p. 12-13; Rowen, *Princes of Orange*, p. 18.
[66] Res. Holl., 12 November 1574.

Some historians have argued that with this agreement, Willem was close to reigning over the rebelling Provinces as a sovereign ruler.[67] However, the bestowal of this 'complete power, authority, and supreme command' was not the expression of all-encompassing sovereignty as it might seem. The agreement between the States of Holland and Willem of Orange was formalised in writing on 11 July 1575 in Dordrecht, and this document detailed the exact context in which the States bestowed this 'High Authority' on Willem. The document made clear that Willem's new powers almost exclusively related to matters of war, and would end with the conclusion of the war.[68] Moreover, the agreement of 11 July was a further step towards independent sovereignty for the provincial States themselves, because unlike their 'recognition' of Willem's authority in 1572, the States of Holland now autonomously 'conferred' this authority upon him. This signified a further development in the formalisation of the future relationship between the stadhoudership and the States' government: the former was given the authority to lead, but the source of this authority originated with the States.

Moreover, it is worthwhile to have a closer look at the opening of the tract, in which the decision to confer this 'High Authority' to Willem is explained as follows:

> all commonwealths and communities are best preserved, strengthened and confirmed by unity, which cannot be done by many, who are often differing in will and opinion, and therefore it is necessary, that the government of these States are being directed and commanded by one Head and Authority.[69]

It was thus reasoned that, despite the open rebellion against the King's government in Brussels, there was still a need for a strong leadership figure with the authority to unify the patchwork of rebelling Dutch towns, nobility, and provincial institutions. However, it must be noted that this statement was made within the political context of 1575, in

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[67] Blok, *Geschiedenis van het Nederlandsche Volk,* pp. 105-106.
[68] 'Holland en Zeeland dragen de Hoge Overheid op aan Prins Willem van Oranje', 11 July 1575; cited from the Dutch Revolt database of the University of Leiden (dutchrevolt.leiden.edu), which holds a wealth of digitised contemporary source material: https://dutchrevolt.leiden.edu/dutch/bronnen/Pages/1575%2007%2011%20ned.aspx.
[69] 'Holland en Zeeland dragen de Hoge Overheid op aan Prins Willem van Oranje', 11 July 1575.

which there was not yet a concrete desire among the rebelling provinces to abandon the principle of monarchy and establish themselves as a republican state. Nevertheless, this early argument for a unifying figure within a plural government structure is noteworthy, as it would later become an inherent feature of the *raison d'être* of the stadhoudership in the time of the Dutch Republic, and an important argument for the office's desirability during the First Stadhouderless Period of 1650-1672.

Two other important developments concerning the development of the stadhoudership that took place almost simultaneously with the 'High Authority' agreement were the consecutive Unions of Dordrecht (1574) and Delft (1575). There had been attempts since the early 1570s at closer cooperation between the three 'rebel bastions' (the 'Noorder-Kwartier' and 'Zuider-Kwartier' of Holland, and the province Zeeland), in order turn them into a more cohesive political unit, enabling a more effective and cooperative approach to the war effort.[70] Following over a year of negotiations, deputies of the States of Holland and Zeeland met at Dordrecht and, on 4 June 1575, agreed to enter into a political union. This Union of Dordrecht was signed by several of Holland's noblemen, as well as deputies from the towns of Dordrecht, Delft, Gouda, Rotterdam, Gorinchem, Schiedam, Briele, Schoonhoven, Oudewater, and Woerden, and from the Zeeuwse towns of Middelburg, Zierikzee, Vlissingen, and Veere. The Union of 1575 stipulated a closer cooperation in terms of governance, trade, and tax collection, but its main objective was to enable a more coherent and effective cooperation in the ongoing war, with all parties promising to equally share the burdens of war.[71] The signatories further pledged to unite themselves 'under the Government and obedience of the Prince of Orange, Count of Nassau, and Stadhouder and Captain General over these Lands on behalf of the King of Spain', and agreed that any conflicts or disputes that would arise between the towns or Provinces would be submitted to their stadhouder's judgement. [72]

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[70] Swart, *Willem van Oranje,* p. 97-98; Wagenaar, *Vaderlandsche Historie,* pp. 105-106.
[71] 'De Unie van Dordrecht', in: Res. Holl., 4 June 1575, NL-HaNA, Staten van Holland na 1572, 3.01.04.01, inv.nr. 11.
[72] 'De Unie van Dordrecht', Res Holl., 4 June 1575:

However, it must be stressed that the agreement and its referral of the additional prerogatives to Willem of Orange was, again, meant to be limited to the current war only, as 'the aforementioned Coalition will last as long as these present War efforts and unrest have not been resolved'.[73]

Nevertheless, this Union of Dordrecht constituted two important and lasting developments in the shaping of the stadhoudership. The first was that Holland and Zeeland had now bound themselves to a shared stadhouder in order to facilitate the political cooperation between the two provinces. The second development was that the authority in Holland and Zeeland to mediate political conflicts was now placed solely with the stadhouder. It must be remembered from the earlier analysis of the stadhoudership's Instructions of 1559 that this had originally been the prerogative of the Governor of the Low Countries. This thesis will show that this power, which had now devolved onto the stadhoudership, would become one of the office's most prominent features throughout the Dutch Republican period.

The Union of Dordrecht was not without criticism. Some of the increasingly self-aware towns and their local magistrates, who since 1567 had gained an increasing autonomy in governance, were uneasy about the new political developments. The regents in Middelburg, for example, complained that the Union had stretched the powers of the stadhoudership too far, and that some of their important local liberties were being taken away under the pretence of defending them ('*dat men den luiden, tot voorstand der Vryheid allerlei zwaarigheden deed ondergaan, en hun, ondertusschen, […] hunne vryheden scheen te willen beneemen*').[74] The influential Zeeuwse town Zierikzee also spoke out against any further aggrandisement of Orange's political position. Following these concerns, Zeeland did not

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'onder den Gouvernemente ende gehoorsaemheydt van den Prince van Orange, Grave van Nassauw, &c. Stadthouder ende Capiteyn Generael over de selve Landen van wegen den Koningh van Hispanien'.

[73] 'De Unie van Dordrecht', Res. Holl., 4 June 1575:
'Het voorsz Verbondt sal geduyren soo lange dese jegenwoordige Krijghsberoerte ende onvrede niet en sal wesen besleght'.

[74] Wagenaar, *Vaderlandsche Historie* (1752), Vol. 7, pp. 95-96.

sign the confirmation of the referral of the 'High Authority' document in July 1575, which had originally been intended to be participated in by both Holland and Zeeland.[75]

Partly because of Zeeland's reluctance to act according to the agreement, the Union of Dordrecht had very little impact on facilitating a closer cooperation between Holland and Zeeland. Meanwhile, the successive sieges in late 1575 of Zierikzee and Woerden demonstrated that the Spanish Army of Flanders remained a constant threat to the rebelling provinces, and by the winter of 1575 and early 1576 the stadhouder and the States again found themselves at odds over the military strategy and financial support to sustain the war effort. In March 1576, Orange once more threatened to abandon his office if the States of Holland and Zeeland would not work towards a properly functioning closer alliance, after which new negotiations began. Deputies for both provinces thus:

> soon started deliberating on this in earnest. It was feared that the Prince would be angered furthered by delaying this matter, having already shown him dissatisfied that the States used his good advice so poorly: and he [Orange] declared again, that he could no longer stay in Government, and would have rather that someone else took his place, as long as no better progress was made towards the Unification.[76]

Meanwhile, Zierikzee, now being threatened by the Spanish siege, abandoned its resistance to further increase of Orange's power as stadhouder of Holland and Zeeland. On 25 April 1576 a new political union between the States of Holland and Zeeland was thus agreed upon in Delft. This Union of Delft was also signed by Willem of Orange, in his capacity of stadhouder, and by the same representatives of the nobility and towns as had signed the earlier Union of Dordrecht, minus the towns of Schoonhoven and Oudewater, which had since fallen into Spanish hands, and the town of Woerden, which was still under siege. New signatories, however, came from the recently liberated towns of Leiden and Geertruidenberg. The text of the Union of Delft was very similar to the

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[75] *Ibid.*, p. 20 - 21.
[76] Res. Holl., 13 March 1576.

earlier Union of Dordrecht, but it also included the Act of 11 July 1575 in which Holland bestowed the 'High Authority' onto Willem of Orange. The Union thus included the articles drawn up at Dordrecht that had stipulated a closer cooperation in all matters relating to warfare and protection of the rebelling provinces, and also contained the text that Holland used to name Orange as its *'Hooft en hoogste Overigheid* ('Head and Highest Authority'). The importance of the Union of Delft was, then, that now both Holland and Zeeland recognised Orange in this capacity.

The making of a political union between Holland and Zeeland has been seen by Jonathan Israel as a frontrunner, or political 'embryo', for the Union of Utrecht in 1579. However, in his argument he only refers to the earlier Union of Dordrecht and overlooks the final Union of Delft, even though his constant references to the text of the latter make one assume that Israel confused the two events, or thought them to be one and the same treaty.[77] Moreover, Herbert Rowen has described the Union of Delft as a defining moment in the development of the stadhouder because 'the essential characteristics of the dual government of States-with-stadholder were clearly set forth […]. The Prince might be called a 'sovereign', but the powers granted to him did not make him a *supreme* ruler; when he had been stadholder in the name of Philip II, he had exercised virtually identical authority'.[78] Moreover, Rowen later referred to the text of the Union of Delft as being Willem's renewed 'commission as stadholder'.[79] There are, however, several problems with Rowen's arguments. Firstly, the Union of Delft technically did not involve the stadhoudership itself. The entire document does not contain a single reference to either the office or to Willem of Orange's position as stadhouder. Instead, the treaty was a combination of two documents that gave specific prerogatives and powers to the person of Willem of Orange himself, *not* to the institution of the stadhoudership. Secondly, when one compares Orange's original powers as Philip's stadhouder, as described in his 1559 Commission, to his position in Holland and Zeeland in July 1576, a significant increase in Willem's power is evident. In the period of 1559 – 1567 Willem's authority had been

[77] Israel, *The Dutch Republic,* p. 197-198.
[78] Rowen, *Princes of Orange*, pp. 19-20.
[79] *Ibid.*, p. 27.

strictly limited by the superiority of the Governor-General in Brussels, but upon his return from exile the rebelling provinces needed him to become a leader with the improvised dual authority of both a stadhouder and Governor-General. Moreover, the States of Holland and Zeeland then acknowledged Orange as their 'Head and Highest Authority', without there being a superior governmental institution above him (even though formally the rebelling provinces still acknowledged Philip II as their king and sovereign). Still, it would not be justified to consider Willem's position from 1576 onwards as that of a semi-king in Holland and Zeeland, as the source of his authority still originated with the States' assemblies of both provinces, and came with strict limitations (such as the provision that they were only to last for the period of the Rebellion). Moreover, the impoverished Prince of Orange remained fully dependent on the States' continued financial support in order to lead the Revolt.

1.5 The stadhoudership and the Union of Utrecht (1579) and Act of Abjuration (1581)

On 23 January 1579 the Revolt entered a new phase when most of the northern rebelling provinces signed a formal alliance against Spanish rule. The Union of Utrecht, as the agreement was known, was a treaty of cooperation that included the core rebel provinces of Holland, Zeeland, Utrecht, the Ommelanden (encompassing the Province of Groningen, but not the town itself), and the assembled nobility ('*ridderschap*') of the Arnhem and Zutphen quarters of the Province of Gelderland. The Union treaty was agreed upon three weeks after the Union of Arras, which had been signed on 6 January by the predominantly Catholic southern provinces to reconcile with the King in Spain and his Governor-General in Brussels. The remaining quarters of Gelderland both signed the Union of Utrecht by March 1579, but the ongoing debate about the Union treaty among the northern Netherlands was demonstrated by the fact that the States of Friesland did not sign until August 1579, while the States of Drenthe only followed in April 1580. Throughout May and June 1579 the important towns of Antwerp, Breda, and

‘s-Hertogenbosch also joined the Union, but the States of Brabant, Flanders, and the Province of Overijssel did not.[80] Indeed, Willem of Orange himself, who for a long time retained a hope for a reunification with the southern Provinces, did not sign the Union of Utrecht treaty until 3 May 1579, when it had become clear that a renewed alliance with the south was unlikely.[81]

There is no lack of historical studies on the signing of the Union of Utrecht, which has often been regarded as the birth of the Republic of the United Provinces, despite the fact that the rebelling provinces still formally acknowledged the sovereignty of Philip II.[82] However, several historians, such as Jonathan Israel and Koenraad Swart, have stressed the contemporaneous controversy of the Union treaty, and pointed at the reluctance among many of the provinces to sign the treaty.[83] Pieter Geyl and Martin van Gelderen have both focused on the significance of the Union of Utrecht as the definite separation between the northern and southern Netherlands in terms of religion, politics, and culture.[84] Furthermore, Geoffrey Parker has described the Union as a ‘triumph’ for the uncompromising spirit of the Rebellion, as, unlike the Union of Arras and the earlier Pacification of Ghent (1576), it made virtually no mention of the authority of the King, the preservation of the Catholic faith, or of a potential reconciliation with Spain.[85] However, there is still a noticeable gap in the scholarship on the Union of Utrecht concerning its immediate impact and influence on the government of the northern Netherlands in the late sixteenth and seventeenth century. This lacuna has partly been

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[80] M.P Christ, *De Brabantsche Saecke. Het vergeefse streven naar een gewestelijke status voor Staats-Brabant 1585-1675* (Tilburg, 1984), p. 17.

[81] Kossmann and Mellink, *Texts,* p. 165.

[82] Van Gelderen, *Political Thought of the Dutch Revolt,* p 52; J. C. Boogman, ‘The Union of Utrecht: its genesis and consequences’, in J. C. Boogman, *Van Spel tot Spelers: verspreide opstellen* (The Hague, 1982), pp. 53-82; p. 64. See also A. Th. van Deursen, ‘Tussen eenheid en zelfstandigheid. De toepassing van de Unie als fundamentele wet’ in: S. Groenveld and H.L. Ph. Leeuwenberg (eds.), *De Unie van Utrecht. Wording en werking van een verbond en een verbondsacte* (The Hague, 1979), pp. 136–54.

[83] Israel, *The Dutch Republic,* p. 201-202; Swart, *William the Silent,* pp. 32-33.

[84] Geyl, *The Revolt of the Netherlands,* pp. 161-79; Van Gelderen, *The Political Thought of the Dutch Revolt*, pp. 51-52.

[85] Geoffrey Parker, *The Dutch Revolt* (London, 1977), p. 194.

partly addressed by Simon Groenveld and Huib Leeuwenberg, who have argued for the significance of the Union treaty as both a constitutional, law-giving document, and a source of inspiration throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth century.[86] Chapter III of this thesis will emphasise these findings further by showing how crucially important the text of the Union treaty was during the Grand Assembly of 1651, when the decision was made to leave the stadhoudership and captaincy-general vacant. This section, however, will analyse the effect that the Union of Utrecht had on the development of the stadhoudership in the immediate aftermath of the signing of the treaty.

The importance of the Union of Utrecht on the forming of the stadhoudership for the Dutch republican period has remained widely unacknowledged, with the only exception being a short evaluation on the matter by Herbert Rowen. Rowen acknowledged the fact that the Union of Utrecht and the successive Act of Abjuration defined the constitutional relationship between the stadhoudership vis-à-vis the provincial States governments, as it would remain throughout the history of the Dutch Republic. Rowen thus argued that the Union of Utrecht signified as a constitution for the United Provinces 'in the sense that it defined the relationship among the signatory provinces as well as the role of the stadholders in the interprovincial relationship'.[87] Rowen has also noted that one of the crucial aspects of the Union for the stadhoudership was its assignment to the office 'of tasks of mediation and reconciliation among the provinces'. However, he then erroneously stated that these tasks had already been given to the office 'in the unions between Holland and Zeeland in 1575 and 1576', while 'the stadholder's other powers, inherited from the time of royal rule, were taken for granted'.[88]

In order to rectify this misconception, we must look at what the Union of Utrecht treaty actually said about the stadhoudership. By entering the Union, the signatories pledged themselves to 'bind and unite themselves with one another, […] as if they were

[86] Groenveld and Leeuwenberg (eds.), *De Unie van Utrecht.*
[87] Rowen, *The Princes of Orange,* p. 23.
[88] *Ibid.,* p. 24.

but One Province'.[89] The Union stipulated the formation of a permanent alliance of military and political collaboration, which both in style and content resembled, to a certain extent, the Union of Delft in 1576 between Holland and Zeeland. However, the notable difference with this treaty is that the Union of Utrecht solely focused on the provincial towns and States' governments. The text made no references to a higher authority than that of the States' themselves, and barely mentioned the King of Spain, who was then still officially recognised as sovereign. Also unmentioned in the treaty was the Prince of Orange, and his authority and prerogatives in the government of Holland and Zeeland. There are, however, several important articles relating to the office of stadhouder, which was tasked with the preservation of the Union by acting as a mediator between the various signatories. The Union of Utrecht thus charged the stadhoudership with the duty to preserve the '*eendracht*' (unity) between both the towns and the provinces, in order to maintain a united front against the enemy. Article IX of the Union of Utrecht thus stated that:

> If it happens that the Provinces cannot reach an agreement on matters of armistice, peace, war or contributions, their differences must be provisionally referred and submitted to the present stadhouders of the aforementioned united Provinces, who will bring about a settlement or at their own discretion give their judgment on the differences. If, however, the stadhouders cannot agree among themselves they will select and ask such impartial assessors and assistants as they themselves choose to consult. And the parties shall be bound to accept the decisions taken by the stadhouders in the aforementioned manner.[90]

Furthermore, Article XVI continued that:

> And if (which God forbid) some misunderstanding, quarrel or discordance arises among the aforementioned Provinces which they cannot resolve, this

[89] 'Verhandelinge van de Unie, eeuwich Vervondt ende Eendreacht, tusschen de Landen, Provintien, Steden ende Leden van dien hier nae benoemt, binnen de Stadt Utrecht gesloten, ende gepubliceert vande Stadthuyse den 29 Januarij Anno 1579', in: C. Cau (ed.), *Groot Placaet-Boek* Vol. I (The Hague, 1658), pp. 7ff. Translation into English taken from Kossmann and Mellink, *Texts concerning the Revolt of the Netherlands* (Cambridge, 1974) pp. 165-173.
[90] 'Verhandelinge van de Unie', 20 January 1579.

> difference, if it concern some of the Provinces in particular, shall be submitted and resolved by the other Provinces or by those, whom they appoint as deputies for this. If the difference concerns all the Provinces, a decision shall be taken by the stadhouders, in the way explained in the IXth article. They shall be bound to give judgment within one month or less of the matter is very urgent. The decision made by the other Provinces or their deputies, or by the stadhouders, will be accepted and carried out and no further appeal or further action on the strength of any right, whatsoever that might be, of appeal, relief, revision or nullity will be allowed.[91]

Finally, Article 21 stated that if any disagreement would arise among the signatories about the interpretation of the Union articles, 'they [the provinces] shall ask for the intervention of the stadholders of the provinces in the manner described above'.[92]

The idea of an authority above the provinces to resolve conflict or disputes was not new. It has been shown in the previous sections that this prerogative had originally belonged to the Governor-General, with limited devolved powers to the provincial stadhouders, and how the Union of Delft had then bestowed the position of supreme mediator upon Willem of Orange. The Union of Utrecht, however, for the first time bestowed the decision-making authority in case of inter-provincial conflict on the office of stadhouder itself, irrespective of the person who held it, with the explicit purpose of preserving the newly formed union between the northern Provinces of the Low Countries. This thus signified a significant expansion of the stadhouder's powers as it had previously been described in the office's Commission and Instructions of 1559. The judiciary powers in matters of conflict on both an inter- and intra-provincial level, which had originally been divided between the Governor-General in Brussel and the stadhouders, were now united exclusively in the stadhoudership.

Although the signing of the Union of Utrecht was a crucial moment in the forming of the Dutch Republic, it was not in fact a proclamation of independence, but rather 'just

[91] 'Verhandelinge van de Unie', 20 January 1579.
[92] 'Verhandelinge van de Unie', 20 January 1579.

an affirmation of continuing hostilities against Philip II'.[93] Moreover, Orange's policy, which was a position shared by many in the States of Holland and Zeeland, was to bring in foreign leadership to help sustain the fight against Spain. Therefore, in August 1580 a commission headed by Marnix van St Aldegonde was sent to France to offer the lordship of the Netherlands to Francis of Anjou, the younger brother of the French King Henri III. In January 1581 a treaty with Anjou was ratified that offered him the sovereignty over the provinces united in the Union of Utrecht, which meant that an official declaration of independence from Habsburg rule had now become a priority. As emphasised before, the rebelling provinces in the northern Netherlands had continued to formally recognise Philip II as their supreme ruler, even though this had increasingly become a formal gesture, rather than a reflection of the political reality. However, the invitation to Anjou to be bestowed with the sovereignty of the northern Netherlands now made it necessary to abandon the narrative that the Revolt was conducted only against the King's advisors, rather than against the monarch himself. Thus on 26 July 1581 the States General signed the Act of Abjuration (*'Plakkaet van Verlatinghe'*), with which the provinces officially renounced Philip II as their sovereign and overlord. The legal justification used for the Act was that the northern provinces did not abandon Philip, but instead that 'these provinces have been abandoned by their king and been treated not as subjects but as enemies, whom their own lord sought to subdue by force of arms'.[94]

The signing of the Act of Abjuration had significant implications for the relationship between the stadhoudership and the provinces. Until the declaration of the Act, the office had still officially been recognised as the local representative of the King, even as this rhetoric became increasingly hollow from the 1570s onwards. With the disposal of the Habsburg monarchy, the Act declared that the States General themselves

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[93] Rowen, 'The Dutch Revolt: what kind of Revolution?', p. 582.

[94] 'Placaet van de Staten Generael der Geunieerde Nederlanden: By den welcken, midts de redenen in 't lange in 't selve begrepen, men verklaert den Coningh van Spangnien vervallen van de Overheyt ende Heerschappye van dese voorsz Nederlanden, ende verbiede synen Naem ende Zegel in de selve Landen meer te gebruycken, &c., 26 Julij Anno 1581', in: Cau (ed.), *Groot Placaet-Boek,* Vol. I, pp. 26 ff. Translation into English taken from: Kossmann and Mellink, *Texts,* pp. 216-228.

would assume some of Philip's sovereignty, and that 'instead of the king's seals, our [i.e. the States General's] great seal, counterseal and cachet-seal shall henceforward be used in matters of general government'.[95] The Act further ordered that all office holders in local and provincial government would 'be bound and obliged to take a new oath in the presence of the States of their respective province or their special deputy, swearing to be faithful to us [i.e. the States General] against the king of Spain and his followers, in conformity with the formula drawn up but the States General'.[96] The Act of Abjuration thus enabled the States General to assume the highest sovereignty in the Union of the northern provinces. This arrangement was supposed to be temporary, but, as will be analysed in more detail in Chapter II, the eventual lack of success in finding a successor to Philip II meant that the sovereignty in the northern provinces ultimately devolved on the provincial States themselves and their representative body, the States-General. The result of this shift of sovereignty was that the stadhouder, who had originally represented the absent sovereign on a provincial level, was now subservient to the sovereign Provincial States.

This new relationship between stadhouder and States that thus resulted from the Act of Abjuration remained a crucial part of the governmental structure for the whole period of the Dutch Republic. However, modern scholarship on the Princes of Orange and their position in the Dutch political system has overwhelmingly described this relationship as a continuous power struggle between stadhouder and States, with this dynamic being used as a context in which political conflicts, such as the ones that occurred under Maurits during the Truce Period and under Willem II in 1650, have been analysed and explained.[97] Conversely, this thesis explores the paradigms of an alternative context, in which the relationship between the stadhouder and States is understood

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[95] 'Placaet van de Staten Generael', 26 July 1581.

[96] 'Placaet van de Staten Generael', 26 July 1581.

[97] De Bruin, 'De soevereiniteit in de republiek: een machtsprobleem'; Prak, 'Republiek en vorst. De stadhouders en het staatsvormingsproces in de Noordelijke Nederlanden, 16e-18e eeuw'; Geyl, *Orange and Stuart, 1641-1672;* Price, *Holland and the Dutch Republic in the Seventeenth Century: The Politics of Particularism*, p. 134; Frijhoff and Spies, *1650: Hard-Won Unity*, p. 96.

through the constitutional tension that was built into the governmental system of the Dutch Republic through the Union of Utrecht and the Act of Abjuration.

In order to understand this alternative paradigm, we must first turn to Arie van Deursen's study on the Union of Utrecht, in which he pointed out the inherent tension in values upon which the Union treaty was based.[98] The preservation of regional and local liberties, both on a provincial and on a town level, was one of the main motivations driving the rebelling provinces against the Habsburg regime. The Union of Utrecht had called for the provinces to unite and cooperate, in order to protect these regional freedoms. The text of the treaty states that its main goals were to ensure the unified alliance between rebelling provinces, in order to preserve regional liberties. The former goal was thus understood to be of vital importance in order to accomplish the latter, and thereby secure the freedom of the Dutch state from foreign tyranny. Van Deursen emphasised the juxtaposition inherent to the Union treaty, as it promoted the opposing objectives of unification and regional independence. However, he then continued to argue that no mechanism was ever set in place to preserve the unity, or *eendracht*, among the provinces, besides a failed attempt in the late 1580s and early 1590s by the *Raad van State* (Council of State) to function as an arbiter in moments of conflict both within and between the provinces. Van Deursen therefore argues that 'no alternative [to the *Raad van State*] was ever found', and that 'no mechanism to mediate in conflicts afterwards existed. This made the proper functioning of the Union difficult in that area that was its prime purpose: the preservation of unity and of local privileges'.[99]

Van Deursen's theory about the inherent constitutional tension situated at the heart of the Dutch Republic raised several important points, but it wholly overlooked the important matter that a mechanism for conflict resolution *had* in fact been put in place: the Union of Utrecht had formally bestowed this task upon the office of stadhouder. Moreover, I argue that the inherent constitutional tension between local privileges and

[98] Van Deursen, 'Tussen eenheid en zelfstandigheid. De toepassing van de Unie als fundamentele wet', pp. 136-154.
[99] *Ibid.*, p. 153.

unification, as pointed out by Van Deursen, was in fact embodied in the office of stadhouder. The previous analyses of the Union of Utrecht and the Act of Abjuration, both of which were crucial documents in the shaping of the stadhoudership for the republican period, show that the office was inadvertently tasked with serving two opposite interests. On the one hand the stadhouder had become subservient to the provincial States and was thus bound to serve the interests and privileges of that province. However, the stadhouder was also responsible for preserving the unity on both an inter- and intra-provincial level, which obliged him to act on behalf of the general interest of the state over that of an individual province. In the history of the Dutch Republic, this practice became even more complicated due to the fact that traditionally the Princes of Orange were often the stadhouder of a majority of the provinces. Through the Union of Utrecht and the Act of Abjuration, the stadhoudership was thus charged to serve simultaneously both the interest of the state as a whole, and the local interests of a province.

1.6 Conclusion

When the Duke of Anjou arrived in the Northern Netherlands in February 1582, it soon became clear that his autocratic style of political leadership would clash with the increasingly autonomous provincial governments. After a disastrous attack on Antwerp, carried out in a desperate bid to shore up his authority, Anjou left the Netherlands in June 1583. Yet prior to his departure, deliberations had already begun in Holland and Zeeland concerning the possibility of designating Willem as their Count. Such a title would give him a position of sovereignty over these provinces. Yet plans for Willem's elevation were abruptly abandoned when the Prince of Orange was assassinated in Delft on 10 July 1584. The office of stadhouder, however, was preserved, but as a fundamentally different office than that which had been bestowed upon Willem in 1559.

This chapter, then, has shown that the stadhoudership under the Habsburgs had been a restricted office with narrowly defined powers, strictly subservient to the

Governor-General in Brussels and the King in Spain. The office holder was, however, also the direct representative of the absent sovereign and, therefore, the centre of power in the corresponding province. Yet all this would change with the advent of the Dutch Revolt. Through the series of treaties explored in this chapter, the rebellious provinces increasingly bestowed upon Willem of Orange, the leader of the Revolt, prerogatives which had originally rested with the Governor-General. Willem needed these powers in order to serve effectively in his capacity as stadhouder of the provinces. The Union of Utrecht, however, transferred some of these powers to the office of stadhouder itself, of which the most prominent was the supreme authority over conflict-resolution. The Union of Utrecht thus defined the stadhoudership as a position of conciliation and delineated its prerogatives as those of mediator on both an inter- and intra-provincial level. This was in the spirit of the Union's ultimate goal, which was to ensure *eendracht* among the rebelling provinces in order to facilitate a strong, unified defence against Spanish might. With the Act of Abjuration, however, the King's supreme sovereignty was devolved to the provincial States, which formally altered the power dynamics between stadhouder and States. Although the office was now subservient to the provincial government, the Union of Utrecht had given the stadhoudership a power equivalent to, or even greater than, that of the States in times of conflict. The office of stadhouder thus embodied the constitutional tension of having to serve and protect the interests of both the Union and the individual provinces. The following chapters will analyse how this task of preserving the *eendracht* in the United Provinces became one of the defining characteristics of the stadhoudership. It argues that the major political crises of 1618-19 and 1650 should be understood in light of the constitutional tension embodied within the office.

Chapter 2

THE STADHOUDERSHIP IN THE DUTCH REPUBLIC, 1584 – 1650

2.1 Introduction

The sudden death of Willem I shook the precarious foundations of the developing Dutch state. But if Philip II had hoped that Orange's assassination would result in the end of the Revolt, he severely misjudged the situation in the northern Netherlands. Only days after the Prince's death the alliance of rebelling provinces made a solemn resolution that they would remain firmly united 'according to the Union of Utrecht'.[100] Meanwhile, the States General assumed 'temporary sovereignty' until a new monarch was found to replace Philip. Throughout the 1580s, the *locus* of sovereignty in the Dutch state remained a constant topic of debate and ambiguity. However, as the likelihood that the sovereignty of the northern provinces would fall to a monarch decreased, the provincial States increasingly considered themselves as the institutions 'with which the sovereignty of the country is now residing'.[101] It was thus in these years that the independent Republic of the United Provinces was truly born.[102]

This chapter will explore how the office of stadhouder was transformed and adapted to become a part of this new republican state. In doing so, I will build on the argument made in the previous chapter and further reject the traditional idea in scholarship that the stadhoudership was in nature a 'conservative' office. Instead, this

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[100] Geyl, *The Revolt of the Netherlands*, p. 194.
[101] Kossmann and Mellink, *Texts,* p. 48.
[102] Jan den Tex, *Oldenbarnevelt* (5 Vols.: Haarlem, 1960-72), Vol. I, p. 251; Kossmann and Mellink, *Texts,* pp. 46-48.

chapter will demonstrate the extent to which the nature and prerogatives of the office changed throughout the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century. It will especially focus on the occasions of which the office transferred from one Prince of Orange to the next. The complexity of these transitions have been ignored by scholarship thus far, which has led to the perception that the succession of the office was a 'matter of fact' occasion. However, even though the persona of the next stadhouder was never much topic of debate, these moments still reveal a wealth of new insights into the contemporaneous perceptive of the nature and position of the office itself.

The previous chapter has also demonstrated how the Union of Utrecht had tasked the stadhoudership with the prerogative of mediation and conflict resolution on both a local and provincial scale. This chapter, then, will demonstrate how this element of the stadhoudership is of crucial importance to understanding the office's functioning throughout this period. It will be shown how it shaped the practical role of the stadhouder, as both Maurits and, especially, Frederik Hendrik were actively engaged with resolving local and provincial disputes about a wide variety of things. More so, this element of the stadhoudership formed the foundations upon which Maurits' actions were informed during the Truce Period Conflicts of 1617-1619. By this analysing the stadhoudership of Maurits, Frederik Hendrik, and Willem II, this chapter will provide new insights into our current understanding of the office in the Dutch Republic between 1584 and 1650.

2.2 The Stadhoudership under Maurits of Orange (1584 – 1625)

2.2.1 Preserving the office of stadhouder (1584-1589)

The previous chapter has shown how the stadhoudership in the Low Countries originated in the fifteenth century as the local representative of an absent sovereign. As the Revolt progressed in the mid sixteenth century, the position and authority of stadhouder Willem of Orange, who had on ambiguous legal claims remained in office for the provinces of Holland and Zeeland, increasingly expanded, as he received powers that had originally

belonged to the Governor General in Brussels. As the Revolt intensified, Willem's position thus gradually moved away from the limitations of the stadhoudership. When the Habsburg monarchy was formally renounced with the Act of Abjuration in 1581, the office of stadhouder, which had represented an absent King, thus no longer reflected the political situation in the northern Netherlands. When analysing the stadhoudership of Maurits of Orange, we must therefore first ask why the stadhoudership was preserved by the provincial States in the first place.

The preservation of the stadhoudership in the 1580s has traditionally been explained by emphasising the non-republican intentions behind the signing of the Act of Abjuration, summarised by Graham Darby as the notion that 'the Netherlanders stumbled only semi-consciously into political independence. They had never expected to achieve it'.[103] Moreover, Horst Lademacher has suggested that the provinces simply did not have the confidence yet to rule independently.[104] Indeed, the Act of Abjuration did not seek to establish a republican form of government, as it mentioned explicitly that it sought to replace Philip II by another sovereign, and that the assembled States had 'more than enough legitimate reasons for abandoning the king of Spain and for asking another powerful and merciful prince to protect and defend these provinces'.[105] Even during Willem of Orange's life steps had been made to this end, and deputies were thus sent to successively King Henri III of France and Queen Elizabeth I of England with offers of sovereignty in return for protection and military support against Spain. Both monarchs rejected the offer, but Elizabeth did agree to the request by the States General to send on her behalf 'some lord of quality to become leader and director in the Netherlands because

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[103] Graham Darby, *The Origins and Development of the Dutch Revolt* (Oxford, 2001), p. 7. See also: Kossmann and Mellink, *Texts*, p. 37; Rowen, *The Princes of Orange*, pp. 32-35; H. G. Koenigsberger, *Monarchies, States Generals and Parliaments. The Netherlands in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries* (Cambridge, 2001), pp. 297, 306-7; Price, *Holland and the Dutch Republic*, p. 135.

[104] Horst Lademacher, 'Stände und Statthalter zur zeit des Prinzen Wilhelm I. von Oranien (1572-1584)', in: *Archiv fur Kulturgeschichte* (1958: Vol. 40), pp. 222-50; p. 245.

[105] Act of Abjuration, 1581. Translation in Kossmann and Mellink, *Texts,* p. 224.

matters had run into disorder since the death of His Excellency [William of Orange]'.[106] To maintain the practice of governing through local representatives has therefore been explained to be both a practical development, as either a French or English sovereign would rule from outside the Netherlands, as well as a desirable one in terms of maintaining a degree of political autonomy.[107] As long as there was hope for obtaining a new King or Queen as sovereign, the stadhoudership thus remained intact. However, I suggest that an additional argument for the preservation of the office should be found in the Union of Utrecht of 1579. The previous chapter has demonstrated how the stadhoudership had evolved from the start of the Revolt up to the 1580s. Unlike the various treaties and acts of the 1560s and 70s, which had referred more to Willem of Orange's position, the Union of Utrecht explicitly detailed the purpose of the stadhoudership within the union of the northern provinces. After the Act of Abjuration, this Union formed between the now independent northern provinces was more important than ever. By tasking the office with the duty to preserve the *eendracht* among the provinces, and act as a mediator in moments of conflict, the Union of Utrecht had incorporated the stadhoudership in the fabric of the state's constitution, and made it vital for the union's survival.

Willem's death in 1584, however, meant that a successor had to be appointed to the office. On 18 August 1584 the States General bestowed the government of the country temporarily ('bij provisie') to a Council of State, which was to be formed by deputies of all the provinces, and Willem's son, Maurits.[108] At the time of his father's death, Maurits was only sixteen years old and a student at the University of Leiden. He did not inherit his father's title of Prince of Orange, which went to Willem's eldest son, Philip Willem, who was being held hostage in Spain, but instead was known as His Excellency the Count of Nassau. Nevertheless, in the Low Countries Maurits was widely recognised as Willem's heir, and the inclusion of the young man in the Council of State

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[106] 'Rapport van de Nederlandsche gezanten, in 1585 naar Engeland gezonden', *Kronijk van het Historisch Genootschap,* 5th series, Vol. II, (Utrecht, 1866), p. 221.
[107] Rowen, *The Princes of Orange,* pp. 26-27.
[108] Res. St Gen. OR, 18 August 1584.

was an early recognition of the fact that the provinces were keen to preserve a leadership role for the House of Orange in the Northern Netherlands.[109] A letter from Maurits to the States of Holland on 24 September 1584 showed that he was equally keen to take up a position of leadership, as he declared that his greatest desire was to follow in his father's footsteps and work for the 'benefit and prosperity of these lands', while hoping that the States would 'continue their sincere and loyal disposition' towards him and his family.[110] However, partly due to Maurits' young age, he was not yet appointed as the successor to his father's offices. The provinces Utrecht, Gelderland, and Overijssel, keen on creating some political distance from the dominant States of Holland, instead appointed Count Adolf van Nieuwenaar as their new stadhouder.[111] Friesland and Groningen named Willem Lodewijk of Nassau, a nephew of Willem of Orange, to the office. The stadhoudership of Holland and Zeeland was left empty for over a year, until in November 1585 their provincial States appointed Maurits to the office on his eighteenth birthday.

At this point, it is important to emphasise that, unlike the other provinces, the States of Holland and Zeeland never seriously considered anyone else but Maurits for the post. This is a crucial development in the office, as it marked the moment the stadhoudership in Holland and Zeeland became associated with the House of Orange in a dynastic sense. Various historians, such as Arie van Deursen and Herbert Rowen, have argued that his was caused by 'political convenience' rather than a notion of dynastic entitlement, claiming that the 1580s had not yet witnessed the development of an 'Orange myth', or a sense of a 'mystical connection between the House of Orange and the Dutch nation'.[112] However, there is sufficient evidence to suggest that the origins of an 'Orange myth', which believed that the members of the House of Orange had a dynastic claim on the stadhoudership due to its service of leadership and sacrifice for the state, in fact began

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[109] Blok, *Geschiedenis,* Vol. II, p. 224; Den Tex, *Oldenbarnevelt,* Vol. I, p. 242; Rowen, *Princes of Orange*, p. 32; Koenigsberger, *Monarchies, States Generals, and Parliaments,* pp. 305-6.
[110] Copy of this letter found in Bor, *Oorsprongk,* B.19 F.27, p. 488.
[111] Japikse, *Geschiedenis van het Huis van Orange-Nassau* (The Hague, 1937) Vol. 1, p. 128.
[112] See: Van Deursen, 'Staatsinstellingen', p. 355; Rowen, *Princes of Orange,* p. 32-34. Cf. Jill Stern, 'The Orangist Myth, 1650-1672', in: Laura Cruz and Willem Frijhoff (eds.), *Myth in History, History in Myth* (Leiden, 2006), pp. 33-51.

with Maurits' appointment to his father's office. This is illustrated by a letter sent by the States of Holland on 26 March 1587 to the States of Utrecht, in which they defended themselves from accusations of undermining Leicester by appointing Maurits as their stadhouder only weeks before the former's arrival in the Netherlands. In this letter, the States of Holland argued that Maurits had a right to the office due to his father's service to the provinces:

> We do not want to keep from you, that the praiseworthy deeds and high offices of the late noble Prince of Orange, and all that followed up until his death, will for ever keep us aligned with the House of Nassau. It is our opinion that all people, either of high or low status, would rightfully think us ungrateful if we did not bestow on His Excellency of Nassau, by our States and the States of Zeeland, the Stadhoudership and the Captaincy General of the lands of Holland and Zeeland, and the Admiralty of the navy, but instead have these [positions] occupied by other *Oversten* or captains, which would cause the detriment of these lands, and the promotion of discord, and the diminishing of the authority of His Excellency of Nassau.[113]

By the mid 1580s, then, the stadhoudership was again part of the government of all the provinces of the independent Dutch state.

Equally important to the question of *why* the stadhoudership was preserved in the early 1580s, however, is the question of what exactly the nature of this preserved office was. Traditionally, scholarship on the Dutch Revolt has argued that the preservation of the stadhoudership after Willem of Orange's death was inherently conservative in nature. For example, Nicolas Japikse has argued that the office barely changed over time since the stadhoudership of Willem of Orange, and that therefore 'the individual carrying out the office was far more interesting than the office itself'.[114] Similarly, Herbert Rowen has stated in his study of the stadhouders of Orange-Nassau that the prerogatives of the stadhoudership as given to Maurits were essentially similar to those which had been

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[113] P.C. Bor, *Oorsprongh, begin en vervolgh der Nederlandsche oorlogen,* Vol. 12, pp. 40-43; Adriaan Kluit, *Historie der Hollandsche Staatsregering tot aan het jaar 1795,* (5 Vols: Amsterdam, 1802-05) Vol. 1, pp. 54-55.

[114] Japikse, *Geschiedenis,* Vol. 1, p. 132.

ascribed to the office in 1559, although Rowen later contradicts himself by arguing that the powers given to Willem of Orange in 1575 and 1576 were 'the powers that the Stadhouders would exercise over the whole history of the Republic'.[115] The previous chapter, however, has shown that the additional powers that the Prince of Orange received in 1575-76 (i.e. the bestowal of the 'High Authority') were bestowed on the persona of Willem of Orange, and not on the office. The traditional notion that the stadhoudership was inherently conservative in nature has also been rejected in Chapter 1, which showed how the position of the office in the Dutch governmental system underwent some significant chances from the late 1550s to the early 1580s.

The transition of the stadhoudership from Willem of Orange to his son Maurits marked another breaking point in the development of the office, in which the nature of the stadhoudership was further reshaped. An effective way of demonstrating this break is by studying the Commission and drafted set of Instructions that Maurits received from the States of Holland and Zeeland upon his appointment as their stadhouder. Both documents were modelled on the ones that Philip II had given Willem of Orange in 1559, with the obvious omissions of references to the king and the preservation of the Catholic faith. It was this fact that founded the traditional narrative of the conservative nature of the stadhoudership.[116] However, a close analysis of the documents themselves reveal how they actually reflected the extent to which the nature and position of the stadhoudership had changed by the mid 1580s.

Particularly the Commission which Maurits received in 1585 emphasised the changed relationship between the stadhouder and the provincial States. The document indeed echoed the tone and wording used by Philip for the 1559 Commission, but demonstrated the confidence of the States' government in their newly found sovereign status: for example, whereas Willem of Orange was commanded to take the oath of his appointments from the hands of Margareta of Parma at the Habsburg court in Brussels,

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115 Rowen, *Princes of Orange,* p. 24.

116 Kluit, *Historie der Hollandsche Staatsregering*, Vol. 1, pp. 44-50; Japikse, *Geschiedenis,* Vol. 1, p. 132; Rowen, *Princes of Orange,* p. 35-36.

Maurits was instructed to 'take the appropriate oath on the hands of the States of Holland and Zeeland'.[117] Moreover, Willem's Commission had given him, as the representative of their supreme sovereign, the prerogative to convene the States' assembly ('*assembler les États quand besoin sera pour la garde, tuition et défense d'icelles (terres)*[118]). This prerogative was no longer a part of Maurits' Commission, demonstrating that the States were no longer submissive to the stadhouder, nor reliant on him for their assemblies. Also left out was the stipulation that 'any prelates, nobles, vassals, or other representatives of the States' ('*aux Prélats, Nobles, Vassaux et autres representans les États*') had to obey and honour the appointed stadhouder, as it had originally appeared in Willem's Commission. The Commission of Holland and Zeeland's stadhoudership in 1585 thus emphasised the now dominant position of the provincial States vis-à-vis the stadhouder.

Alongside this Commission, the States of Holland and Zeeland intended to provide Maurits with a set of Instructions, just as Willem's appointment in 1559 had been accompanied with a set of Instructions that narrowly detailed the prerogatives and limitations of the office. It is telling, however, that a similar document for Maurits was left in draft, with only five articles written.[119] Very little is known about the discussion regarding the Instructions for Maurits, but it is certain that the draft was never finished, and Maurits thus never received a formal set of Instructions to describe the remits and limitations of his stadhoudership. An early study by C. M. van der Kemp, who wrote one of the first biographies of Maurits, found that throughout October and November 1585 several suggested drafts of Instructions for the stadhoudership circulated among the

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[117] 'waarop de voorn. Heere Grave Maurits van Nassou gehouden wordt te doen den behoorlijken eed aan handen van de Staten van Holland en Zeeland voorn.'; *Res. Holl.* 1 November 1585.

[118] Commission of Willem of Orange, 1559.

[119] These articles included decision-making powers in the field of jurisprudence, and the right to select certain members to the town's magistrates. It also included the admonishment to try and become stadhouder of the province of Utrecht, on the argument that the three provinces had historically often shared a stadhouder, and that the renewal of this practice would encourage the preservation of 'peace and unity' ('vrede en eenigheid') among them. See: Draft Instructie voor Maurits bij de Staten van Holland, 6 October 1585, found in: C. M. van der Kemp, *Maurits van Nassau, Prins van Oranje, in zyn leven, waardigheden en verdiensten,* Vol. I (Rotterdam, 1843), pp. 173-175.

towns of Holland, but the current whereabouts of these drafts appear to be lost.[120] The Resolutions of the States of Holland reveal that in late November the formation of a special committee was announced for the design of a new set of Instructions, but no mention of this committee can be found afterwards.[121]

The fact that the set of Instructions for Maurits were left in draft is significant. The little evidence available to us surrounding the drafting of this document suggest that his may have been caused by either a lack of time, or a failure to agree on the contents of the document. Either way, it indicates that writing a new set of Instructions describing the prerogatives and restrictions of the stadhoudership was not a straightforward task. This inability to adapt the original Instructions from 1559 to the new political reality of the 1580s thus further indicates the extent to which the stadhoudership had changed, and the difficulty for contemporaries to redefine the position of the office.

Finally, it is important to emphasise that even though the Provinces had preserved the stadhoudership after the Act of Abjuration, both the nature of the office as the circumstances in which Maurits was appointed were radically different than when it had been bestowed upon Willem of Orange in 1559. Maurits' appointment rested on a new relationship between the office of stadhouder and the provincial States. Although the exact locus of sovereignty in the United Provinces during the 1580s was a subject of uncertainty and improvisation throughout most of the 1580s, the States General of the northern Netherlands had assumed sovereignty since the Act of Abjuration.[122] Technically, however, the States General did not claim full authority until the departure of the Earl of Leicester in 1587, but the fact remained that the new stadhouders of the 1580s had been appointed solely by the authority of the Provincial States themselves, whereas Willem had originally been appointed as stadhouder by a sovereign monarch, in

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[120] C. M. van der Kemp, *Maurits van Nassau, Prins van Oranje, in zyn leven, waardigheden en verdiensten,* Vol. I (Rotterdam, 1843), pp. 173. Some further speculations about the legal status of these draft Instructions can be found in Kluit, *Historie der Hollandsche Staatsregering*, Vol. 1, pp. 49-50; Wagenaar, *Vaderlandsche Geschiedenis,* Vol. 8, p. 54.

[121] *Res. Holl,* 26 November 1585.

[122] Kossmann and Mellink, *Texts,* p. 16.

order to rule the provinces in his stead. This thus transformed the stadhoudership from representing the sovereign monarch on a provincial level to becoming a servant of the provincial government, which signified a radical change from the traditional relationship between stadhouder and the States.

However, modern scholarship has ignored the further implication that this shift in sovereignty had on the nature of the stadhoudership, and its position in the early modern Dutch state. As discussed in the previous chapter, the office of stadhouder in the Low Countries was created in the fifteenth century to represent the Crown in those parts of the realm in which the monarch himself was absent. It has been pointed out that the original etymology of the office literally referred to someone holding a position in another's stead.[123] This meaning was reflected in the political practice of the stadhoudership throughout the Dutch Revolt, as it has been shown how Willem of Orange had formally remained the representative of Philip II, despite the fact that the northern provinces were in open rebellion against their king. But the stadhouders of the 1580s were appointed by the Provincial States themselves, to serve *alongside* the States government. A tentative argument could be made that the anticipated arrival of the Earl of Leicester meant that the stadhoudership would report to this new Governor General, but this fiction was no longer sustainable after Leicester departed the Low Countries in 1587. So which sovereign power were Maurits and his colleagues representing in their capacity as stadhouder? The formal answer was that the stadhouder represented the provincial States who had appointed him to the office, just as the stadhouders had represented the Habsburg monarch before. However, this meant that the original conception of the stadhouder as a representative of an *absent* sovereign who ruled in their stead had now ceased to exist. The stadhouders that had been appointed after Willem of Orange's death thus ruled alongside the sovereign body that they had previously replaced, rather than on their behalf, which changed both the position and the nature of the office.

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[123] Marlies Philippa (ed.), *Etymologisch woordenboek van het Nederlands* (Amsterdam, 2003-09). J. van Loon, *De ontstaansgeschiedenis van het begrip 'Stad'. Een bijdrage tot de diachrone semantiek en de sociaal-economische geschiedenis van Noord-West-Europa, inzonderheid de Nederlanden* (Gent, 2000).

Concluding, the traditional notion that the preservation of the stadhoudership in the 1580s was conservative in nature must be rejected. Although the official documents accompanying Maurits' appointment were indeed modelled on the ones his father had received in 1559, the altered power dynamics between the office and the provincial States meant that the stadhoudership was, by the mid 1580s, an inherently different office than it had been in the previous decades.

2.2.2 The development of the stadhoudership under Leicester and the 'Ten Years' (1585 – 1608)

In late December 1585 the Earl of Leicester arrived in the northern Netherlands at the head of the English support troops, where he was to be installed as Governor-General of the United Provinces. However, it soon became clear that Leicester's politics clashed with the increasing political autonomy of the provincial States. When Leicester tried to strengthen his position by attempting a political coup in the summer of 1587, popular opinion turned decisively against his governance.[124] He soon returned to England from where he officially resigned as Governor General in April 1588. Leicester's brief period of rule, which has been mostly regarded as negative, or a 'total failure', by among others Herbert Rowen, Martin van Gelder, and Jonathan Israel, was the last time that a foreign prince was asked to become a governor or sovereign of the northern Netherlands.[125] After his departure, the Dutch provincial States' governments formally ruled in their own name, with the States-General as their representative, unifying body.

Leicester's short period as Governor General in the northern Netherlands was characterised by conflict over authority between himself and the provinces, which was partly due to the fact that his position, much like the question of sovereignty in the Dutch state, was subject to continuous debate. However, it has thus far remained overlooked that at the heart of this tension was the position of the stadhoudership, and especially the prerogative to appoint someone to the office. Indeed, the power struggle between

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[124] Van Gelderen, *Political Thought of the Dutch Revolt*, p. 58.

[125] Rowen, *The Princes of Orange*, pp. 35-36; Van Gelderen, The *Political Thought of the Dutch Revolt*, p. 57-60; Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, p. 226.

Leicester and the provinces over the privilege to select stadhouders reflected the ambiguity about the transformed nature of office itself, as well as the source of sovereignty it served.

This conflict originated with the signing of the Treaty of Nonsuch in August 1585 between the Dutch States General and Elizabeth I, which detailed Leicester's prerogatives during his stay in the Netherlands and which stipulated that the English nobleman would have a final say in the appointment of the stadhouders for every province. However, each province had already appointed their respective new stadhouders before Leicester's arrival in the United Provinces, with Holland and Zeeland appointing Maurits only weeks before Leicester took up his new position. Particularly Johan van Oldenbarnevelt, the influential Pensionary of Rotterdam and Leicester's 'foremost Dutch adversary', had lobbied for Maurits' appointment before the Earl's arrival.[126] The timing of especially Maurits' appointment has often argued to have been a deliberate move to circumvent Leicester's new authority, as the province's own choice of stadhouder could guarantee a level of political independence from their new Governor General.[127] Tensions soon came to a head on the subject, and in January 1586, during negotiations between the States General and Leicester concerning the latter's role, the States of Holland and Zeeland asserted that the new Governor General had no authority regarding the appointment of stadhouders, as his Habsburg predecessors had had none either. The authority to appoint a stadhouder had exclusively rested with the sovereign, which, argued Holland and Zeeland, had now devolved upon the provincial States and the States General's bodies, 'with which the sovereignty of the country is now residing' ('bij denwelcken nu de souverainete van den lande was').[128] Leicester's departure to England soon after, which ended the Dutch search for support from foreign governors, resulted in a *de facto* victory for the argument of provincial sovereignty. Moreover, the idea that the stadhouder was

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126 Israel, *The Dutch Republic,* p. 222.

127 Japikse, *Geschiedenis,* Vol. 1, p. 128; Martin van Gelderen, *Op Zoek naar de Republiek,* p. 76; Rowen, *The Princes of Orange,* p. 35; Israel, *The Dutch Republic,* p. 224.

128 E.H. Kossmann, 'Volkssouvereiniteit aan het begin van het Nederlandse ancien régime', in: *BMGN*, XCV (1980: Vol. 95, No. 1), pp. 1-34; p. 13. See also: Kossmann and Mellink, *Texts*, p. 48; Israel, *The Dutch Republic,* p. 244.

appointed by provincial sovereignty and was subservient to the provincial States was since then an inherent feature of the stadhoudership.

Modern historiography often refers to the decade that followed Leicester's permanent departure from the United Provinces as the 'Ten Years', in which supposedly the Dutch Republic consolidated its governmental shape.[129] The late 1580s and the 1590s are also important years for the development of the stadhoudership, because it was in this period that the stadhouder of Holland consolidated its grip on the office in almost all of the other provinces. This was mainly done through the cooperation between Maurits and Johan van Oldenbarnevelt, who had risen to the powerful position of Land's Advocate of Holland. Oldenbarnevelt sought to expand Holland's political influence over the other provinces through the strategic use of the stadhoudership. When the Count van Nieuwenaar, stadhouder of Utrecht, Overijssel, and Gelderland, died in 1589, Oldenbarnevelt convinced these provinces to appoint Maurits instead by arguing that military affairs and political policy could be better co-ordinated when united under one stadhouder.[130] The stadhoudership was thus used as a way to bind the provinces closer together. For the remainder of the history of the Dutch Republic, minus the two Stadhouderless Periods, these five provinces would always have the same individual, traditionally being the Prince of Orange, as their stadhouder.

Maurits' historical evaluation as a stadhouder has been dominated by his military career and by his role in the domestic conflicts during the Dutch Truce Period (which will be discussed below). This is reflected in most of the major historical biographies of both him and Van Oldenbarnevelt, such as in Arie van Deursen's *Maurits van Nassau, de Winnaar die Faalde* (2000), Jan den Tex' *Oldenbarnevelt* (5 vols., 1960-72), and Herbert Rowen's *The Princes of Orange* (1988). The general historiography of Maurits' life in the 1580s and 1590s paints an image of a stadhouder who, in the words of Rowen, 'turned away from politics' to focus on his military campaigns, being 'little concerned with politics

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[129] The 'Ten Years' term to describe the period 1588-1598 was first coined by Robert Fruin in his *Tien Jaren uit den Tachtigjarigen Oorlog, 1588-1598* (The Hague, 1857).
[130] Geyl, *The Revolt of the Netherlands,* p. 216.

for its own sake, beyond what it contributed to his military activities or the prestige of his family'.[131]

However, this reflection has resulted in very little attention for the times that Maurits actively engaged in Dutch politics in his capacity as stadhouder, and, as per the articles of the Union of Utrecht, sought to resolve the occurrence of any internal disputes between towns and provinces. He thus spent a significant portion of his time between July 1588 and October 1589 acting as a mediator between the various members of the States of Holland. The dispute that had arisen was that the region of West-Friesland, which under the Habsburg had enjoyed a semi-independent status within the States of Holland, wanted to declare itself as an independent province, to the dismay of the rest of Holland. Maurits, who ultimately successfully prevented the break-up of Holland, urged province to remain united and end the dispute, and to that end send several personal letters to its towns and appeared in a succession of meetings of the States' assembly.[132] On 16 January 1589, for example, he wrote on the occasion to the assembled States of Holland, emphasising that it was his duty 'to promote by all means, the internal unity, friendship, and communication between the United Provinces, and especially these of Holland and Zeeland and all its regions and towns, and to dispel all causes of misunderstanding and disagreement'.[133] Moreover, in October 1589 the States' assembly noted how they had received a letter from their stadhouder 'acting in the upkeep of the *eendracht* of these lands, in which he 'issued a serious admonition to remain in this unity, and stray far from any causes of disorder or discord'.[134] Also in late 1589 did Maurits visited the town of Medemblik, where a dispute had broken out between the town's civil government and church council about the appointment of a new controversial preacher named Taco Sibrands. Here, again, he came to act in the explicit role as a mediator, in his capacity of the province's stadhouder. After listening to both parties, and a conversation with Sibrands, Maurits successfully resolved the matter by deciding that Sibrands was to

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[131] Rowen, *Princes of Orange*, p. 38 and p. 42.
[132] Van der Kemp, *Maurits van Nassau,* Vol. 1, pp. 92-91.
[133] The letter is noted in Res. Holl., 22 Febr. 1589.
[134] Res. Holl., 22 Oct. 1589.

remain in his position, but on the condition he conformed to all the teachings of the Reformed Church.[135]

2.2.3 The role of the stadhoudership during the Truce Period Conflicts (1617 – 1619)

In 1607 the United Provinces entered into an armistice with Spain, which ultimately led to the declaration of a temporary peace agreement between the two states for a period of twelve years, starting on 9 April 1609. This time of peace, which has since become known as the Twelve Year Truce period, is mostly remembered for a major religious and political conflict which divided society in all seven provinces of the Dutch Republic. This section will analyse the stadhouder's role in this conflict, and specifically explores the ways in which the office and its prerogatives were used to bring the conflict to its final solution. So far this conflict has mostly been studied in terms of the political rivalry that emerged in the personal relationship between Maurits of Orange and Johan van Oldenbarnevelt.[136] Moreover, Arie van Deursen contributed his important study on the experience of the conflict by the average churchgoer of the reformed Dutch Church.[137] By focusing on the role of the stadhoudership, however, this study will demonstrate how this period showcased for the first time the problematic position of the office, being tasked to simultaneously serve provincial *and* national interests.

The conflict centred around the opposing beliefs of theologians Franciscus Gomarus (1563 – 1641) and Jacobus Arminius (1560 – 1609) on the doctrine of predestination. Their religious disagreement soon became politicised and spread across the United Provinces, involving churches, towns and government. The relationship

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135 Van der Kemp, *Maurits van Nassau,* Vol. 1, pp. 94-6.

136 See: Den Tex, *Oldenbarnevelt*; A. Th. Van Deursen, 'Oldenbarnevelt en Maurits', in: H. J. M. Nellen and J. Trapman (eds.), *De Hollandse Jaren van Hugo de Groot* (Hilversum, 1996), pp. 155-160; *Ibid*, *Maurits van Nassau. De Winnaar die faalde* (Amsterdam, 2000); Geert H. Janssen, *Het Stokje van Oldenbarnevelt* (Hilversum, 2001); Simon Groeneveld, *Het Twaalfjarig Bestand, 1609-1621, De jongelingsjaren van de Republiek der Verenigde Nederlanden* (2009).

137 A. Th. Van Deursen, *Bavianen en slijkgeuzen: Kerk en kerkvolk ten tijde van Maurits en Oldenbarnevelt* (Assen, 1974).

between stadhouder Maurits and the Land's Advocate of Holland, Johan van Oldenbarnevelt, had become increasingly strained in the last decade, and their breach became final when they choose opposite sides of the conflict: Oldenbarnevelt choose the side of the 'Remonstrants', as Arminius' supports had become known, while Maurits sided with Gomarus' 'Contra-Remonstrants'. Following an escalation of the conflict in July 1618, Maurits removed most of the Remonstrant regents in Holland's towns in a series of 'wetsverzettingen', and replaced them by Contra-Remonstrants. Meanwhile, Oldebarnevelt and several others were arrested on the accusation of treason, and the Land's Advocate was beheaded at the Binnenhof in The Hague at 13 May 1619. Four days earlier, the Synod of Dort, which had lasted from 13 November 1618 to 9 May 1619, declared Arminianism heretical.

Historians of the Truce Period, such as Jan den Tex, Arie van Deursen, and Simon Groeneveld, have thus often studied the conflict in the context of a power struggle between two charismatic and powerful men, while focusing on their personal relationship. However, the period was, in fact, also a conflict about the prerogatives of the stadhoudership, and the office's position and purpose in the United Provinces. For example, if one emphasises the subservience of the stadhouder to the States, then Maurits' actions might indeed be perceived as a political coup by an ambitious servant, as argued by, among others, Den Tex and Jonathan Israel.[138] If, however, one analyses the conflict against the context of the stadhouder's duties and prerogatives as prescribed by the Union of Utrecht of 1579, then Maurits' actions are not only legal, but even justified.

In order to support this argument, it is important to establish the extent to which the conflict threatened the peace in Dutch civil society, as well as the unity among the seven provinces. The conflict increasingly divided both local and provincial government, particularly in the provinces of Holland and Utrecht. For example, during the assembly of the States of Holland in April 1617, news reached The Hague that incidents of social unrest had occurred in Amsterdam, Haarlem, Oudewater, and Heusden, increasing fear

[138] Jan den Tex and Ali Ton, *Johan van Oldenbarnevelt* (The Hague 1980); Israel, *The Dutch Republic,* pp. 450-54.

for a wide-spread popular rebellion.[139] Towns and provinces alike differed in their preference for either the Remonstrants or Counter-Remonstrants, polarising all levels of society. Contemporaneous foreign commentators confirm the idea that the domestic situation in the United Provinces was growing increasingly severe. For example, Matthew Slade, an English minister living in Amsterdam at the time, made frequent reports about incidents of popular unrest in his letters to the English Ambassador in The Hague.[140] This included an account of how in February 1617 Counter-Remonstrant mobs in Amsterdam had attacked Remonstrant houses and places of worship.[141] Various modern historians, such as Jonathan Israel and Pieter Geyl, have therefore argued that, by the summer of 1617, the Dutch state was 'unfolding before one's eyes', adding how particularly in Holland 'all pretence of unity was gone, and the States of Holland had split into two warring blocks'.[142] Moreover, Jan den Tex, biographer of Johan van Oldenbarnevelt, emphasised that by the summer of 1618 a 'full-scale civil war seemed a real prospect'.[143]

Faced with such increasing levels of public unrest, the States of Holland called a special meeting on 13 January 1617 to discuss ways of maintaining order. At this meeting, Maurits was requested, in his capacity as stadhouder, to help preserve public order through means of the garrisons under his command. However, Maurits refused to employ military force, and defended his decision by stating that the oath he had taken in 1585 as the province's stadhouder included the promise to 'preserve the Union and the true Reformed religion', and that he intended to 'uphold that oath and religion' as long as he lived.[144] Historiography has mostly regarded this as the moment when the stadhouder openly stated his preference for the Counter-Remonstrants, whom he referred to when

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139 *Res. Holl.*, 8 April 1617. See also: Den Tex and Ton, *Oldenbarnevelt,* p. 222; Israel, *The Dutch Republic,* p. 438.

140 Willem Nijenhuis, *Matthew Slade, 1569-1628: Letters to the English Ambassador* (Leiden, 1986), pp. 41-48.

141 Nijenhuis, *Letters to the English Ambassador,* pp. 41-48.

142 Geyl, *The Dutch Revolt,* p. 385; Israel, *The Dutch Republic,* p. 442.

143 Den Tex and Ton, *Johan van Oldenbarnevelt,* p. 234.

144 Res. Holl., 13 January 1617. See also: Den Tex and Ali, *Oldenbarnevelt,* pp. 217-218.

mentioning the 'true Reformed religion'.[145] Maurits thereby declared himself at odds with Oldenbarnevelt and others in the States of Holland, who favoured the Arminians' cause. However, the statement is even more significant than has previously been considered, as it also signified the moment in which Holland's stadhouder openly refused to take the orders from its sovereign body, the States of Holland, by justifying this through emphasising the office's duty of preserving unity. It thereby marked the first moment that a stadhouder firmly placed himself in opposition to the supreme authority of the States, by drawing on the office's prerogative of acting from a position of interprovincial neutrality in time of conflict.

Moreover, Maurits' statement also reflected his genuine concern for the threat posed by the conflict to the peace and *eendracht* of Dutch society. The stadhouder's worries were recorded by Dudley Carleton (1573 – 1632), the English Ambassador to The Hague, in a letter to Westminster written in February 1617. In this correspondence, Carleton wrote that every time he spoke with Maurits, he found the stadhouder keen to resolve the conflict, though anxious to take a cautious approach, as he feared that drastic matters might 'break of the bond of *eendracht* and Union'.[146] Concern for the damage the conflict caused the union between the seven provinces was equally voiced in England, as evidenced by a letter from its Secretary of State, Ralph Winwood, to Carleton in April 1617. The letter, which Carleton was instructed to present in the States General, carried the message that Charles I feared that the Dutch state might be torn apart if the present discord among the towns and provinces would not soon be resolved:

> And unless that union be preserved, as well in unanimity of religion as in civil polity, that state, how powerful soever *[sic]* they hold those provinces to be in

[145] Geyl, *Geschiedenis van de Nederlandse stam,* pp. 382-83; Rowen, *Princes of Orange,* p. 47; Van Deursen, *Maurits,* p. 87.
[146] *Letters from and to Sir Dudley Carleton, Knt., during his embassy in Holland,* ed. Philip Yorke, Earl of Hardwicke (London, 1775), p. 219.

> martial strength by sea or land, I dare with confidence speak, to the grief of their friends, and the glory of their adversaries, will soon be dissolved.[147]

Eric Platt has in some detail explored the English involvement in the Truce Conflicts, thereby pointing out the strong personal preference of both James I and his Ambassador for the Counter-Remonstrant cause.[148] Yet the correspondence of Carleton and Whitehall demonstrates a genuine fear that the conflict might threaten the unity and strength of the United Provinces, which, being England's ally, could harm England's security.[149]

The Dutch political crisis was brought to boiling point on 4 August 1617, when the States of Holland issued the 'Scherpe Resolutie' ('Sharp Resolution'). This resolution, issued in an attempt to subjugate public unrest, empowered towns to raise their own troops by hiring '*waardgelders*' (mercenaries), who would act under the direct control of the towns themselves, and not of that of the stadhouder, States General, or captain-general.[150] Moreover, the resolution also required all troops stationed in Holland to swear an oath of primary obedience to the government of the States of Holland, 'even when receiving different orders' (namely orders given by the stadhouder or the States General).[151] The Resolution was a direct assault on Maurits' prerogatives, who, in his capacity as stadhouder of Holland and captain-general of the Union, traditionally commanded the province's garrisons. However, the stadhouder's refusal to use military force to keep the public peace had led Oldenbarnevelt and his Remonstrant allies in the States to take this unusual step, thereby demonstrating the distrust and animosity that had

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147 Ralph Winwood to Sir Dudley Carleton, April 1617, in: *Letters from and to Sir Dudley Carleton*, pp. 123-24.

148 Eric W. Platt, 'Pamphlets, Great Britain, and the *Bestandstwisten*: the use of British sources in the Dutch disputes of the 1610s', in: *Dutch Crossing* (2013: Vol. 37, No. 2), pp. 115-30.

149 Winwood to Carleton, 1 - 11 April 1617, and Winwood to Carleton, 27 August 1617; *Letters from and to Sir Dudley Carleton,* pp. 123-25, p. 168; Platt, 'Pamphlets, Great Britain, and the *Bestandstwisten',* p. 117.

150 Scherpe Resolutie van Holland, 4 August 1617, in: A.S. De Blécourt and N. Japikse (eds.), *Klein plakkaatboek van Nederland. Verzameling van ordonnantiën en plakkaten betreffende regeeringsvorm, kerk en rechtspraak (14e eeuw tot 1749),* (Groningen-The Hague, 1919) pp. 240-42.

151 Den Tex and Ali, *Joan van Oldenbarnevelt,* p. 245.

grown between the stadhouder and the States.[152] In September 1617 the States of Utrecht followed Holland's example on direct recommendation of Oldenbarnevelt, and raised four large companies of 150 *waardgelders* in its province.

The issue of the *waardgelders* demonstrated the deep political divisions that had grown in the Dutch state. In a private letter to his cousin, the Frisian stadhouder Willem Lodewijk, Maurits wrote that 'The States [of Holland] have taken such outrageous measures, that a schism in the state could be expected, as it now already exists in the Church'.[153] Meanwhile, the Resolution had also split the members of the States of Holland internally. Shortly after it had been issued, Maurits attended a meeting of the States of Holland at which Oldenbarnevelt stated that the deputies expected him, as their stadhouder, to ensure the magistrates could properly function in their office, especially in regard to the recent resolution. Oldenbarnevelt, however, was then interrupted by a burgomaster of Amsterdam, who emphasised that not all members shared the Advocate's opinion, after which a heated argument broke out between those supporting Oldenbarnevelt and the opposing members. Maurits, thereupon, stated that, as he had taken an oath to the States as a whole, he could not obey one side over the other:

> To end the strife [Maurits] told them, that when he first took his oath as governor of the province, they were all good friends, and at agreement […]. Now they were so divided (as was there manifest) he would not, in obedience to one part, do anything, which might either directly or indirectly contrary the oath made to them all; with which protestation he departed the assembly.[154]

The originally religious quarrel had thus developed into a full-grown dispute about the nature of sovereignty in the Dutch Republic. The States of Holland and Utrecht

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[152] Smit, 'Prins Maurits en de goede zaak', pp. 60-61. See also: Den Tex, *Oldenbarnevelt,* Vol. 3, pp. 493-497; Israel, *The Dutch Republic,* p. 441.

[153] Maurits to Willem Lodewijk, 7 August 1617 in; *Archives,* Vol. 2, pp. 532-533:
'Les états d'Hollande se sont séparés devant-hier sans rien résoudre touchant ces différens eclésiastiques, mais ont prins des résolutions si extravangtes, que je prévoy une division en l'Estat, comme il y at à la religion.'

[154] Sir Dudley Carleton to James I, 13 August 1617, in: *Letters from and to Sir Dudley Carleton,* p. 166.

argued vehemently that that the preservation of provincial public order was a strictly internal matter. In contrast, the presence of large numbers of *waardgelders* in Holland and Utrecht were seen by the two stadhouders and the five remaining provinces as a direct affront to their sovereignty and authority. On a local level, instances of civil unrest aimed at the town governments continued, while garrisons and town's *schutterijen* rivalled with the *waardgelders*. To end the conflict and restore the union in the state, the stadhouders and a majority of the provinces supported the idea of calling a National Synod, during which the religious disputes at the core of the conflict could be discussed and decided upon.

Traditional scholarship on the Truce Conflicts has placed much emphasis on how then, in January 1618, Maurits used the stadhouder's prerogative of *wetsverzettingen* in Overijssel and Gelderland to replace certain political allies of Oldenbarnevelt as town magistrates, which ensured that the two provinces would have a majority in favour of holding the Synod. Though Maurits' original biographer, Cornelis van der Kemp, emphasised that the stadhouder was fully acting within the legal perimeters of his office, later historians, such as Pieter Geyl, Jonathan Israel, and Willem Frijhoff and Marijke Spies have commonly depicted the episode as a coup d'état, in which Maurits rid himself of his political opponents.[155] However, much less attention has been given to the earnest attempts by the two stadhouders in that period to ensure a proper dialogue between all provinces could take place in the States General. The correspondence between Maurits and Willem Lodewijk shows how, as in the late summer of 1617 very few provincial deputies were in The Hague to attend meetings of the States General. Therefore, Maurits urged his cousin to encourage representatives of the States of Friesland and Groningen to travel to The Hague, while promising he would do the same for the deputies of the provinces for which he was stadhouder. Maurits thereby stated how he 'could not see how these ecclesiastical disputes might by resolved by other means than by the

[155] Kemp, *Maurits,* Vol. 3; Geyl, *Orange and Stuart, 1641-1672;* Geyl, 'Het stadhouderschap in de partij-literatuur onder De Witt' (1971), *Ibid., Democratische tendenties in 1672* (The Hague, 1950); Price, *Holland and the Dutch Republic*, p. 134; Frijhoff and Spies, *1650: Hard-Won Unity*, p. 96.

provinces'.[156] Similarly, Willem Lodewijk writes to Maurits in September 1617 to urge the deputies of Zeeland to start negotiating with Utrecht, Gelderland, and Overijssel ('as very little cooperation can be expected from Holland') in order to start working towards a 'fruitful resolution'.[157]

However, the debate that thus unfolded among the members in the States General further demonstrated the great level of discord on both an inter- and intra-provincial level. In the meeting of the States General in late May 1618, the provinces of Zeeland, Overijssel, Gelderland, Friesland and Groningen all voted in favour of a National Synod to resolve the ongoing religious conflict. Holland and Utrecht, however, in the knowledge that it would face an overwhelming Counter-Remonstrant majority at such a Synod, rejected the outcome of the vote. While claiming the authority to decide on matters of religions resided exclusively with the individual provinces, they argued that the Union of Utrecht had stipulated how the outcome of a decision of the States General which had been taken by majority vote was only valid on a limited range of issues, and matters of religion were not among these.[158] But as the States of Holland submitted this position in formal writing to the States General on 3 July 1618, representatives of six of Holland's towns declared their opposition to their province's statement, which had only been passed by a narrow majority vote in the provincial States on 28 June, and instead voiced their support for a National Synod.[159] Discussion on the related issue of the *waardgelders* also continued in the States General. On 16 July 1618 it issued a resolution to the

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[156] Maurits to Willem Lodewijk, 9 August 1617; *Archives,*Vol. II, pp. 533-534:
'want wij niet en sien dat dese kerckelijke disputen anders dan bij de provintien zullen connen gesligt worden'.

[157] Willem Lodewijk to Maurits, 2 September 1617; *Archives,* Vol. II, pp. 539-540:
'ick u. Exc. Hiermede dienstelick bidde ende versoucke, omme die heeren van Seelandt deertoe te disponeren, ten eynde haer E. met d' andere drye welgesinde provincien (wijl doch van Hollandt weynich [apparentie] te verwachten is) sonder lange vertoch in besogne treden ende met gemeenen advyse t' eener vruchtbaren resolutie condescenderen mogen.'

[158] Res. Holl., 3 July 1618; Israel, *The Dutch Republic,* p. 447.

[159] Res. St. Gen. NR, 7 July 1618; Res. Holl., 28 June 1618. The six opposing towns were Dordrecht, Amsterdam, Schiedam, Enkhuizen, Edam, and Purmerend. They were represented at this meeting of the States General by Jacob de Witt, secretary of Dordrecht (and later father of Johan de Witt), and Albertus Bruynincx, secretary of Enkhuizen.

Republic's two stadhouders, Maurits and Willem Lodewijk, to convene with the Council of State and advise on how to solve the dispute, as per the articles of the Union of Utrecht.[160] Their advice, which was presented on 20 July to the States General, was to depose of the *waardgelders* and replace them, where necessary, with '*s lands compagnieën*' (companies of soldiers under the command of the captain-general and States General).[161] Following this, a majority of the provinces voted on 23 July in favour of appointing a committee which would visit various towns in Utrecht and Holland to oversee the disbanding of the *waardgelders*. This committee consisted of members of Zeeland, Gelderland, Overijssel, Friesland, and Groningen, and was to be accompanied by Maurits.

On 31 July, the committee and Maurits thus oversaw the disbandment of all the *waardgelders* troops in Utrecht. Meanwhile, Oldenbarnevelt and his political allies in the States of Holland succumbed to the force of both external and internal pressure. Amsterdam in particular had been vocal in its opposition to Oldenbarnevelt, and the internal discord in Holland had become so serious that the province's minority of opposing towns had joined forces and sent their own separate delegation to the States General.[162] Under these circumstances the States of Holland thus finally dismissed its *waardgelders* in early August and consented to the convention of a National Synod.

The final act of the dramatic summer of 1618 came on 28 August, when the States General passed a secret resolution which authorized Maurits to arrest Oldenbarnevelt and his close political allies, such as renowned law philosopher Hugo Grotius. However, it must be noted that the resolution itself did not contain the word 'arrest' or any direct allusions to it, as there was no precedent for the States General to order the arrest of a person who resided in a province which did not consent to such actions. Instead, the resolution stated that Maurits, together with a committee representing the Generality, was authorized to 'further inquire' into 'those sinister policies […] that were in direct violation of the Union' and to act 'as is necessary in order to preserve the security, peace and

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160 Res. St. Gen. NR, 16 July 1618.
161 Res. St. Gen. NR, 20 July 1618.
162 Geyl, *The Dutch Revolt,* p. 397.

welfare of these lands'.[163] Maurits' arrest of Oldenbarnevelt, done on the authority of the States General, was followed by a trial during which the latter was accused of treason by deliberately endangering the union between the Seven Provinces. Oldenbarnevelt was found guilty and sentenced to death for having 'tried to break the union between the Provinces'.[164]

2.2.3.1 Analysis: the role of the stadhoudership during the Truce Conflicts

Maurits' strategy for bringing the Truce Conflicts to an end brought to the fore some of the inherent ambivalent features of the constitutional position of the stadhoudership in the Dutch Republic.[165] The prerogative to select the local magistrates for office, and, in certain circumstances, to replace them through the power of *wetsverzettingen* had been used to sway the province of Overijssel and the town of Nijmegen in favour of calling a National Synod. The stadhouder's powers to do so originated in the Habsburg era, when the office holder had ruled in place of the monarch. But in the Republican era, these prerogatives meant that the stadhouders could change the governmental formation of the towns, and thereby of the provincial States: effectively this thus meant that the servant could, to an extent, control the nature of his master. Surprisingly, this strange feature of the stadhoudership has little been commented on in existing scholarship, even though Maurits showed in 1618 how effective these powers were for the stadhouder, while stadhouder Willem III successfully used the same move in 1672.

Both those living during the Stadhouderless Period of 1650-1672 and modern historiography have often drawn comparisons between Maurits' actions during the Truce Conflicts and stadhouder Willem II's attack on Amsterdam in 1650.[166] However, I argue that it would be more accurate to consider how both events were different, especially

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163 Tex and Ton, *Joan van Oldenbarnevelt,* pp. 241-242.

164 *Brief van de Hoog. Mog. Heeren Staten Generael aen den alder-christelijcksten koninck van Vranckrijck ende Navarre* [1619].

165 Price, *Holland and the Dutch Republic,* pp. 135-137.

166 See for example: Rowen, *Princes of Orange,* p. 87; and Price, *Holland and the Dutch Republic,* pp. 248-251.

considering that the two stadhouders acted in very different political circumstances. I will consider Willem's case in the following section, but will discuss Maurits' actions here. It has been noted above that during 1617-18, Maurits acted in a political climate in which widespread public unrest, and perhaps even civil war, was perceived to be increasingly likely. As demonstrated above, the religious conflict between Remonstrants and Counter-Remonstrants, and the political alliances that had been formed alongside of them, had not only pitted the various provinces against each other, but had divided each province internally as well. It should further be remembered that the treaty of the Union of Utrecht of 1579 had specifically stipulated that the main task of the stadhoudership in the Dutch state was to preserve the unity among the provinces in case of internal discord. As noted above, the States General had used precisely this argument to legitimise the authority given to Maurits to disband the *waardgelders* in Utrecht and Holland. It is true that Maurits had personally ensured of sufficient support for these plans through the series of *wetsverzettingen* in Nijmegen and Overijssel, but this does not mean that the reasoning of the States General was in any way flawed or unconstitutional in its backing of the stadhouder. Maurits had used the political powers of the stadhoudership to secure the political support he needed, in order to end both the ongoing religious conflict. His actions in the summer of 1618 were thus not only in the spirit of the stadhoudership's general instruction according to the Union of Utrecht, they were also fully within the remit and prerogatives of this office. Moreover, it would be a mistake to think of Maurits' victory as a triumph of stadhouder versus the sovereignty of the States, and in particular as a battle between stadhouder and the States of Holland, which is how modern historiography often views the later conflict between Willem II and the States of Holland. A crucial reason for Maurits' victory was the fact that the Province of Holland itself had been utterly divided, with Holland's towns and their deputies in the States polarised on both religious and political issues. Unlike Willem II, who faced a united block in his opposition of Holland, Maurits had had many supporters among Holland's towns and in its States.

In his assessment of the Truce Conflicts, John Price has argued that Maurits' actions in 1618-19 marked 'the beginning of the anti-Orange political myth'.[167] Yet it must be noted that this criticism was not directed at the stadhoudership *itself.* This is another important difference between Maurits' actions in 1618 and those of Willem II in 1650: contemporary criticism of Maurits remained mostly aimed at his person and to accusations of abusing his official powers in order to secure his desired political outcome. However, the office of stadhouder itself and its constitutional position was not explicitly brought into question.

The conflict during the Truce Period leaves one last question to answer, and that is the extent of Maurits' powers after Oldenbarnevelt's fall. Many historians have reflected on this, with the majority agreeing that after 1619, Maurits had become a 'de facto monarch' with almost unlimited power.[168] Jonathan Israel has gone one step further, and labelled Maurits' actions in 1618 a '*coup d'état'* which formed one of the most 'fundamental shifts' in the Dutch government of the seventeenth century, as Maurits 'wielded greater authority from the summer of 1618 until his death in 1625, than any man in the United Provinces since his father's assassination before'.[169] This line of scholarship is based on both the fall from power of Oldenbarnevelt and his allies, and the fact that, following the death of stadhouder Willem Lodewijk in 1620, Maurits became stadhouder of Groningen, which meant he then held the office in six of the Republic's seven provinces. Israel and others have also noted that after Oldenbarnevelt's downfall, the power wielded by the office of Holland's Land's Advocate was drastically decreased.[170] The office's prerogatives were curbed, and its official title was changed to Grand Pensionary ('*raadspensionaris*') in order to emphasise 'its advisory and subordinate function vis-à-vis the States'.[171] However, this move had not been pursued by Maurits in order to strengthen the political influence of the stadhouder; rather it had been a move from many of Oldenbarnevelt's

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[167] Price, *Holland and the Dutch Republic,* p. 251.
[168] Geyl, *Geschiedenis van de Nederlandse Stam,* Vol. II, p. 387, 475-477.
[169] Israel, *The Dutch Republic,* pp. 450-452.
[170] Israel, *The Dutch Republic,* p. 454; Price, *Holland and the Dutch Republic,* p. 129-131; Den Tex, *Oldenbarnevelt,* Vol. III, p. 733.
[171] Price, *Holland and the Dutch Republic,* p. 129.

old opponents within the States of Holland to ensure that the political leadership of the province could not so easily be dominated by one individual again.[172]

Despite these changes, Maurits proved Oldenbarnevelt's fears about the stadhouder's ambition for sovereignty to be unfounded in the years following the latter's death. Although after 1618 Maurits indeed had more political influence in his capacity as stadhouder than before, this was mostly due to the lack of a strong counterweight in the States of Holland. Moreover, Maurits did not attempt to make any structural changes to either the stadhoudership, by for example expanding its powers, nor to the overall structure of any of the provincial governments or States General. He also was not interested in gaining any personal sovereignty by accepting to be elevated as Count or Duke of any of the provinces in which he was a stadhouder, even though he had many supporters advocating such a move.[173] It should also be noted that when in early 1625 a sickly Maurits asked the States General for permission to appoint his half-brother, Frederik Hendrik, as deputy-commander, the representative body insisted on making the appointment itself, thereby making a public display to both the current stadhouder and his successor of who held the supreme power.[174]

2.3 The Stadhoudership under Frederik Hendrik (1625 – 1647)

2.3.1 Introduction

The career of Frederik Hendrik of Orange as stadhouder of Holland, Zeeland, Utrecht, Gelderland, and Overijssel (as well as Drenthe and Groningen from 1640), and captain-general of the United Provinces, is predominantly remembered in modern scholarship for his military achievements.[175] Like his half-brother Maurits, Frederik Hendrik was an

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172 *Ibid.*, p. 129.

173 Rowen, *Princes of Orange,* p. 52.

174 PN Holl., Vol. II, February 1625.

175 The two most authoritative studies on the life of Frederik Hendrik are the biographies by P. J. Blok (*Frederik Hendrik, prins van Oranje*) and J. J. Poelhekke (*Frederik Hendrik. Een biografisch drieluik).*

excellent military commander, earning him the honorary nickname '*Stedendwinger*' ('conqueror of cities'). The following section, however, will explore how Frederik Hendrik engaged with the office of stadhouder, and how the stadhoudership further developed during this period. In doing so, it will demonstrate how Frederik Hendrik further explored the office as a tool for preserving the *eendracht* among both the provinces and their towns, as stipulated by the Union of Utrecht. Moreover, it will provide new insights into the constitutional dynamics of the office by the mid 1620s, by analysing the short transient phase in which the States of Holland and Zeeland passed the stadhoudership from Maurits to Frederik Hendrik.

2.3.2 Succession to the stadhoudership (1625)

Prince Maurits of Orange died in his bed on 23 April 1625 in the Stadhouder's quarters at the Binnenhof in The Hague, between five and six in the afternoon. His successor, Frederik Hendrik, had been waiting in the side lines for some years. Frederik Hendrik was born on 29 January 1584 as the youngest child of Willem of Orange. From a young age, he had been trained in the military arts by Maurits, and had subsequently risen quickly through the ranks of the Dutch armed forces. In 1600 he was admitted as a member of Holland's *Raad van State* ('Council of State', the States' executive body), through which he gained valuable political experience as well. As the last living son of Willem of Orange, and being practised in both military command and politics, Frederik Hendrik was thus not only heir to Maurits' titles and lands, but also the most likely successor to his offices in the Dutch Republic.

But despite being the obvious, and indeed only, candidate to be considered for the stadhoudership after Maurits' death, a close study of contemporary documents reveal that his appointment was in fact not the straightforward affair described by Frederik Hendrik's biographer's.[176] Moreover, as was the case with Maurits' appointment to the office in

[176] Blok, *Frederik Hendrik*, pp.136, and Poelhekke, *Frederik Hendrik,* pp. 84-85. Poelhekke even stated that the transferral of the stadhoudership from Maurits to Frederik Hendrik 'could not have been done more quickly' ('had niet vlotter kunnen verlopen'); p. 85.

1585, the method in which the stadhoudership was bestowed upon Frederik Hendrik tells a lot about the nature of the office at the time. Unlike the crisis that had been caused by Willem of Orange's sudden death in 1584, the necessity of appointing a new stadhouder in April 1625 had been anticipated for some time. Maurits' health had been declining for a significant time, and both the States of Holland as the States General had remained in session at the Binnenhof in The Hague to be ready to act on the moment of his passing.[177] When this moment arrived, the States General unanimously moved to appoint Frederik Hendrik as captain-general of the Republic's army in a matter of hours after Maurits' death.[178] The urgency behind this appointment is clear in the description of the meeting's deliberations:

> And thus the lords ('*heeren*') of the States General were in deliberation to take care of all the arrangements, and specifically in terms of the military and captaincy on water and on land, which in this situation cannot be left vacant for even an hour, at risk of great danger, especially if rumours of the [Maurits'] death were to spread.[179]

In sharp contrast to the States-General's swift efficiency, however, stood the decision of the various provincial States to name Frederik Hendrik as their new stadhouder. The official appointment of Frederik Hendrik as the stadhouder for Holland and Zeeland was not made until 24 May 1625 (a full month after Maurits' death), while Utrecht, Overijssel and Gelderland did not make the appointment until later that summer. The deliberations that caused this delay give evidence of the lingering political uncertainty of the nature of the stadhoudership that still existed in the 1620s, which made its

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Regarding Frederik Hendrik's appointment as captain-general of the Dutch troops, it must be noted that this post had formally not existed before 1625. Although Maurits had acted as the supreme commander of the Republic's troops, officially he had only been the commander of the troops of each province of which he was stadhouder. With the appointment of Frederik Hendrik as Captain-General of all of the United Provinces, this unpractical 'anomaly', as it was named by Poelhekke (1978), had now been resolved.

[177] Poelhekke, *Frederik Hendrik,* p. 77.

[178] Res. St. Gen., 23 April 1625.

[179] PN Holl., Vol. II, 23 April 1625.

appointment a more complicated and contested matter than has thus far been acknowledged.

The day following Maurits' passing, a declaration was made in the States of Holland that the appointment of a new stadhouder should be done swiftly, 'so that the land would not dilapidate into tumult, commotion and conspiracies'.[180] The minutes of this meeting tell us that the States' members then ordered to have the text of the Commission and Instructions used for Maurits' appointment in 1585 to be brought in and read out, in order to prepare for Frederik Hendrik's appointment. The magistrates at the time were thus apparently unaware that Maurits had served as stadhouder without a set of Instructions. In the subsequent confusion caused by the missing Instructions, the document was 'said to be lost and perhaps may have never existed'. However, later in the day a draft copy of Instructions was found 'without day or date', which possibly was the document discussed in the previous section of this thesis.[181] Following this discovery, the members of the States voted to go back to their respective towns and consult with their localities, reasoning that the decision was 'one of the most important matters of state in the Land'.[182] The States' assembly gathered again on 1 May, where the province's representatives of Holland's nobility (the '*Edelen')* proposed to simply proceed without a set of Instructions and to appoint the new Prince of Orange to Holland's stadhoudership on the basis of 'the same Commission as was given and bestowed upon his lord father and brother, in order to speed up this work and to avoid any disputes that might be caused by changing it'.[183] After some further discussion on this point, it was decided during the next day that the appointment to the stadhoudership was to be made along a similar Commission as Maurits had received in 1585, but without a set of Instructions. The justification for this was that:

> When the disagreeing members on the matter of the Stadhoudership were asked to explain their position, they presented some considerations but ultimately

[180] PN Holl., Vol. II, 24 April 1625.
[181] PN Holl., Vol. II, 24 April 1625.
[182] PN Holl., Vol. II, 24 April 1625.
[183] PN Holl., Vol. II, 1 May 1625.

> thought it better to make little changes to it [the documents of the Stadhouder's appointment], in order to avoid all the disputes and disagreements that might arise from this to great detriment of the land.[184]

The decision for not drafting a set of Instructions for the stadhoudership, which would have offered the opportunity to clearly outline the duties and prerogatives of the office, was thus based on an assumption among the States' delegates that composing such a document would result in lengthy arguments and discussions. It must be remembered that the last official set of Instructions available to the States had been written by the Habsburg court in 1559 for Willem of Orange. Because the stadhoudership had undergone such a radical transformation since then, not least in terms of its position vis-à-vis the provincial States, an entirely new document would have to be conceived to suit the office's position in the political system of 1625. A complete rewriting of the old documents would thus involve a considerable amount of time and, in all probability, prolonged debate about the exact prerogatives and limitations of the stadhoudership. The fact that this task was rejected for fear of prolonged debate and disagreement indicates a sense of uncertainty about the exact nature of the stadhoudership that was still present in the 1620s.

Moreover, even after the States of Holland had settled on the issue of the Commission, Frederik Hendrik was still not formally asked to become the province's stadhouder. This was because the Union of Dordrecht of 1575 had stipulated that Holland and Zeeland would appoint the same stadhouder in order to promote close political ties between the two provinces. The States of Holland thus decided to send a request to the States of Zeeland to join them in their appointment of Frederik Hendrik to the stadhoudership along the same Commission.[185] In answer a *Zeeuwse* delegation was sent to The Hague to discuss the matter, which again emphasised the apparent lack of institutional memory among the provincial States: the magistrates from Zeeland were convinced that Maurits had been operating with both a Commission and a set of

[184] PN Holl., Vol. II, 2 May 1625.
[185] PN Holl., Vol. II, 1 May 1625.

Instructions, and had arrived with the expectation to discuss adapting both documents for Frederik Hendrik.[186] After explaining the actual situation, the delegates were quickly told that as far as Holland was concerned 'the Commission could (also) serve as an Instruction'.[187] The two provinces soon afterwards agreed upon the definite wording of the Commission, and on 24 May 1625, a full month after Maurits' death, Holland and Zeeland finally announced the appointment of Frederik Hendrik as their new stadhouder. Frederik Hendrik was officially sworn in to the office on 2 June 1625 according to a Commission that was almost identical to the one Maurits had received in 1585.

Despite the lack of a set of Instructions for the stadhoudership in 1625, at least one of its predominant functions in the contemporary perception was clear: the stadhoudership was still perceived as a tool to strengthen the bond between the provinces of the Dutch Republic, and remedy any discord that might appear between them. This was of course consistent with the description of the office in the Union of Utrecht, as discussed in chapter 1. Evidence for this can be found in the fact that while Zeeland and Holland were discussing the details of their appointment of Frederik Hendrik, they sent out delegations to the other provinces that had lost their stadhouder following to Maurits' death, with the request to act in accordance.[188] The resolution concerning the sending of these envoys tellingly reads:

> And because my lord Prince Maurits had also been Stadhouder of Gelderland, Utrecht, and Overijssel, it has been similarly understood and decided, that all possible efforts will be made with these said Provinces, to also take the current

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[186] PN Holl., Vol. II, 19 May 1625.

[187] Poelhekke, *Frederik Hendrik,* p. 89.

[188] This did not include the province of Groningen, which had appointed the Frisian Stadhouder, Count Ernst Casimir of Nassau, as their Stadhouder in the summer of 1625. Their intention to do so must have already been known to the States of Holland in May 1625, as Stellingwerf noted that it had been decided to not send a similar group of deputies there as was dispatched to the other provinces, 'in order to not give insult to Count Ernst'; PN Holl., 1 May 1625. Poelhekke has noted that the fact that Holland was aware of Groningen's intentions, despite a lack of official documentations in the run-up to the decision, demonstrates how often politics in the United Provinces were done by '*onderling gesmoes'* ('unofficial chatter'); Poelhekke, *Frederik Hendrik*, p. 86.

> Prince of Orange as their Stadhouder, in order to maintain a better communication with these Provinces.[189]

The appeal was met with general approval, and without much debate the provinces of Utrecht, Overijssel, and Gelderland all appointed Frederik Hendrik as their stadhouder during the summer of 1625, according to a very similar Commission document as the one used by Holland and Zeeland.

Finally, it is important to state that although the discussions surrounding Frederik Hendrik's appointment to the stadhoudership may have delayed the bestowal of the office upon him for some months, there never was any real question regarding the persona of the next stadhouder. Frederik Hendrik did not only have political and military experience, the 'obvious merit of the house of Orange', as quoted above, ensured that no other candidate was seriously considered. However, it must be noted that while the States of Holland and Zeeland were still in the middle of their deliberations, they made a conscious effort to not treat Frederick Hendrik as the 'heir presumptive' to the office. They thereby emphasised that the stadhoudership was not a dynastic position, but that the office was bestowed or withheld at the pleasure of the States. This is evidenced by the fact that when Frederik Hendrik requested the States of Holland on 26 April 1625 to have some of his late brother's state papers delivered to him, the States replied that he would not be allowed to receive the particular documents 'until a decision on the stadhoudership shall be made'.[190] Nicolaes Stellingwerf, the pensionary for the town of Medemblik, commented on the episode that the papers had been withheld because the members of the States had considered that Frederik Hendrik 'not yet being a Stadhouder, did not have any need for them'.[191] The States of Holland made a similar demonstration of supreme sovereignty shortly afterwards when Frederik Hendrik asked them whether, in a symbol of mourning, he could hang up his brother's coat of arms at the Stadhouder's Quarters in the Binnenhof, or on the gate outside. The request lead to fierce debate in the States'

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189 Res. Holl., 1 May 1625.
190 Res. Holl., 26 April 1625.
191 PN Holl., Vol. II, 26 April 1625.

chambers, as some members thought that displaying Maurits' coat of arms at the Binnenhof 'could be perceived as if the late Prince had not been stadhouder but Count of Holland, because the place [the Binnenhof] would seem like it had belonged to him'.[192] It was therefore settled that the coat of arms would be hung on the gate house outside.

2.3.3 The stadhoudership under Frederik Hendrik (1625 – 1647)

After his succession to the stadhoudership, the years of Frederik Hendrik in office are mostly remembered in the historiography of his life in terms of his professional capacity as captain-general, during which he significantly expanded the territory of the United Provinces by capturing various strategic lands and cities from the Spanish. For example, one of Frederik Hendrik's most prominent biographers, Jan Poelhekke, has focused predominantly on his military career, while stating that the Prince's main political ambition was to completely defeat the Spanish and secure the full independence of the Dutch Republic.[193] Likewise, Herbert Rowen has portrayed Frederik Hendrik mainly as a military visionary, while emphasising that his main goal was to 'bring the war of independence to a triumphant conclusion, if possible with the reunification of the [Northern and Southern] Netherlands'.[194] His stadhoudership has therefore often been characterised in terms of constant negotiations with the States General and in particular the States of Holland about the continuation and financing of the war effort.[195] Of all the provinces, Holland contributed the vast majority of the total war costs, and due to this considerable drain the Hollanders increasingly considered the continuation of the war undesirable. Throughout the 1630s, Frederik Hendrik and the provincial States were therefore almost continuously engaged in ongoing discussions about the continuation and funding of the war effort. In this section, however, I will evaluate Frederik Hendrik's legacy in his capacity as a stadhouder. The Union of Utrecht had bestowed upon the stadhoudership the authority of mediation and conflict resolution, in order to preserve

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[192] Res. Holl. 26 April 1625; PN Holl., Vol. II, 26 April 1625.
[193] Poelhekke, 'Frederik Hendrik en Willem II', pp. 124-125.
[194] Rowen, *Princes of Orange,* p. 63.
[195] Poelhekke, 'Frederik Hendrik en Willem II', pp. 124-130.

the *eendracht* both within and among the seven provinces of the Dutch Republic. The previous section has shown several examples of Maurits acting in this capacity before his involvement in the Truce Period conflicts exposed the inherent tension that this task had created for an office subservient to provincial sovereignty. This section will show how Frederik Hendrik balanced this tension, while actively using the stadhoudership as a tool for conflict resolution and mediation between both towns and provinces.

Throughout Frederik Hendrik's time as stadhouder, we find many examples of him actively taking on a conciliatory role during political or religious conflicts, or being specifically requested to do so by provincial and town magistrates. The minutes of the meetings of the States of Holland, for example, show its members frequently calling upon their stadhouder to attend their gatherings and give his judgment on particularly difficult cases which had caused disagreement. As it was noted in one particular meeting, the general consensus among the members of the States was that Frederik Hendrik should always be called upon to give his advice on any political and religious disputes that arose, as 'the harmony of this country is His Excellency's most pressing concern as Stadhouder'.[196] And thus Frederik Hendrik was specifically requested to sit in on the meeting of the States of Holland on 23 April 1632 where the Councillor Pensionary explained to him 'the difficulties that had occurred in the assembly on the aforementioned points, which was the reason why His Excellency was requested to take the trouble of attending the current deliberations'.[197] Moreover, when a year earlier a dispute had arisen among a group of preachers in Rotterdam, the States again decided 'to appeal to His Excellency to take on this matter together with some political and religious persons, and, if possible, to bring to a good outcome'.[198] The province's stadhoudership was also used to preserve the unity among the provincial towns when a small minority of members dissented from the overwhelming consensus. An example of this occurred in 1633, when only Haarlem resisted the imposition of an additional tax on brewers, upon which the rest of the States' members called upon Frederik Hendrik to urge the towns magistrates

[196] PN Holl., Vol. III, 5 August 1628.
[197] PN Holl., Vol. V, 5 - 6 April 1632.
[198] PN Holl., Vol V, 24 January 1631.

to drop their protests, thereby preserving *eendracht* among the towns 'for the benefit of the nation'.[199] The stadhoudership was not only used as a conciliatory political tool within the provinces, but also between them. For example, in 1632 the province of Utrecht specifically argued that 'the dispute should be submitted to the Stadhouder in accordance with the articles of the Union [of Utrecht]', following a growing dispute with the province of Holland over a planned expansion of a set of shared locks and dams.[200] Similarly, when in the same year the seven provinces could not agree on whether to pursue preliminary peace negotiations with Spain, the States of Holland suggested that those provinces who were against the proposal should 'state their objections to His Excellency as Stadhouder, in order to find a good resolution'.[201]

A particularly noteworthy case in which the stadhouder was asked to mediate in a conflict occurred in 1634, when a dispute about the lawful usage and maintenance of the local water locks escalated between Alkmaar on the one side and several other towns (most notably Amsterdam and Haarlem) on the other. The decision on resolving the conflict is worth quoting in full, as it demonstrates how in this particular incident, mediation by the stadhouder was discussed as a legal alternative to having the case judged upon in a court of law:

> Concerning the matter between the towns of Alkmaar and Haarlem *cum sociis* about the formation of a certain lock at Nauwernae; the majority of the towns involved is of the opinion that this case should be submitted to His Excellency as Stadhouder, to hear from him some proposals with which the case can be resolved and which can end all the discord. Which has been agreed by the members [of the States] that were not related to the case, and as subsequently it was reported to His Excellency, it was reported that the advice of His Excellency was, that in the case the matter was subject to the law, the different parties should turn to a court of law, but if it was not, than he would be content as Stadhouder to intercede between the parties and provide a provisional judgment on the matter. This was debated, and the *heeren Edelen* declared that they were of the opinion that these parties should either choose the road of the

[199] PN Holl., Vol. VI, 25 March 1633.
[200] PN Holl., Vol. V, 22 September 1632.
[201] PN Holl., Vol. V, 16 - 20 October 1632.

> court of law, or submit the case to His Excellency. […] Because most members agreed with the advice of the *heeren Edelen,* it was at last decided, albeit not without discussion, that His Excellency […] would be authorised to submit some propositions which would bring the parties together in friendship (*'in minne ende vruntschap'*), if possible.[202]

The stadhoudership as a governmental authority of conflict resolution was thus, in this particular case at least, placed on equal footing with a juridical decision by a court of law, which demonstrates a general deference of the stadhouder's constitutional role of resolving conflict.

The importance of the stadhouder's role as a mediator during these States' assemblies is even more pronounced when we consider that it was uncommon for a stadhouder to sit in during a meeting of the States, even though he had a right to do so at all times. The records of these meetings for the period 1625 – 1640 show that Frederik Hendrik's attendance at States' meetings was almost always to either discuss matters of war (in his capacity as captain-general), or to intervene in political disputes in his capacity as stadhouder. Furthermore, the stadhouder's judiciary powers not only included political and administrative affairs, but also extended to church matters. Religious tensions between Remonstrants and Contra-Remonstrants continued to flare up occasionally throughout the 1620s and 1630s, during which Frederik Hendrik consistently promoted a policy of conciliation and religious harmony.[203] On several occasions city magistrates called upon the Prince in his capacity of captain-general to bring in troops to restore order when simmering religious tensions had resulted into rioting. Both times, however, Frederik Hendrik preferred to intervene in his capacity as stadhouder, and attempt to resolve the conflict through personal mediation. Frederik Hendrik thus stayed four days in Amsterdam in April 1628 to personally look into a conflict where rising tensions between local Remonstrants and Contra-Remonstrants was threatening public order. He had been specifically called upon to do so by the town's magistrates, who had requested that 'he might, with great urgency, come here, in order to placate these arisen conflicts

[202] PN Holl., Vol. VII, 12 - 20 May 1634.
[203] Rowen, *The Princes of Orange*, pp. 64-65.

through his great dignity'.[204] The stadhouder's mediation efforts were successful for some time, and he was subsequently praised by contemporaries from both sides of the conflict for bringing the parties together.[205]

Throughout his stadhoudership, Frederik Hendrik thus actively, and often successfully, engaged with domestic conflicts in his capacity of mediator. The fact that both towns and provincial States requested him to do so, demonstrate the acceptance and respect of the stadhoudership as an effective tool for conflict resolution.

2.3.3.1 Tension between the stadhoudership and the dynastic ambitions of the House of Orange

Another aspect that characterises Frederik Hendrik's time in office as stadhouder was that he and his wife Amalia van Solms continuously sought to boost the (inter)national prestige and eminence of the House of Orange. One way in which Frederik Hendrik and Amalia sought to enhance the status of the House of Orange was by increasing the splendour of the Prince of Orange's court.[206] This led to a significant break with the

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[204] Res. Holl., 8 April 1628. Quote in J. Wagenaar, *Amsterdam in zijne opkomst, aanwas, geschiedenissen enz.*, (Amsterdam, 1764) Vol. II, pp. 495-496: 'dat hy sich, ten spoedigste, herwaarts begave, om de gereezen onlusten, door zyn hoog gezag, by te leggen'.

[205] The prominent Remonstrant minister Johannes Uyttenbogaert reported that his informers from Amsterdam had sent nothing but good reports about the Prince's actions; see: H.C. Rogge (ed.), *Johannes Uyttenbogaert, brieven en onuitgegeven stukken* (Utrecht, 1868-1875) Vol. III, p. 41. Baron Alexander van der Capellen (a later advisor to Frederik Hendrik, but at the time not yet an outspoken supporter of the Prince) noted in his personal writings that the stadhouder had managed to pacify both parties equally; see: R.J. van der Capellen (ed.), *Gedenkschriften van Jonkheer Alexander van der Capellen* (Utrecht, 1777-1778), Vol. I, p. 463. See also: Poelhekke, *Frederik Hendrik,* p. 209.

[206] For studies on the dynastic ambitions of Frederik Hendrik and Amalia van Solms, and the court culture surrounding the House of Orange, see: Marika Keblusek and Jori Zijlmans (eds.), *Princely display: The Court of Frederik Hendrik of Orange and Amalia van Solms* (The Hague, 1997); M. E. Tiethoff-Spliethoff, 'De hofhouding van Frederik Hendrik', in: *Jaarboek Oranje-Nassau Museum* (1989), pp. 42-62; Olaf Mörke, 'William III's stadholderly court in the Dutch Republic', in: Esther Mijers and David Onnekink (eds.), *Redefining William III. The impact of the King-Stadholder in International Context* (Aldershot, 2007), pp. 227-40. For a comparative study on the court of the House of Orange in a European context, see: John Adamson (ed.), *The Princely courts of Europe: ritual, politics, and culture under the ancien régime, 1500-1700* (London, 1999); and Jeroen Duindam,

stadhouder's predecessors: Willem I had never settled in one place for a long time upon his return from Germany, and Maurits had preferred to live in the Stadhouder's Quarters at the Binnenhof in The Hague. But Frederik Hendrik and Amalia had several lavish palaces built, such as Honselaarsdijk and Huis ten Bosch, and were thereby the first to cultivate a court culture around the House of Orange, modelled after the grandeur of royal courts elsewhere in Europe. Another way in which Frederik Hendrik and his wife attempted to increase the dynastic standing of the House of Orange was by making prestigious marriages for their children. They thereby managed to link their relatively modest princely House to the royal House of Stuart by arranging a marriage between their only son, Willem II, to princess Mary Stuart, daughter of King Charles of England, Scotland, and Ireland. The wedding ceremony took place in 1641 in the Chapel Royal of Whitehall Palace in London. Moreover, in 1646 Frederik Hendrik's oldest daughter, Louise Henriëtte, married the Elector of Brandenburg, Friedrich Wilhelm.

The increasingly elevated standing of the Prince of Orange on the European stage naturally caused tension with the Prince's position as a stadhouder and 'servant of the States' in the United Provinces. A first instance of rising unease within the States' can be seen when in January 1637 King Louis XIII of France bestowed upon the Prince of Orange the title *Altesse* ('Highness'), instead of the customary 'Excellency'.[207] This title elevated Frederik Hendrik to the same level as other European princes of the blood and minor sovereigns. Reportedly, the States General 'coolly received the news of the Prince's honour', and soon after adopted for themselves the grand sounding title of address 'Hoge Mogenden' ('High Mighty Lords'), which made them known as 'their High Mightinesses'.[208] Moreover, Frederik Hendrik's personal dynastic ambitions directly influenced the stadhoudership when he successfully lobbied the province of Holland to have his son Willem II appointed as his successor to the office (which will be discussed in more detail in the next section). This was an unprecedented move in the history of the

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'Tussen tafellaken en servet. Het stadhouderlijk hof in dynastiek Europa', in: *BMGN* (2009: Vol. 4), pp. 536-58.

[207] Poelhekke, 'Frederik Hendrik en Willem II', p. 117.

[208] Rowen, *The Princes of Orange,* p. 70; Blok, *Geschiedenis*, Vol. II, p. 569.

office, which until then had only been appointed to a new person after the death or resignation of the previous stadhouder. However, it is important to note that this did not change the constitutional nature of the stadhoudership: the office itself was still not formally hereditary, and the States received the right to reverse their decision. It did, however, strengthen the position of the House of Orange as a Dutch political dynasty.

Due to the dynastic ambitions of the House of Orange and its growing standing on the European stage, as well as its increasingly dynastic claim on the stadhoudership and the captaincy-general, scholars such as Ernst Kossmann have argued that the stadhoudership itself was also increasingly perceived as a 'continental-monarchical' element in the political system of the Dutch Republic, with foreigners who were not too familiar with the governmental system of the Dutch Republic sometimes considering Frederik Hendrik to be a monarch 'in all but name'.[209] Such conclusions, however, do not align with the evidence from Frederik Hendrik's time as stadhouder. For example, an accurate contemporary reflection on how Frederik Hendrik's political powers were significantly dependent on the authority of the States assemblies is provided by a letter sent to the French Marshall de Chatillon from Frans Aerssen van Somelsdijk, who was a close advisor of Frederik Hendrik, and who had previously served as the Dutch envoy to France. The letter, which discussed the preparations for that summer's war campaign, detailed the political reality of Frederik Hendrik's life as a stadhouder in comparison to the authority of a monarch, and specifically emphasises the office's subservient nature:

> The Prince of Orange is in a different condition from that of the King [of France], who only has to express his wishes. Because here [the stadhouder] needs money in order to execute his ideas, which proceeds slowly and cannot be obtained from the provinces, who are weary and mostly exhausted, without any clear evidence of a remarkable advantage, and many do not recognize that in the conquest of towns, as it increases their burdens. […] Our provinces have difficulty in agreeing upon the employ of the army, one demanding it here, the

[209] J.C. Boogman, 'The Union of Utrecht: Its Genesis and Consequences', *BMGN,* 94 (1979), p. 401. See also E.H. Kossmann, 'The Low Countries' in: *The New Cambridge Modern History* (14 vols.; Cambridge, 1957-1970), Vol. IV, pp. 360-365; Van Deursen, *Bavianen en Slijkgeuzen,* p. 356; Rowen, *The Princes of Orange,* p. 67.

> other there; one wants it not to move, another proposes to limit its size to the revenues of the State. With such a variety of interests and sentiments, *Son Altesse* must give his advice, and, by gradually detangling himself, bring matters to their true advantage; which cannot be done without much debating, nor without great loss of time, and Your Excellency being well informed [of all this] may excuse Monseigneur the Prince of Orange that, having to succeed with his advice among these people, he cannot do all the things he wants to.[210]

Furthermore, scholarship claiming that the Prince sought to increase his authority and power during his time as stadhouder ignore the evidence that Frederik Hendrik not only rejected any rumours about him trying to expand his political powers beyond the strict boundaries of his office, but in fact actively went out of his way to show the opposite. For example, when in September 1633 popular rumours reached him in his army camp which accused him of 'using the army for his own ambition and elevation, rather than for the service of the country', Frederik Hendrik immediately refused to undertake any more action until he received a special act signed by the States General that specifically stated their consent and authorisation of his upcoming campaign plans.[211] In doing so, Frederik Hendrik both strengthened his leadership position, while explicitly placing himself under the authority of the States General. Moreover, in 1636 the Holy Roman Emperor offered to elevate Frederik Hendrik's territorial possession of Meurs to an imperial principality, which would make him the sovereign Prince of Meurs. Frederik Hendrik, however, turned down the offer, for though it would enhance the prestige of his House, he feared it would cause controversy among the Dutch provinces, and thereby endanger his position as stadhouder and captain-general.[212] Frederik Hendrik never sought to change the political system of the United Provinces in a way that would increase the prerogatives and position of the stadhoudership, nor did he ever seek to increase his personal sovereignty by looking to rule any of the provinces as a duke or a count. Of course, the increased prestige of the House of Orange enhanced Frederik Hendrik's

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[210] M. de Sommelsdyck to the Maréchal de Chatillon. 10 April 1638, *Archives*, Vol. III, pp. 113-116. Sections of this letter have also been used by Herbert Rowen, who erroneously cited the letter as 'Aerssen van Sommelsdijk to Frederick Henry, 114-15' (*The Princes of Orange,* p. 67).
[211] PN Holl., Vol. VI, 6 September 1633.
[212] Poelhekke, *Frederik Hendrik,* p. 472.

authority and standing, which would have indirectly, though not formally, reflected on his activity as a stadhouder. But overall, Frederik Hendrik displayed a keen sensitivity for the balance of elevating the status of the House of Orange, without threatening the subservient nature of the stadhoudership. It is therefore more accurate to think of Frederik Hendrik's period as stadhouder in terms of dynastic rather than semi-monarchical ambition.

2.3.4 Conclusion

The section has explored how Frederik Hendrik engaged with the office of stadhouder, and how the stadhoudership further developed during this period. It has rejected the general assumption that the transferral of the stadhoudership from Maurits to Frederik Hendrik was immediate and smooth, and, while doing so, has demonstrated a lack of institutional knowledge regarding the office among the provincial States of Holland and Zeeland. Deputies from both provinces assumed that their previous stadhouder, Maurits, had been functioning according to a set of Instructions, and when this idea proved to be wrong, it was considered too complicated and laborious to draft a set of Instructions for their new stadhouder. This is significant, as it also indicates a level of uncertainty among the members of the provincial States about the exact nature and prerogatives of the stadhoudership.

Once in office, Frederik Hendrik actively explored the office as a tool for preserving *eendracht* on both an inter-provincial level, as within the provinces. For the first time in the historiography about the Prince, this section has emphasised how both Frederik Hendrik as the deputies of the States' governments of Holland and Zeeland turned to the stadhoudership for conflict resolution and mediation when disputes occurred. A lack of domestic conflict of the scale of those that had occurred during the Truce Period, moreover, meant that Frederik Hendrik was never faced with the choice between serving the interests of his masters, the provincial States, and the interest of the general state as a whole. Some tension, however, did develop between the stadhouder and the Dutch provinces, due to the increasingly elevated status of the House of Orange. However, it is vital to distinguish between the dynastic ambitions of the House of Orange,

and the office of stadhouder. Although the securing of the *survivance* of the office upon his son strengthened the claim of the Princes of Orange on the office (and, thereby, the 'Orange myth'), the office itself had still not become hereditary. In contrast to the work of Pieter Geyl, who has blamed for Frederik Hendrik for abusing his offices for the prestige of his family, this section has shown that, throughout his years as stadhouder, the Prince was in fact careful not to challenge the sovereignty of the provincial States. At the end of his life, Frederik Hendrik could rightly say on his death bed that he had been 'der Heeren Staten Dienaer' ('the servant of my lords the States').[213]

2.4 The Stadhoudership under Willem II (1648 – 1650)

2.4.1 Introduction

The stadhoudership of Willem II was the shortest of all Princes of Orange that held the office, and is therefore perhaps most difficult to characterise. It is predominantly remembered for the conflict that arose between the Prince and the States of Holland over the size of the Dutch army, which culminated in the summer of 1650 with the stadhouder orchestrating an attack on Amsterdam and arresting several members of Holland's provincial States. This conflict, however, and the stadhouder's role in it, will be explored in detail in Chapter III. The following section, then, will instead focus on how the office of stadhouder was used by Willem II in the few years leading up to these events. I will first analyse the extent of which the childhood of Willem II was affected by being the first future Prince of Orange who grow up amid the firm expectation to become a stadhouder. In doing so, this section provides new insights into the perception of the office during the 1630s and '40s. The second part of the section will explore the stadhoudership of Willem II, and argue how it was significantly influenced by the Peace of Münster of 1647.

[213] Poelhekke, *Frederik Hendrik,* p. 563.

2.4.2 Born to be a stadhouder: the youth of Willem II

Willem II was born on 27 May 1626 in The Hague, as the first child and only son of stadhouder Frederik Hendrik of Orange. Unlike his father, his uncle Maurits, or his grandfather Willem I of Orange, Willem grew up among a general expectation that he would one day succeed to the respective offices of stadhouder and captain-general. Even the place of his birth marked him for a position of political leadership, as he was the first future Prince of Orange to be born in the Stadhouder's Quarters at the Binnenhof in The Hague. The early expectations for Willem are demonstrated by the congratulatory messages to Frederik Hendrik and Amalia made by deputies of the various provincial States and the States General. For example, the latter conveyed the wish that:

> the young Prince would grow up to follow in the footsteps of his Father, and late illustrious Grandfather and Uncle, and to become in time an instrument for the protection of the freedom of these Lands.[214]

In similar fashion, Frederik Hendrik declared that 'a servant of *Haer Hoge Mogendheden* [i.e. the States General] was born, who is ready to follow in his ancestor's footsteps'.[215] The young prince was christened on 2 July 1626, with representatives from both the States of Holland and the States General standing as his godfathers. Considering the inherent juxtaposition within nature of the stadhoudership, it was remarkably fitting that representatives of both a provincial institution, and of one representing the Union, stood as godfather for the young Prince. In a final act of dynastic emphasis, the States of Holland suggested that the child be named Willem, after his grandfather, 'if the *Heeren* States General and His Excellency agree'.[216] Thus from the very onset of his birth, Willem II was treated in the United Provinces as much as a political figure, as the heir to the Orange dynasty. However, it must be remembered that both the provincial office of stadhouder and the Union's office of captain-general were still formally not hereditary, and so there was no constitutional foundation for the prospect that Willem II would

[214] *Ibid.*, p. 152.
[215] *Ibid.*, p. 152.
[216] *Ibid.*, p. 153; Rowen, *Princes of Orange,* p. 59.

follow in his ancestor's footsteps, other than a sense of dynastic tradition. Nevertheless, the statements made upon Willem's birth by both the States General and by Frederik Hendrik conveyed an obvious anticipation that the young boy would one day take over the offices that were currently held by his father. The suggestion by the States of Holland to name the child after Willem the Silent similarly placed the new born in a tradition of political leadership by the House of Orange.

In 1631, however, an unprecedented decision occurred which strengthened the dynastic claim by the House of Orange on the stadhoudership of several provinces. On 23 January that year it was reported during an assembly of the States of Holland that the provinces of Utrecht and Overijssel had granted the *survivance* of the stadhoudership to Willem, meaning that they had already named him as Frederik Hendrik's successor to the office while his father was still alive.[217] Discussion immediately followed in Holland's States assembly about whether to follow the example of Overijssel and Utrecht. After letting the matter rest for some months, Holland's States' magistrates returned to the matter in March, when the province's nobility, traditionally supportive of the House of Orange, officially recommend to also bestow their stadhoudership's *survivance* on Willem II.[218] In early April, deputies of Zeeland arrived in The Hague to state their province's support for such a move, but only if it was done together with Holland in order to uphold the tradition of their shared Stadhoudership.[219] Meanwhile, the States' deputies of Holland's towns had taken some weeks to discuss the matter with their municipality back home, and on 4 April it was decided to bestow the *survivance* of Holland and Zeeland's stadhoudership on Willem II, 'in recognition of the merits of the House of Orange, especially of prince Willem and Maurits, of the highest memories, and also of His Excellency at present'.[220] The official reason given for the *survivance* was thus another expression of the earlier discussed 'Orange myth', which advocated the right to important political and military positions of the House of Orange out of respect for its history of

[217] PN Holl, Vol. V, 23 January 1631.
[218] PN Holl., Vol. V, 14 March 1631.
[219] PN Holl., Vol. V, 2 April 1631.
[220] PN Holl., Vol. V, 4 April 1631.

service to the Dutch Republic. Moreover, Blok and Poelhekke have both explained the development as stemming from Frederik Hendrik's dynastic ambitions for his family.[221] Either way, it was a remarkable and unprecedented move by the provinces to appoint the successor of a living stadhouder, and it reflects the extent the which the stadhoudership was increasingly thought of as 'belonging' to the Princes of Orange, based on a claim of dynastic tradition.

The *survivance* of the captaincy-general to the Republic's armed forces was also bestowed upon Willem II in 1637, and Herbert Rowen has stated that the debate in the States General leading up to this decision introduced the idea of a potential minor in office, if Frederik Hendrik should die before Willem had come of age.[222] This was altogether not an unrealistic thought, considering that Frederik Hendrik was an active military commander who went on campaigns every summer. However, the debate concerning a minority had in fact already featured during Holland's discussions in 1631, on whether to bestow the *survivance* of the stadhoudership on Willem II. Surprisingly, this fact has been overlooked by Rowen, Blok, and Poelhekke alike. In particular the town of Haarlem, therein supported by Alkmaar and some smaller towns, expressed its concern that the stadhoudership might fall to Willem II while he was '*noch onmondig'* ('had not yet come of age').[223] In order to address these concerns, the States therefore expressly stated in their ultimate agreement on the *survivance* that if Willem II was underage at the time of Frederik Hendrik's death, the States reserved the right to change their mind on his appointment, 'understanding that such a right always remains with the assembly'.[224] This comment was not only out of practical reasons, but should also be read as a powerful reminder that, despite the increasingly strong dynastic tradition of reserving the Stadhoudership for the Princes of Orange, the final choice of this appointment still belonged to the provincial States.

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[221] Blok, *Frederik Hendrik,* pp. 156-58; Poelhekke, *Frederik Hendrik,* p. 337, 349-50, 517.
[222] Rowen, *Princes of Orange,* pp. 71-72.
[223] PN Holl., Vol. V, 4 April 1631.
[224] Res. Holl., 10 April 1631.

A final aspect of Willem II's youth that demonstrated the extent to which he was regarded as a political figure before the stadhoudership was bestowed upon him, was the arrangement of his marriage. The match between Willem II and princess Mary Stuart has been studied by, for example, Lisa Jardine, in dynastic terms, emphasising how it added to the prestige of the House of Orange.[225] Yet its implications for the office of stadhouder, both before *and* after the wedding took place, have received far less attention. The prospective marriage of Willem II demonstrated the extent to which the affairs concerning the stadhouder's son were by the mid-seventeenth century considered to be of direct political interest to the state. This was a break with the past, since both Maurits' marital situation, or rather the lack thereof, and Frederik Hendrik's marriage had been regarded by the provincial States as private affairs. However, Willem's marriage negotiations were no longer regarded as a private matter of the House of Orange, but as a matter of national politics. Thus when in December 1640 the marriage between Willem II and a daughter of King Charles I of England had become increasingly likely, a formal emissary of the States General oversaw the final stage of the negotiations, because the marriage of the son of the stadhouder (and prospective future stadhouder) was regarded as 'a matter of state'.[226] It should also be emphasised that the match was to some extent due to Charles I's erroneous understanding of the position of the stadhouders in the United Provinces, whom he thought could independently dictate the Dutch Republic's foreign policy (and thereby send aid to the beleaguered Charles in his conflict with the English Parliament). This misconception had clearly been shared by the English Queen, Henrietta Maria, who remarked during a visit to Holland in 1642 that she had been informed of 'the Prince's great authority and power' and thought that 'he did as he willed with this state'.[227]

Frederik Hendrik's actions in order to secure the prestigious match for his son led to criticism of his use of the stadhoudership. Pieter Geyl has described in detail how

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[225] Lisa Jardine, *Going Dutch. How England plundered Holland's Glory* (London, 2008), pp. 67-75; Frijhoff and Spies, *1650: Hard-Won Unity*, p. 98.
[226] Geyl, *Orange and Stuart,* p. 7. See also: Poelhekke, 'Frederik Hendrik en Willem II', p. 140.
[227] Aitzema, *Saken van Staet en Oorlogh,* Vol. 5, p. 336.

Frederik Hendrik privately gave considerable financial support to help the increasingly desperate position of his son's parents-in-law, while popular opinion in the Dutch Republic was more sympathetic towards the Parliamentarian cause. This was partly due to a strong sense of recognition with a party which projected itself as staunch protestants who were fighting for liberty against an absolutist king with strong Catholic leanings.[228] Moreover, when the struggle between King and Parliament openly broke out in August 1642, it was feared that Frederik Hendrik's personal involvement and support for the Stuarts could endanger the position of the Republic, which had officially adopted a policy of neutrality in order not to give offense to either party.[229] Nevertheless, and against the express wishes of the States of Holland, its stadhouder continued to use his political influence to pressure many provincial deputies to the States General to declare for the Stuart cause, while privately engaging in talks with France and Charles I of entering a triple alliance against the Parliamentarians.[230] These developments led Geyl to argue that Frederik Hendrik's use, or 'abuse', as Geyl phrases it, of the stadhoudership in order to advance the dynastic ambitions of the House of Orange 'gave impetus to the anti-Stadholder movement'.[231] In contrast, Simon Groenveld has rejected Geyl's critical analysis of the House of Orange, arguing instead that Frederik Hendrik was rather reluctant in his assistance of the Stuart cause, and preferred a policy of mediation between the English Royalists and Parliamentarians.[232] Moreover, in the early 1640s, the Dutch provinces, including Holland, were, according to Groenveld, supportive of the Stuart-Orange alliance, in order to strengthen the political cooperation between the Dutch Republic and England on the European battle fields.[233] Despite Groenveld's assertions,

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[228] Geyl, *Orange and Stuart,* pp. 11-12. It should be noted that this general sympathy for the Parliamentarian cause ended abruptly when the newly established Commonwealth regime executed Charles I in 1649.

[229] *Ibid.,* pp. 13-18.

[230] *Ibid.,* pp. 26-29.

[231] *Ibid.,* p. 21, 29-30.

[232] S. Groenveld, *Verlopend getij. De Nederlandse Republiek en de Engelse Burgeroorlog 1640-1646* (Dieren, 1984) 91-133; Groenveld., 'The House of Orange and the House of Stuart, 1639-1650: A Revision', in: *The Historical Journal* (1991: Vol. 34, No. 4), pp. 955-72.

[233] Groenveld, 'The House of Orange', pp. 956-59.

however, there is evidence to believe that the seeds for a direct feeling of uneasiness about the House of Orange's strong grip on Dutch politics were sown with the Orange-Stuart alliance that was forged in the 1640s. For example, the seventeenth-century historian Lieuwe van Aitzema (1600 – 1669) described an anecdote in which a man applying for the position of bailiff of Salland in October 1643, for which he carried letters of recommendation from Frederik Hendrik, soon discovered that 'the Overijssel towns, both on account of the English marriage and because they did not like His Highness's favouring the King of England more than Parliament, would not be much impressed by this recommendation, and that it might do him harm rather than advance his cause'.[234]

Willem II thus may have made a splendid match by marrying princess Mary Stuart, but although the Stuart connection enhanced the dynastic status of the House of Orange, it certainly did some damage to the popular image of the Princes of Orange as unequivocal champions of the interest of the Dutch Republic. Yet the notion that such criticism were early manifestations of an 'anti-stadhouder' sentiment, as Geyl has suggested, should be rectified, as no actual debate about the desirability of the office occurred. Instead, commentary was aimed at the Prince of Orange himself and his use of the office, and not on the office itself.

2.4.3 The stadhoudership of Willem II (1648 – 1650)

The previous sections have discussed how Willem II had been appointed during his father's life as the future stadhouder of those provinces in which Frederik Hendrik held the office. Therefore, modern scholarship has treated Willem's accession as stadhouder predominantly as a matter-of-fact occasion.[235] Indeed, on the same day that Frederik Hendrik died on 14 March 1647, his son Willem, now Prince of Orange, was appointed by the States General as the Republic's new captain-general.[236] However, historians who

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[234] L. van Aitzema, *Historie of verhael van saken van staet en oorlogh in ende omtrent de Vereenigde Nederlanden, beginnende met 't uitgaen van den Trevis ende eyndigende 1669* (14 vols: The Hague, 1557-1671), Vol. 5, p. 563.

[235] Poelhekke, Israel, *The Dutch Republic,* p. 595-6; Groenveld, 'Willem II en de Stuarts', pp. 157-58.

[236] Poelhekke, 'Frederik Hendrik en Willem II', p. 145.

have written on the period, such as Pieter Geyl, Jonathan Israel, and Simon Groenveld, ignore the fact that Willem II's appointment to the stadhoudership was not as straightforward as has traditionally been thought. In reality, the provinces of Holland and Zeeland did not confirm Willem II as stadhouder until January 1648, a full ten months after his father's death.[237] This delay was partly caused by the fact that the *survivance* only stated that Willem II would be appointed as the provinces' next stadhouder after Frederik Hendrik's death, but had not stated the terms for this appointment. Therefore, debate within the States of Holland and Zeeland arose again on the question of drafting a set of Instructions for the stadhoudership. After a period of internal bickering, which was in many ways similar to the discussion in 1625 about whether Instructions should be drafted for Frederik Hendrik, it was again decided that none would be issued for the new stadhouder.[238]

However, this discussion only partly explained the significant delay between Frederik Hendrik's death and the formal appointment of Willem II to the stadhoudership in Holland and Zeeland. The other, more prominent reason was because of Willem II's attitude towards the ongoing peace negotiations between the United Provinces and Spain. Willem made no secret of his opposition to the Peace of Münster, which was formally ratified in May 1648. He even stated in a letter to the French ambassador in The Hague that he wished he could 'wring the necks of all these villains, who made the peace'.[239] Negotiations for peace between Spain and the United Provinces occurred throughout the 1630s and '40s, before finally shifting to the town of Münster in 1643. It was in this town that in 1647 a conclusion between the two states was finally reached. The treaty of the

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[237] Israel, *The Dutch Republic*; Geyl, *The Netherlands in the Seventeenth Century 1609-1648* (New York, 1961); *Ibid.*, *Histories of the Low Countries. Episodes and Problems* (London, 1964); Groenveld, 'Willem II en de Stuarts, 1647-1650', pp. 157-181.

[238] Japikse, *Geschiedenis,* Vol. I, p. 221; Rowen, *The Princes of Orange,* p. 82-83.

[239] Willem II to d'Estrades, 14 August 1649: *Archives,* Vol. IV, p. 314: 'Ik wou dat ik alien schurken, die den vrede gesloten hebben, den nek kon laten breken'. See also: S. Groenveld, 'Van opklimmende vorstenzoon tot neerstortende Faetoon. Stadhouder Willem II (1626-1650) in beeld' in: S. Craft-Giepmans a.o. (eds.), *Stadhouders in beeld. Beeldvorming van de stadhouders in contemporaine grafiek 1570-1700* (Rotterdam and Gronsveld, 2007), pp. 109-174; p. 150.

Peace of Münster was officially concluded in January 1648, and ratified by the States General the following May. Due to Willem II's outspoken opposition to ending the war with Spain, the States of Holland and Zeeland therefore did not confirm Willem as their new stadhouder until January 1648, when the peace treaty had already been agreed upon. Willem's installation as stadhouder in these provinces was thus deliberately delayed in order to ensure that he could not politically interfere with the peace negotiations.[240] With this context in mind, it is necessary to revise statements made about Willem II's reported 'inactivity' to obstruct the making of the peace with Spain. Throughout the summer of 1647 and early 1648, French deputies in The Hague complained that the young Prince was more preoccupied with private amusements than with politics, as they wrote that 'son principal défault est boutade et de s'appliquer a toute autre chose qu'aux affaires'.[241] This has led modern historians, such as Herbert Rowen, to conclude that the young Prince of Orange inability to prevent the making of the Peace of Münster as a personal 'failure'.[242] But such statements have not considered the fact that Willem had not been formally installed as stadhouder of Holland and Zeeland until January 1648, when the Peace treaty was all but concluded. He therefore lacked the formal authority and power through which he could directly influence the politics of these two powerful provinces.

The Peace of Münster of 1648 not only influenced the circumstances of Willem II's appointment to the stadhoudership, it is also of vital importance to the understanding of Willem II's brief tenure as stadhouder in general. In order to do so, it is important to acknowledge that Willem was far from alone in his opposition to the peace with Spain. The peace proceedings had in fact divided Dutch politics, as many did not share Holland's zeal for a swift ending to the war. The Union of Utrecht, which had bound the seven provinces together, had after all been formed as a military alliance that united the provinces against a common enemy. The struggle for survival, freedom and independence had become part of the very essence of the Dutch state and its sense of identity. There

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[240] Rowen, *The Princes of Orange*, p. 83.

[241] Japikse, *Geschiedenis,* p. 223; Poelhekke, 'Frederik Hendrik en Willem II', p. 144; Geyl, *Geschiedenis van de Nederlandse Stam,* Vol. II, p. 5.

[242] Rowen, *The Princes of Orange,* p. 82.

was therefore a genuine concern that the Union would fall apart when peace with Spain, the Republic's traditional enemy, was concluded.[243] Throughout the peace negotiations, this anxiety about the future of the Union was most strongly voiced by Zeeland and Utrecht, who both voiced concern that peace with Spain would damage the union of the seven provinces.[244] A contemporaneous Dutch pamphlet described the conflicting sentiments about the Peace of Munster as thus: 'War was for you a bond of union and unity. […] Peace brings quarrels and disunity'.[245] Historians such as Judith Pollmann and Jan Poelhekke have noted that a sense of unease had emerged among several of the other provinces about the ending of the Eighty Years War, as the war effort had been so instrumental in the making of the Dutch Republic and the shaping of its sense of identity.[246] Poelhekke, for example, has argued that the years just before and after the Münster peace were a time of 'true crisis' for the political state of the Northern Netherlands.[247]

Willem's personal opposition to the Peace of Münster, however, mostly originated in the belief that the peace would not last; nor did the young stadhouder intend it to.[248] Like his father before him, Willem continued to support the increasingly desperate position of his father-in-law, Charles I, and the House of Stuart. Several historians of the period have argued that Willem's ultimate goal was for the Republic to re-enter into a military alliance with France, restart the war against Spain, and restore the Stuart dynasty on the English throne.[249] Willem indeed regarded France as crucial ally in the fight against

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243 Poelhekke, 'De Vrede van Münster', pp. 12-13; Pollmann, 'The Cult and Memory of War and Violence', pp. 87-88.
244 Israel, *The Dutch Republic,* p. 596; Frijhoff and Spies, *1650: Hard-Won Unity,* pp. 42-5.
245 Anon., *De Na-Ween vande Vrede* (1650); Knut. 6756.
246 Poelhekke, 'De Vrede van Münster', pp. 12-13; Pollmann, 'The Cult and Memory of War and Violence', p. 87.
247 Poelhekke, *Geen Blijder Maer,* p. 13.
248 Geyl, *Orange and Stuart,* pp. 60-66; Rowen, *The Princes of Orange,* pp. 85-6, p. 92; A. Th. van Deursen, *De Hartslag van het leven: studies over de Republiek der Verenigde Nederlanden* (Amsterdam, 1996), p. 53-4; Israel, *The Dutch Republic,* p. 605.
249 For the relevant historical studies on the foreign policy of stadhouder Willem II, see: Rowen, *The Princes of Orange*, pp. 81-82; Poelhekke, 'Frederik Hendrik en Willem II', p. 143-146; Japikse, *Geschiedenis,* Vol. I, p. 225; Geyl, *Orange and Stuart,* pp. 60-66.

Spain on the European battlefield and to secure the Stuart restoration in England. Throughout the period of his stadhoudership, Willem's correspondence demonstrates how he was in constant contact with among others the old French ambassador in The Hague, d'Estrades, who by then acted as governor of Duinkerken, and through him with France's first minister Mazarin.[250] Nicolaas Japikse has thus stated that Willem II 'continued to think as if the United Provinces were in a state of war, and he acted accordingly'.[251]

Almost immediately after Willem's formal appointment as stadhouder of all the provinces in which his father had held the office, his ideas for Dutch foreign policy led to increasing animosity between the young stadhouder and, particularly, the States of Holland. Although the execution of King Charles I in January 1649 met with almost universal disapproval in the Dutch Republic, the province of Holland nevertheless insisted on remaining on friendly terms with the new Commonwealth regime in England, in order to preserve the trade relations between the two countries.[252] In direct opposition to Holland's policy, Willem supported the Stuart cause with big loans to continue the fight against the Parliamentarians. The tension between the States of Holland and their stadhouder significantly increased when a few months later Willem used his authority to prevent the Republic from officially recognising the new regime in England as its legitimate government.[253] The stadhouder did this by using his political influence in the other provinces to ensure that the ambassador from the English Commonwealth, Walter Strickland, was not received in the States General.[254] However, Holland then invited Strickland to an audience in their States' assembly, thereby not only publicly opposing their stadhouder and the States General, but also demonstrating the limits of the stadhouder's influence when the States of Holland formed a united front. Tensions in the United Provinces further rose when in May 1649 Holland sent the Amsterdam regent

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250 This correspondence is preserved in Vol. IV of the *Archives,* Series II.
251 Japikse, *Geschiedenis,* Vol. I, p. 219.
252 Poelhekke, *Orange and Stuart,* pp. 46-47.
253 Japikse, *Geschiedenis,* Vol. I, p. 225-226.
254 Geyl, *Geschiedenis van de Nederlandse Stam*, Vol. II, p. 5.

Gerard Schaep over to England in the capacity of a 'commissioner' on behalf of the province, despite there already being an envoy to the English parliament on behalf of the Republic as a whole. Although strictly speaking the Union of Utrecht did not forbid any of the provinces from having private diplomatic relations with other states (although it did prohibit the provinces to make individual 'treaties or alliances'), Holland's actions were widely regarded by the other provinces as undermining the political unity of the Dutch Republic, and the *eendracht* among the seven provinces.[255] It was also strongly condemned by Willem II, who according to Henri Brasset, the French ambassador in The Hague, had expressed the hope that this individualistic move by Holland would be undone, before it would bring about 'the complete dissolution of the Union'.[256] The final conflict that ultimately arose between the States of Holland and its stadhouder over the number of troops on the province's payroll will be discussed in the next chapter, which will focus on the debate on the stadhoudership in 1650-51. However, the tensions described here are crucial to the understanding of the stadhouder's actions in the fateful summer of 1650.

2.4.4 Conclusion

This section has explored in new detail the ways in which Willem II was, from birth, treated as a more political figure than any of his ancestors had been. His youth, and, especially, the bestowal on him of the *survivance* of the stadhoudership and captaincy-general, demonstrated the extent to which the dynastic claim of the House of Orange to these offices had developed. Moreover, this also marked the first time that a debate about a minority stadhoudership took place. Extant analyses have neglected this debate, not least the fact that the provincial States used the discussion to assert their authority over the stadhoudership by emphasising that they had the right to repeal the *survivance* at any time. I have also explored the significance of the Peace of Munster in influencing Willem's policies in light of his confirmation as stadhouder of Holland and Zeeland only in the wake of its signing. Tensions subsequently grew between Holland and its stadhouder

[255] Geyl, *Orange and Stuart,* p. 59; Geyl, *Geschiedenis van de Nederlandse Stam,* pp. 4-6.
[256] H. Brasset to Cardinal Mazarin, 7 December 1649. *Archives,* Vol. IV, p. 317.

concerning their differing attitudes towards the peace. The next chapter will show how this tension formed the background of the domestic conflict of the summer 1650, which rocked the political foundations of the Dutch state.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter has analysed the stadhoudership from the death of Willem I of Orange through to the Stadhouderless Period. In doing so, it has sought to challenge several unfounded assumptions in existing scholarship, relating principally to the office's perceived 'conservative nature'. It has also demonstrated the importance of the office holder's position as a mediator and conflict resolver to our understanding of the actions of the Princes of Orange. Historiography on the period has privileged the Princes' capacity as captain-generals and their ambitions regarding the Republic's foreign policies. This chapter, in contrast, has sought to emphasise that their roles as stadhouder had them actively mediate in or pass judgement on disputes between towns or provinces. Moreover, the stadhoudership serves as a key element in understanding Maurits' actions during the Truce Period Conflicts: the role, I suggest, not only informed, but also justified his actions.

I have traced back the origins of the 'Orangist myth' to the early 1580s, with the appointment of Maurits of Orange to the stadhoudership of Holland and Zeeland. Inspired by this myth, dynastic claim to the stadhoudership and captaincy-general intensified under Frederik Hendrik and Willem II. At the same time, the European standing of the House of Orange increased during their stadhouderships, thanks in no small measure to Willem's marriage arrangement with the royal House of Stuart. Historians have concerned themselves with the influence these developments purportedly had on the stadhoudership. Pieter Geyl, in particular, has accused Frederik Hendrik and Willem II of abusing their position to serve the dynastic ambitions of their House. However, the conclusion that this resulted in the beginning of an 'anti-stadhouder' movement should be rejected: much like the controversial actions of Maurits

during the Truce Period Conflicts, criticism was directed at the persona of the Prince of Orange, and did not question the legitimacy or position of the office of stadhouder itself.

Chapter 3

THE STADHOUDERSHIP IN THE RUN-UP TO THE STADHOUDERLESS PERIOD (1650-1651)

3.1 Introduction

This chapter will explore the role of the stadhoudership in the Dutch domestic conflict of 1650 and the subsequent debate at the Great Assembly of 1651, at which the position of the office and its desirability in the political composition of the United Provinces was discussed. In doing so, it seeks to question the assumptions and challenge the conclusions of existing scholarship on the events leading up to the Stadhouderless Period. Most importantly, it seeks to reframe the conflict of 1650 by envisaging the stadhoudership as torn between the duties to serve the opposing interests of federal unity and provincial liberty. The section on the Great Assembly will once again emphasise the ways in which the stadholder's role of mediation and conflict resolution was perceived as a vital part of the Republic's constitution.

3.2 The role of the stadhoudership in relation to the conflict of 1650

3.2.1 Introduction

The dramatic events of the summer of 1650, during which stadhouder Willem II orchestrated an attack on Amsterdam and arrested six senior members of the States of Holland, have long since attracted scholarly interest. Historian Roger Bigelow Merriman, for example, has them rank amongst the 'six contemporaneous revolutions' of the mid-

seventeenth century.[257] Herbert Rowen, too, has labelled the event as an early modern example of a revolution.[258] If they differ in their interpretation of the revolutionary status of these events, more recent studies have overwhelmingly characterised Willem II's actions as a coup d'état, aimed at breaking Holland's political hegemony and increasing his own power.[259] Willem Frijhoff and Marijke Spies have even suggested that the 'real conflict' concerned whether or not the provinces could 'evolve into a more closely knit confederation and eventually, perhaps, into a unified state […] presumably in the form of a monarchy'.[260]

This section, however, will move away from the traditional perception of the conflict as an expression of the struggle over sovereignty between the States of Holland and an ambitious Prince of Orange. Instead, it will focus on the role of the stadhoudership during the conflict of 1650 and, by doing so, will highlight the crucial bearing the office holder's task as conflict resolver had on this conflict's subsequent development. Moreover, it will show that the inherent tension of the stadhoudership was, in fact, at the heart of the conflict, with one party emphasising the office's subservience to provincial sovereignty, and the other seeking to use it as an intra-provincial mediator on behalf of the union's interests.

3.2.2 The stadhoudership and the Conflict of 1650

The previous chapter on the stadhoudership of Willem II has shown that even though the United Provinces had signed a peace treaty with Spain in 1648, the internal mentality of being a state at war did not immediately end. Between 1648 and the summer of 1650, tension increased among both the provinces themselves and between the provinces and their stadhouders about the direction of the Republic's foreign policy. Indeed, J. H.

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[257] Roger Bigelow Merriman, *Six Contemporaneous Revolutions* (Oxford, 1938).
[258] Rowen, 'The Revolution that wasn't' (1974).
[259] Dominant voices for this argument have been Pieter Geyl and Jan Poelhekke, in particular in Geyl's *Orange and Stuart,* pp. 55-66, and in Poelhekke's 'Mag men de dood van Prins Willem II een zegen voor ons land noemen?', in: *Ibid., Geen Blijder Maer,* pp. 15-34. See also: Frijhoff and Spies, *1650: Hard-Won Unity,* p. 96; and Rowen, *Princes of Orange,* pp. 90-94.
[260] Frijhoff and Spies, *1650: Hard-Won Unity,* pp. 73-77.

Kluiver has argued that 'because of domestic arguments in the years 1648-1651, the war for the freedom of the United Provinces only really ended in 1651'.[261] This tension ultimately came to a head in the conflict of 1650 between the province of Holland on the one side, and the other six provinces, the Council of State, and the two stadhouders on the other.

At the heart of this conflict was the matter of army reductions, and specifically, the extent to which the Republic's armed forces would be reduced now a peace treaty with Spain had been reached.[262] The province of Holland, responsible for financing the majority of the war costs, advocated a significant reduction of the size of the Republic's troops, as the financial burden of their upkeep weighted heavily on the province.[263] However, most of the other provinces were more reluctant to reduce the size of the army. Moreover, the previous chapter has shown how stadhouder Willem II was convinced that a lasting peace was neither likely nor desirable, and therefore considered the maintenance of a sizeable army vital to the prospect of potential future warfare, and, in extension of that, of national safety.[264] After almost a year of intense negotiations among the provinces in the States General, the crisis came to a head on 4 June 1650 when Holland announced its plans to independently disband a significant number of troops that were on its direct payroll.[265] Considering the fact that decisions relating to the Republic's armed forces were a Generality issue, this unprecedented move by an individual province was, strictly speaking, unconstitutional. Therefore, the assembled delegates at the States General, and in consultation with the Council of State and the two stadhouders, voted in favour of warning the commanders of the garrisons to not discharge any troops without explicit instructions to do so from the States General or Willem II, in his capacity as captain-general. Furthermore, it also issued a resolution that a deputation be formed on behalf of

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[261] Kluiver, 'Brieven van de Middelburgse regent Hendrick Thibaut aan stadhouder Willem II en diens secretaris Johan Heilersich (1648-1650)', in: *Nederlandse historische bronnen* (1992: Vol. 10), pp. 33-97; p. 33.
[262] Japikse, *Geschiedenis,* Vol. I, p. 223.
[263] Geyl, *Orange and Stuart*, p. 56.
[264] Japikse, *Geschiedenis,* Vol. I, pp. 224-25.
[265] *Ibid.,* Vol. I, pp. 225-26.

the States General to visit the member towns of the States of Holland and call upon its regents to change their policy. The only member at the assembly that protested the resolution was the delegation of Holland, on the basis that it violated the province's freedom of action.[266]

The Prince of Orange was entrusted to lead this deputation with the explicit reason that it was his duty as stadhouder to preserve the *eendracht* and domestic harmony among the provinces. In consideration of the conflict that had arisen between Holland and the six other Provinces, the resolution of the States General on 5 June thus 'asked and authorised' the Prince of Orange, in his capacity as stadhouder, to:

> restore concord by all means necessary, and to make those provisions, in order to maintain everything in peace and harmony; and to especially maintain and preserve the Union against all and any efforts directed against it.[267]

On 8 June the special deputation of the States General first arrived in Dordrecht, and from there travelled throughout Holland for nearly a month. At each of Holland's member towns, the deputation's spokesperson, Alexander van der Capellen, lord of Aertsbergen, presented the town council with a resolution, and informed the gathered magistrates that the deputation would not depart until the council had stated in writing 'whether they wanted to return to the Union, which they have left', and until the regents of that particular town had made 'prompt and effective repairs to the damage done to the Union, of which they and the other members of Holland were guilty'.[268] The resolution presented by the deputation in each town thus accused the regents of Holland to create a breach in the *eendracht* among the provinces, and thereby the Union. Moreover,

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[266] Aitzema, *Saken van Staet,* Vol. III, p. 427; Kernkamp, *Prins Willem II,* pp. 108-109; Rowen, 'The Revolution that wasn't', p. 103.

[267] *Archives,* p. 398:
'om alle noodighe ordre te stellen, ende die voorsieninghe te doen, ten einde dat alles in goede ruste en de vrede werde geconserveert, ende insonderheit gemainteneert ende vastgehouden de Unie met den gevolghe en de aenkleven van dien, ende in tegendeel geweerst ende te gemoet getreden dat contrarie van dien soude werden voorgenomen'.

[268] Aitzema, *Saken van Staet,* Vol. III, p. 429.

it emphasised the legitimacy of the deputation's mission by pointing at the prerogative of Willem II, as stadhouder, to act as a mediator and judge at times of conflict:

> Therefore we request your Honours to acquiesce on the matter of War with the six other consenting Provinces, or alternatively to let the disagreement be decided upon by the *Heeren* Stadhouders, according to the ninth Article of the aforementioned Union [of Utrecht].[269]

Most of the town councils, however, refused to be intimidated, and declared to stand firm with the policies of the States of Holland.[270] Pieter Geyl has therefore argued that the delegation 'only soured the mood between Holland and the other provinces even further'.[271] The city of Amsterdam, moreover, blankly refused to receive the deputation, even though Willem insisted on being allowed an audience in his capacity as stadhouder. Amsterdam's refusal was therefore condemned by the Prince as 'undermining our dignity and respect; and also that of the status and sovereignty of this Province, as it charged us with the office and oaths of the stadhoudership'.[272] In a letter to the States of Holland, Amsterdam itself however claimed it had extended an invitation to the Prince in his position as stadhouder, but would not see him in his capacity as a deputy for the States General.[273] The city further emphasised the provincial nature of the stadhoudership, and therefore argued it was the States of Holland, and the city of Amsterdam in particular, that should receive compensation 'by those, that advised and urged His Highness [the Prince of Orange] to accept such an unacceptable mission'.[274]

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269 Aitzema, *Saken van Staet,* Vol. III, pp. 431-32.

270 *Ibid.*, Vol. III, pp. 432-34. After its visit to Dordrecht, the deputation of the States-General continued its tour past the voting towns of Holland, calling on Gorinchem, Schoonhoven, Gouda, Rotterdam, Den Briel, Delft, Alkmaar, Hoorn, Enkhuizen, Medemblik, Edam, Amsterdam, Haarlem, and Leiden.

271 Geyl, *Orange and Stuart*, p. 62.

272 Aitzema, *Saken van Staet,* Vol. III, p. 435:
'strijdende teghen onse digniteyt ende respect; mitsgaders tegen den Staet ende Hoogheyt van dese Provincite, die ons met de qualiteyt ende charge van Stadthouder hebben bekleedt.'

273 *Ibid.*, pp. 441-442.

274 *Ibid.*, p. 443

When the deputation returned to The Hague on 25 June, it submitted a report on its unsuccessful mission to the States General two days later. At the same time, Holland sent a missive to the States General to denounce the deputation, claiming that the province had not acted against the Union, but was simply acting within the bounds of its provincial sovereignty. Furthermore, Holland also complained about the role of Willem in the deputation by emphasising the stadhouder's subservience to provincial sovereignty: 'the stadhouder is bound to promote, and preserve the Sovereignty, Justice, and Privileges and welfare of this province, its members, towns, and citizens'.[275] Negotiations about the reduction of the army continued throughout July about the reduction, but they ended in a stalemate at the end of the month when neither of the parties were willing to compromise any further.

By 29 July 1650, Willem singlehandedly broke this stalemate. On the morning of 30 July, the stadhouder informed Jacob Cats, the Councillor Pensionary of Holland, that earlier that day he had arrested six of Holland's deputies to its States assembly, while his cousin, the Frisian stadhouder Willem Frederik, had marched upon Amsterdam with a sizeable number of troops. According to Cats' own memoirs, the Prince then justified his actions to him by pointing at the resolution of the States-General of 5 June, and emphasising that he had been authorised to preserve the Union of Utrecht, adding: 'I have been able to suffer no longer that several ill-disposed persons should foster disunity and discord between the province of Holland and the other provinces, to the disservice of the country'.[276]

Yet Willem's forceful way out of the impasse was only partly successful. Amsterdam had been warned of the marching troops by a post courier who had overtaken Willem Frederik and his men, and so the city had closed its doors before they arrived. Yet instead of further escalation of the conflict, Holland settled on a compromise with the

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[275] Aitzema, *Saken van Staet,* pp. 442-43:
'de Stadthouder gehouden is voor te staen, te bevorderen, ende bewaren De Hoogheyt, Gerechtigheyt, Privilegien ende welvaren van de Landen, Leden, Steden, ende Ingesetenen'.
[276] Jacob Cats, 'J. Cats Twee en Tachtigjarige Leven', in: *Alle de Werken* (Amsterdam, 1712), p. 54.

stadhouders and States General. Amsterdam's powerful burgomaster Cornelius Bicker and his brother Andries were to be dismissed from their offices in the town's government, and Holland accepted the military budget proposed by the States General on 15 July, along with 'a declaration that thereafter any action by provinces to reduce the army on their own would be considered violations of the Union of Utrecht and subject to repression'.[277] Soon after, Willem decided to release the six prisoners, which were kept at the castle of Loevesteyn, upon the condition they would resign from their offices. He justified this request by arguing that it was the best way to facilitate a good relationship between the towns and its stadhouder, which was necessary for the internal harmony and stability. In a private letter, Willem explained this as follows:

> I request and desire that the respective *heeren* that are imprisoned, are released upon the same agreement as with Amsterdam [which dismissed the Bickers from government], judging that this will benefit the land and standing of the respective towns, and not desiring anything but the restoration of peace and harmony, and to be able to keep in good and close correspondence with the towns, which could not be possible if these *heeren* remained in their governments, as they would continue to try and prevent the good correspondence that should exist between a stadhouder and the towns.[278]

3.2.3 Aftermath

Willem's decisive, though unprecedented actions had brought the conflict to a sudden end. Messages of thanks were thus sent to the stadhouder from almost all provinces, with, for example, the States of Zeeland thanking him for 'maintaining the peace of our fatherland', and assuring him of their approval of any future activities that would 'prevent any further disagreements, maintain the land in security, and keep the provinces together in good unity'.[279] Soon afterwards, the States General disbanded for the summer, and

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[277] Rowen, 'The Revolution that Wasn't', p. 116.

[278] *Archives,* Vol. IV, p. 396; note. 19.

[279] Kluiver, 'Brieven', note 177, p. 89:
'gelijk wij doen bij desen, met gedienstigh en vrientlyck verzoeck, daer in met zoodanighen yver te continueren, dat alle verdere onlusten zouden mogen geweert, het lant in seeckerheyt geconserveert, en de provintien gesamentlyck in goede eenigheyt moghten behouden

Willem retired to his private hunting lodge in Dieren. There the Prince fell ill in October, and after his return to The Hague died from smallpox on 6 November.

Willem's sudden death at the age of 24 brought his stadhoudership to an abrupt end, leading historians, such as Jan Poelhekke, to comment that 'many of his plans and ideas remain unknown'.[280] However, scholarship has largely overlooked the fact that Willem actually left an unfinished document behind, in which he explained his actions with regard to the conflict with Amsterdam. This document was discovered among the Prince's personal papers after Willem's death, and had been kept by Holland's Councillor Pensionary Cats, who presented it towards the end of the Great Assembly to the assembled delegations there.[281] Judging by the format and style of the document, Willem II must have meant for the document, which reads like a pamphlet, to be published, but his untimely death prevented this from happening. Although the document can be found in both Aitzema's *Saken van Staet* and in Groen van Prinsteren's *Correspondence inedite de la maison d'Orange-Nassau,* it has received surprisingly little attention by modern historians.[282] Despite its obvious propagandic nature, it provides a valuable insight into how stadhouder Willem II himself interpreted his office, and how he used it to legitimise his political actions.

Throughout the document, Willem emphasised that he had acted according to the orders given to him by the States General. He thus stated that both the resolution of 5 June, as well as his general duty as stadhouder, had tasked him to act in the interest of 'conserving the Union, and of the order, peace, and security of the state'.[283] He further argued that despite his repeated attempts to conciliate the States of Holland with the other six provinces, he had found with despair that his efforts were:

werden'.This letter can also be found in *Gedrukte Notulen van de Staten van Zeeland* ([Middelburg], 1649-1650), p. 141.

[280] Poelhekke, 'Frederik Hendrik en Willem II', p. 143.

[281] Aitzema, *Saken van Staet,* Vol. 4, pp. 582-83.

[282] The document can be found in Aitzema's *Saken van Staet* Vol. 3, p. 583-84, and in the *Archives*, 2nd series, Vol. 4, pp. 398-403.

[283] *Archives,* p. 399.

> increasingly made fruitless by the insolent stubbornness of a few, who seemed to rather risk the state's security and the peace of its inhabitants, than compromise in the slightest that which they had forced upon their town councils, and afterwards upon the assembly of Holland, through their vain, pretentious, wiseacre speeches, against the wisdom of the six Provinces and so many discrete and well-meaning missives from His Highness [meaning himself] and the Council of State'.[284]

Willem therefore argued that he had acted according to his office, oath, and assignment as stadhouder, which had tasked him with the preservation of *eendracht* among the provinces of the Republic. The document thus concluded that:

> His Highness, bound by commission and instruction [of the stadhoudership] to maintain the Union, and being further required and authorised to do so by the aforementioned special resolution, seeing that among the Provinces a flame had erupted which would have burned them to ashes, and being in possession of all the means to prevent this, [while also] understanding that his honour, oath, and conscience, and such a special and explicit authorisation of the Highest Government, should be respected and endeavoured [to upkeep], therefore waded with urgency and zeal against that rising tide, in order to stop these waters.[285]

Willem thus justified his actions by emphasising his task to preserve unity among the provinces as a general duty of his office as stadhouder, and being further encouraged and authorised by the States General to do so. The document thus rejects the arguments made previously by Amsterdam and the States of Holland that his actions had been illegal

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[284] *Archives,* p. 399.

[285] *Archives,* p. 401:

'dat also Syne Hoocheit, by commissie [of the stadhoudership] ende instructive [of the Resolution of 5 June] verplicht de Unie te mainteneren, ende noch deertoe by gemelde speciale resolutie van nieuws aengemaent ende geauthoriseert zynde, siende onder de Provintien een vlamme opgaen die geschapen waren alle deselve gesamentlick in kolen en asschen te leggen, ende in de hand hebbende de middelen om daer tegens te versien, verstaen soude moeten werden sich syner eere, eed ende conscientie niet gequeten, nochte gem. Soo speciale ende expresse authorisatie van Hooghste Regieringhe near behooren gerespicierrt ende betracht te hebben, ten waren hy, met alle spoed ende yver tegens dat rysende vier ware ingeloopen, ende het selve getracht hadde te wederhouden ende te dempen, in voeghen als in desen is geschiet.

as he had acted against their wishes, despite the fact that the stadhouder was a servant of the provincial States. Instead, this document stresses the importance of the stadhoudership on a Union level, and emphasises the priority of the Union by referring to the States General as the 'Highest Government'.

How, then, should we characterise the events of the summer of 1650? Could it indeed be labelled as a political coup by an ambitious Prince trying to expand his authority, or was it instead a successful move of a stadhouder to bring back a rebellious province into the fold of the Union, and thereby restore the union of the seven provinces and, thus, guarantee the survival of the Republic? It cannot be denied that Willem's actions had been bold and unexpected to even his allies. For example, Aertsbergen noted that even the deputies from the other six provinces had been 'taken aback' when they first heard of the developments.[286] At the heart of the matter, however, is whether Willem merely sought to end the conflict itself (and thereby also accomplish his own favoured policy of keeping a well sized army), or whether he sought to make some significant, long-lasting changes to the constitutional make-up of the Republic in order to enhance his own position and authority. I would argue that there is no evidence for the notion that Willem intended to push the limits of the stadhoudership and expand his position, or the powers of his offices. Indeed, even Herbert Rowen, who otherwise supports the idea of Willem's actions accumulating to a full-blown *coup d'état*, has admitted that 'seizure of power or even making his offices of captain-general and provincial stadholder absolute, independent, and hereditary does not seem to have occurred to him'.[287] Historians such as Jan Poelhekke have emphasised that it is almost impossible to know Willem's long-term plans, due to his sudden death in November. Nevertheless, we do know Willem's actions in the immediate months after the resolution of the conflict, and none of these related to seizing the opportunity to make any changes in the constitutional make-up or government of the United Provinces. Indeed, instead of capitalising on the momentum of power he had created, the stadhouder almost immediately retreated to his hunting

[286] Alexander Van der Capellen, Heer van Aertsbergen, *Gedenkschriften*, ed. Robert Jaspar van der Capellen (2 Vols; Utrecht, 1772-73) Vol. II, pp. 274-75.
[287] Rowen, 'The Revolution that Wasn't', p. 114.

lodge in Dieren for the whole of September and October, devoting himself almost exclusively to pleasure and hunting.[288] Willem's correspondence of this period shows how he had seen Holland's behaviour mainly as undermining his position as stadhouder and captain-general, and that his motivation had been to reassert his powers. His private letters thus give evidence of his satisfaction that 'this affair has now entirely re-established my authority'.[289]

3.2.4 Conclusion

This section has sought to challenge the traditional scholarship on the Dutch domestic conflict of 1650, which largely perceives the event as a revolution by a would-be sovereign and equates Willem II's methods for resolving it to a *coup d'etat*. I have instead framed the conflict in the context of the stadhoudership's divergent nature of being tasked with the preservation of the Union and *eendracht* among the provinces, and being subservient to the sovereignty of the provincial States. As Holland broke away from the other six provinces by singlehandedly dismissing troops, which was a matter that constitutionally fell under the jurisdiction of the Generality, the stadhouder's prerogatives of mediation were emphasised by a special mandate issued by the States General. Lack of progress with the subsequent negotiations resulted in Willem II resolving the conflict through more drastic, and unprecedented, means. There is little doubt that the Prince acted in defence of his own position, as he was convinced that Holland's actions had undermined his authority as much as in the interests of the Union. However, there can equally be no question about the fact that Willem acted within the prerogatives given to him by the Union of Utrecht of 1579 and the resolution of 5 June 1650 issued by the States General. Therefore, the constitutional circumstances of the conflict itself as well as the fact that Willem II did not seek to exploit the momentum created to expand his authority suggest that the characterisation of the event as a coup or revolution should be dismissed.

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[288] Aitzema, *Saken van Staet,* Vol. V, p. 454.

[289] Willem II to [addressee's name missing], 26 Aug. 1650, *Archives,* Vol. IV, p. 407: 'que ceste affaire a restabli entièrement mon authorité'.

3.3 The debate on the stadhoudership at the Great Assembly of 1651

3.3.1 Introduction

When Willem II died in November 1650, six of the seven provinces of the Dutch Republic unexpectedly lost their stadhouder, leaving the United Provinces in a political vacuum.[290] For the first time, the Dutch state found itself in the unprecedented situation where there was no male adult Prince of Orange who could assume a position of leadership and authority. Herbert Rowen therefore described the moment as 'a profound transformation of the political scene in the United Provinces'.[291] However, only eight days after Willem II's death, his son and heir, Willem III, was born in The Hague. On the same day of the young Prince of Orange's birth, his mother, the *princess royal* Mary Stuart, sent a request to the States General for the baby to receive the offices and titles that his forefathers had held in the United Provinces. Six days later, Amalia van Solms made the same appeal for her grandson to both the States General and each of the seven provinces.[292] However, after the escalated conflict of the summer of 1650, the States of Holland had no intention of installing a new stadhouder, and sought to persuade the provinces of Zeeland, Utrecht, Gelderland, and Overijssel to follow its example. In order to do so, the States of Holland called for a 'Great Assembly' to be convened to discuss 'means for maintaining unity among the provinces upon the basis of the Union of Utrecht, confirming the order of the Reformed Church as established by the Synod of Dordrecht, and settling the status of the army'.[293] By late November, the States General had accepted Holland's proposal to call for a special assembly of the provinces to discuss the 'three pillars of Union, Religion, and Militia'.[294] This 'Great Assembly' first convened on 18 January 1651 in The Hague, and stayed in session until 3 September.

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[290] Willem-Frederik of Nassau Dietz remained in office as stadhouder of Friesland, and was also appointed to the office in Groningen and Drenthe in 1650, following Willem II's death.
[291] Rowen, *Princes of Orange,* p. 95.
[292] Aitzema, *Saken van Staet,* Vol. III, p. 460.
[293] H. H. Rowen, *John de Witt. Grand Pensionary of Holland, 1625-1672* (Princeton, 1678), p. 44.
[294] Res. St. Holl., 23-24 Nov. 1650.

The discussions that were held at the Great Assembly reflected a breaking point in the political history of the Dutch Republic, as it was, as rightly pointed out by Jonathan Israel, the first occasion since 1579 that the seven provinces gathered 'to debate the form and the structure of the Union' in order 'to determine how best to maintain the Union in the unprecedented situation in which the United Provinces now found themselves'.[295] It is therefore surprising that there is a significant lacuna in modern scholarship of detailed studies on the proceedings at this Assembly. Although the event features superficially in most historical studies of the period, a thorough recent study on the Assembly remains missing. Jan Poelhekke's article on the role of Gelderland during the Great Assembly might be seen as an exception, but its focus on that particular province alone means the study is limited in its scope of analysis.[296] Even in their study of 1650 as a breaking point in Dutch history, Willem Frijhoff and Marijke Spies have given noticeably little attention to the significance of the Great Assembly, and simply dismissed the matter as that 'there was no question of restoring the stadholderate in Holland and the neighbouring provinces'.[297] In general, scholarship repeats the assumption that the Great Assembly was simply a tool through which the now dominant *staatsgezinde* party in Holland successfully formalised the imposition of its policies upon the other provinces, and thereby consolidated its leading position in the Dutch Republic.[298] A similar prevailing assumption is that the matter of the stadhoudership had effectively been decided upon *before* the Assembly convened, leaving the latter with no scope for discussion on the matter. Israel phrased this as follows:

> The basic restricting of government, and power relationships, took place during the crucial months between William II's death and the convening of the Great Assembly, leaving the latter with little more to do than acquiesce and formalize

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295 Israel, *The Dutch Republic,* p. 7036, 706.

296 J. J. Poelhekke, 'Nijmegen, Gelderland, en de "Grote Vergadering" van 1651', in: *Numaga* (1969: Vol. 16), pp. 96-173.

297 Frijhoff and Spies, *1650: Hard-won unity,* p. 78.

298 This line of argument can for example be found in: Geyl, *Orange and Stuart,* pp. 79-82; Poelhekke, *Geen Blijder Maer,* p. 183; Frijhoff and Spies, *1650: Hard-won unity,* p. 77-80; Israel, *The Dutch Republic,* pp. 702-710.

> the restoration of Holland's ascendancy over the confederate state […] [as] the decision to leave the stadholderate in Holland indefinitely vacant was already taken in November.[299]

This following section will reject this line of scholarship by giving a thorough analysis of the discussion on the stadhoudership during the Great Assembly, and thereby demonstrating that the matter was in fact still hotly debated among the provinces for several months. In doing so, it shows that the traditional interpretation of the Assembly ignores the practical role the stadhoudership had in Dutch governance, and the genuine concern for its absence that was felt among many of the provinces. I therefore mean to challenge the general consensus in scholarship that most of the discussion on the stadhoudership had already taken place before the Assembly convened, and that the meeting only served to ratify these decisions.

3.3.1.1 Methodology: Lieuwe van Aitzema's account of the Great Assembly in the Saken van Staet

The main challenge to writing a historical analysis of the Great Assembly is the fact that it occurred as a separate event taking place *outside* the traditional bodies of government, such as the provincial States and the States General. Records of these bodies therefore provide little detailed information about the nature of the proceedings happening inside the Grand Hall of the Binnenhof, in which the Assembly took place. Instead, there exists a scattering of sources ranging from provincial statements submitted for negotiation to correspondence between governmental institutions or individuals. However, a thorough overview of most of these sources is available in the work of Lieuwe van Aitzema (1600 - 1669), who thereby has published the most detailed historical source on the proceedings of the Great Assembly. Aitzema was a Frisian diplomat, who was based in The Hague since 1625 as the permanent representative of the Hanseatic League at the States-General. He lived and worked in the heart of the political action of the United Provinces, and had, through his professional network, constant access to state documents and diplomatic

[299] Israel, *The Dutch Republic,* p. 703.

correspondence. These governmental papers form the basis of his historical works, of which the most famous was the *Historie of verhael van saken van staet en oorlogh (1621 – 1669),* which was published in 14 volumes between 1657 and 1671. Like his other works, the *Saken van staet en oorlogh* consists mostly of an extensive chronological collection of governmental papers and correspondence, which are put into a historical narrative by the author. Due to the fact that Aitzema's *Saken van Staet* will be used as a key text to this analysis of the Great Assembly, it is necessary to evaluate the work's credibility as a historical source, as well as the potential of the author's personal bias of the events.

Both Aitzema's work as a historian as well as his political ideas have received significantly different evaluations. Jan Poelhekke, for example, has praised Aitzema's work, and wondered why it had not received more appreciation by historians.[300] Contrastingly, Pieter Geyl has judged Aitzema's writing to be a dry, endless series of formal documents bound together by the author's commentary.[301] For this specific reason, Gees van der Plaat has considered Aitzema's writing as 'useful and informative, but not very accessible'.[302] Although Geyl and Van der Plaat are correct in their evaluation of the readability of Aitzema's writing, it is precisely the extensive collection of authentic documents and government proceedings presented in his work that make it such a valuable and comprehensive source. Moreover, one can verify the authenticity of the many documents used in the *Saken van Staet,* as well as the author's narrative, when comparing them with other contemporary works written in the period, such as the diary of the Frisian stadhouder Willem-Frederik of Nassau-Dietz (which will be referred to later in this section). All of this confirms the reliability of Aitzema's work as a historical authority on the Great Assembly.

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[300] J. J. Poelhekke, 'Enkele aantekeningen over Lieuwe van Aitzema', in: Poelhekke, *Met pen, tongriem en rapier. Figuren uit een ver en nabij verleden* (Amsterdam 1976); pp. 85-114, pp. 85-86.
[301] P. Geyl, 'Aitzema, de kroniekschrijver en nieuwsleverancier' in: Geyl, *Verzamelde Opstellen,* Vol. III (Utrecht, 1978), Vol. III; pp. 110-18, p. 117.
[302] G. van der Plaat, 'Lieuwe van Aitzema's kijk op het stadhouderschap', in: *BMGN* (1988, 103: 3), pp. 341-72, p. 371. Cf. G. van der Plaat, *Eendracht als opdracht. Lieeuwe van Aitzema's bijdrage aan het publieke debat in de zeventiende-eeuwse Republiek* (Hilversum, 2003).

If we accept the authenticity of the source material which forms the bulk of the *Saken van Staet,* there is still the potential issue of the author's bias towards the narrative he has constructed. After all, Aitzema wrote his works in the midst of an intensely polarised political period in Dutch history, which meant that he potentially aimed to contribute to the political debate on the stadhoudership through his own work. In terms of his personal political leanings, however, the author has stated on several occasions that he was merely a writer of the '*naeckte waerheyt*' (naked truth), and explicitly denied to be either '*Prins-gesint'* or '*Hollandts-gesint'*; 'what I have written, I wrote to my best abilities as a historian (…): with arguments sometimes against, sometimes in favour of the Prince, according to every person's words and beliefs'.[303] Regardless, many historians have since debated Aitzema's political preferences, and the extent to which he let his own potential bias be reflected in his work. For some time, a general consensus existed that Aitzema himself supported the states party of Johan de Witt, which Geyl attributed to opportunism rather than conviction.[304] Jan Cornelissen, Edzo Waterbolk, and Simon Groenveld have all argued that Aitzema's alleged pro-states sentiment came from a genuine belief in the superiority of a pluralist model of government, with the latter moreover stating that the political views of the Frisian author were thoroughly 'biased by the *staatsgezinde* opinions and propaganda'.[305] Herbert Rowen, however, has been more cautious in his judgement of the author's personal politics, and has argued that Aitzema often appeared ambiguous in his commentary on contemporary politics, adding that his opinion seemed variable depending on the topic.[306] A more recent study, however, has fiercely rejected the idea that Aitzema was a 'principled republican', and argued instead

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[303] Aitzema, *Saken van staet,* Vol. VII, pp. 725-26.

[304] Geyl, *Orange and Stuart,* p. 218.

[305] J. D. M. Cornelissen, 'Brieven van Aitzema in het archief der Brusselsche nuntiatuur', in: *Bijdragen en Mededelingen van het Historisch Genootschap* (1928: Vol. 49); E. H. Waterbolk (ed.), *Proeven van Lieuwe van Aitzema. Opstellen voortgekomen uit een werkcollege onder leiding van dr. E. H. Waterbolk, hoogleraar aan de Rijksuniversiteit Groningen* (Leeuwarden, 1970), pp. 8-9; S. Groenveld, *Verlopend getij. De Nederlandse Republiek en de Engelse burgeroorlog* (Dieren, 1984), pp. 131-32.

[306] H. H. Rowen, 'Lieuwe van Aitzema. A soured but knowing eye', in: P. Mack and M. C. Jacobs (eds.), *Politics and culture in Early Modern Europe. Essays in honour of H. G. Koenigsberger* (Cambridge, 1987), p. 174.

that the Frisian historian had much more sympathy for the House of Orange and the restoration of the stadhoudership than has previously been thought.[307]

Although the question of Aitezema's political bias has thus proven to be divisive, its significance for a historical evaluation of the *Saken van Staet* is mostly limited to the context provided by the author to create a narrative around the sources presented in his work. The matter is therefore of less concern to this study, as it focuses predominantly on the governmental documents presented in Aitzema's work, and not on author's narrative surrounding it.

3.3.2 The debates of the Great Assembly

This section will demonstrate that, in contrast to belief in modern scholarship so far, the role of the stadhoudership within the constitutional framework of the United Provinces was one of the most hotly debated topics of the Great Assembly. It will show that this was the case despite insistence by the Province of Holland that the office was a purely provincial institution, and therefore fell outside the remits of the Assembly. Instead, a debate emerged on the matter of the office's necessity within the Union's constitution, with special reference to the question of whether a province had the right to leave the office vacant.

At the heart of this discussion were differing interpretations of the Union of Utrecht, which was generally regarded by all parties as 'the sole foundation upon which the glorious building of this Republic has been built, the sole clay with which its walls are being held upright, […] and the pillars upon which its security rests'.[308] The following account of the negotiations at the Assembly will show that of particular importance for the discussion were the Union Articles 9, 16, and 21. As discussed in Chapter I, these Articles tasked the stadhouders in the Dutch Republic with the preservation of internal unity if any discord among the provinces would occur. The stadhouder's role on both a inter and intra-provincial level was thus to function as a 'neutral arbiter' or mediator, who

[307] Van der Plaat, 'Lieuwe van Aitzema', pp. 353-354; Aitzema, *Saken van Staet,* Vol. VI, p. 351.
[308] Aitzema, *Saken van Staet,* Vol. VI, p. 503.

was responsible to solve any rifts that would endanger the survival of the Union. These Union articles were at the heart of the debate on the stadhoudership during the Great Assembly, and formed the basis for the argument by the office's proponents that no province was allowed to leave the stadhoudership vacant due to the importance of the post as set out by the Union of Utrecht.

3.3.2.1 The Great Assembly: Opening Positions

The Great Assembly took place at the Binnenhof in The Hague, which also held the seat of the States of Holland and the States General. It is noteworthy to point out that the physical space in which the Great Assembly convened carefully reflected Holland's political perception on the matters at hand. The *Groote Zaal* ('Grand Hall') in which the Assembly convened had been decorated with a great number of colourful flags and banners that had been captured from the Spanish troops during the Eighty Years War. Even more symbolic, however was the fact that the Hall was richly furnished with green linens (instead of black), in order 'to show that Holland was not in mourning' over the death of their late stadhouder.[309] The assembly space was thus purposefully transformed into a political statement that reflected Holland's position on the future of the United Provinces: an independent Republic with a strong sense of unity among the provinces, but with no place for a stadhouder.

In order for the provinces to negotiate directly, rather than through their deputies in the States General, every province had sent a special delegation from their States government to reside in The Hague for the duration of the Assembly. The delegation of Holland was the first to take the floor on 18 January, and used the opportunity to make its position on the stadhoudership abundantly clear. Holland's strategy on the topic was to try and leave it completely off the negotiation table on the basis that the stadhoudership, as a provincial institution, did not fall within the remit of the Assembly. The province's lengthy opening speech, delivered by its Councillor Pensionary Jacob Cats (1577 – 1660), reflected this line of argument by expressly leaving out any mention of the

[309] Aitzema, *Saken van Staet*, Vol. VI, p. 498.

office. Instead, Cats emphasised that of the three main discussion points ('Union, Religion, and Militia') which the Assembly was set to discuss, only the last topic deserved any substantial attention because the former points had essentially remained unchanged:

> Since there has been no change to the two first issues in the current situation (thank God), […] the only issue still subject to deliberation concerns the Militia and all things related to it, and how it from henceforth shall be organised.[310]

By thus arguing that the state of the Union had been unaltered since the events following the Peace of Münster, Holland emphasised that the stadhoudership was neither an intrinsic part of the Union's government, nor was the office a necessity for the welfare of the Republic.

Cats dedicated the rest of Holland's opening speech almost exclusively to a proposal that the States General would no longer appoint a captain-general *ad vitam* ('for life'), as such an office was no longer necessary now that the Dutch Republic was at peace. Instead, the province proposed a reorganising of the Union's army to reflect the new circumstances, by transferring most of the captain-general's decision-making powers to the *Raad van State* ('Council of State'), while more local military decisions could be made by the respective Provinces and towns themselves. Holland justified its proposal not only on the basis of recent practical changes in the Union's military situation, but also on the elaborate argument that the existence of an appointed captain-general for life was not in line with the example of many of the admired ancient Republics from biblical and classical times. Cats thus argued that by abolishing the position of a captain-general *ad vitam,* the United Provinces would emulate 'the Government and Military of the 'oldest Republic that the world has ever known':

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310 Aitzema, *Saken van Staet,* Vol. VI, p. 499:
'Aengaende de twee eerste poincten en is by de jegenwoordige gestaltenis van saken (God lof) geen verandering gevallen, […] invoegen dat de deliberatie nu te houden eygentlijck ende alleenlijck is raeckende het bestellen van de Militie ende dat daar omtrent is, ende hoe de selve by de jegenwoordige voor-gevallen Vergaderinge beleydt behoordt te worden.'

> namely, [the Republic] of the Hebrews, who are God's own people, who from the time that they fled from Egypt to the time of Kings, being four hundred and fifty years, never had a Governor or Captain General, despite the fact they were involved in many wars, and only ever elected a Head or Field Marshall for every [separate] campaign.[311]

From the outset of the Great Assembly, the delegation from Holland thus had a clear goal: to convince the provinces to abolish the election of a captain-general *ad vitam*, and to avoid discussion on the stadhoudership in general.

The opening statements of Utrecht, Overijssel, and Gelderland originally showed support for Holland's position. Even though Gelderland had initially been utterly divided on the question of its stadhoudership after Willem II's death, those opposing the election of a new stadhouder had narrowly outvoted the others (which was partly due to strong external pressure from Holland).[312] The result of this was that Gelderland's opening speech at the Assembly on 20 January closely followed Holland's agenda, with no mention of the stadhoudership at all and a proposal to transfer the various duties of the captain-general to the States-General and the Provinces themselves.

The province of Zeeland, however, opened its statement at the Assembly on a more cautious note. Before the Assembly, the States of Zeeland had agreed to stay closely aligned with the States of Holland, as in accordance with the Union of Dordrecht of 1575, and not elect a new stadhouder, although it had taken a lot of persuading and pressure from Holland to get the traditionally pro-Orange province to agree to this.[313] Zeeland's ambivalent position to the stadhoudership is evident in the province's opening statement at the Assembly, in which it supported Holland's implicit arguments for leaving the office vacant, whilst also emphasising the importance of the office on a Union-wide level. The *Zeeuwse* deputies emphasised the importance of the Union of Utrecht, which had prescribed a mediatory role to the stadhoudership's in order to preserve the state's internal harmony. Furthermore, they stressed the office's historic prominence for the

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311 Aitzema, *Saken van Staet,* Vol. VI, p. 500.
312 Poelhekke, 'Nijmegen, Gelderland, en de 'Grote Vergadering' van 1651', pp. 195-216.
313 Israel, *The Dutch Republic,* pp. 704.

Republic by calling it 'the Government's Principal Director', to whom 'many notable services and merits the State of these Lands' were indebted.[314] Instead of pointing at the stadhoudership's provincial nature, Zeeland instead emphasised the office's significance for the state as a whole, hailing the office for 'steering the Ship' [of State] and preserving the *eendracht* among the provinces. The province argued that internal harmony was the core strength of each republican state and only guarantee for its survival, and, like Cats, turned for evidence to biblical and ancient examples:

> And so the Histories teach us, that, as long as they [the Greek states] remain in that alliance, and uphold that unity, they could be defeated by the great might of the Persians; experience has also found, what this State through unity and trust among the members among each other can endure against the King of Spain, and how the same, despite all the burdens and a bloody war of eighty years, has been elevated to this prosperity and height, as it is in the present day.[315]

The deputation of Zeeland was hereby the first to explicitly open the debate on the future of the office by concluding that, if some provinces choose to leave the stadhoudership vacant, the Assembly should discuss 'a remedy' so that 'the most important and necessary articles of the Union would not expire'.[316]

Zeeland proposal that the stadhoudership should be replaced by an alternative authority tasked with the powers of mediation soon found support from both Overijssel and Utrecht. Overijssel in particular emphasised that since such an authority had been deemed a necessity by the 'sacred and unbreakable' Union treaty of 1579, it was important that a similar peace-making instrument should remain as part of the Republic's governmental system. The province therefore, though still defending the notion that provinces had the right to not appoint a stadhouder, concluded that an alternative should be sought by the appointing some other 'neutral Arbiter'.[317] Similarly, the deputies from Utrecht suggested the establishment of a system of independent judges or non-partisan

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[314] Aitzema, *Saken van Staet,* Vol. VI, p. 502.
[315] *Ibid.*, p. 503.
[316] *Ibid.*, p. 504.
[317] *Ibid.*, p. 536.

mediators if ever a conflict would arise between the towns or provinces. Both deputations emphasised that the articles 9, 16, and 24 of the Union of Utrecht had bestowed upon the stadhoudership a role that was so essential for the preservation of the Union, that if the office was to be left vacant, and alternative should thus be established.

Finally, the provinces Friesland and Groningen declared themselves in their opening statements strongly opposed to the notion that a province could choose to leave the stadhoudership vacant. These two northern provinces, along with Drenthe (the Republic's 'eight' province, which did not have a voting right at the States General), still had a stadhouder, and argued vehemently for the significance and necessity of the office. Similar to the previous provinces, the text of the Union of Utrecht was at the heart of their argument, and specifically the afore-mentioned articles referring to the stadhouder's position as mediator and judge in any internal disputes between the provinces. Friesland advocated an interpretation of these articles in which the stadhoudership itself was an integral and, according to the Union, mandatory part of the Republic's governmental system. Thus the Frisian delegation argued that:

> the necessity to have stadhouders must at the formation of the Union been deemed so indispensable, that they could not imagine a solution to difficult issues without it, as is evidenced by the articles nine, sixteen, and twenty-one from the aforementioned Union treaty.[318]

Friesland's position further asserted that, considering the stadhoudership's important role for preserving the Union, the office was an essential and obligatory component of the Republic's government. It emphasised that, as the Treaty itself was written with the aim to be preserved 'until times eternal', all its articles should be interpreted similarly:

> and although the ninth article includes the words 'by provision &c.' and 'at this time', as if when the stadhouders have died, [and] to be replaced by a new one, this or that Member [province] could choose to do so according to her own liking and appetite; [but] this cannot be argued from the contents of the first

[318] *Ibid.*, p. 510.

> article, as the intention was to make a Treaty, which would last for all times eternal, and therefore also the means and persons for its preservation should be treated accordingly, in order to support this work when it is unstable.[319]

The Province of Groningen closely followed Friesland's line of argument, and emphasised the importance of preserving the articles of the Union treaty, which stipulated that a stadhouder should be referred to for advice and judgment at all times of conflict. The delegation from Groningen reminded the other deputies that any weighty discussions on the nature of the Dutch state should be regulated according to the Union of Utrecht, 'being an eternal Pact and confederacy, of which one may not stray'.[320] The province thus argued that, as several articles of the treaty clearly stated the importance of the stadhouders in occasion of conflict, the office could not dismissed without endangering the future of the state:

> Our ancestors had clearly acknowledged, that a variety of people, who made up the government of this State, and still make it, meant a variety of opinions, and that ultimately conflicting opinions would cause weighty issues. Having thus implemented solving measures against such an evil, and decided, that any dispute that would arise, would be deferred to the *Heeren Stadthouders* from the United Provinces: *dicto Articulo*.[321]

Moreover, the delegation from Groningen reminded the Assembly of the twenty-fourth article of the Union treaty, which stated that 'every stadhouder, either now or who

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[319] *Ibid.*, p. 510.

[320] *Ibid.*, p. 512:
'Souden de Heeren van Stadt ende Landen u Hog. Mog. in grondelijck bedenckinghe gheven, ofte niet alle de Deliberatien in dese hooghwichtige saecken soo wel Politicque als Militaire, behooren ghereguleert te worden nae den Sin ende Inhoudt van de Unie voorsz., zijnde een eeuwigh Verbondt ende confederatie, waer van men niet vermach te scheyden'.

[321] *Ibid.*, p. 512:
'Onse Voor-Ouderen hebben daer by seer wel konnen bedencken, dat diversche Persoonen, daer uyt de Regheringhe van desen Staet bestont, ende noch bestaende is, diversche humeuren by brachten, ende vervolgens eyndelijck discrepante opinion oock in soo hooghwichtige saecken soude causeren. Hebben oock op Salutaire middelen, tegens soodanighen quaet, verdacht gheweest, ende verstaen, dat het verschil daer uyt geresen, sal worden ghedefereert aen de Heeren Stadthouders van de Unieerde Provintien: dicto Articulo'.

will come hereafter, shall swear an oath to maintain and upkeep every article'.[322] This article, emphasised Groningen, should be interpreted that the Union treaty had meant for stadhouders to be an integral part of the Dutch state both at the time and in the future.

3.3.2.2 Phase II of discussion

When Holland's Grand Pensionary Cats had opened the Assembly with the province's original proposition, he had tried to keep the topic of the stadhouder off the debating table on the argument that the office, being a provincial institution, fell outside the remit of the Great Assembly. However, the previous section has shown that the subsequent considerations made by the other six provinces, including those who in principle supported Holland's policy of leaving the stadhoudership vacant, caused Holland's attempt at side-lining the issue to fail. Instead, a lively debate emerged about the role of the office as described in the articles of the Union of Utrecht, and its necessity for the preservation of the state. The role of the stadhoudership as the Republic's mediator, and its stipulation as such in several articles of the Union of Utrecht, had been one of the main arguments of Friesland and Groningen in favour of the office. Moreover, even provinces that had followed Holland's example in keeping the office vacant now argued for the necessity of finding an alternative to the stadhouder's role of conflict resolution. Discussion thus turned to whether or not the stadhoudership itself formed an integral part of the Republic's constitution, or whether it could be replaced by an alternative governmental system of mediation.

When the deputies from Holland took the floor again on 13 February, it was in an attempt to reclaim control of the debate and steer it away from the stadhoudership. The province thus announced that in order to limit the 'troubles' the Assembly had to deal with, discussion on matters that are 'Provincial, and do not belong to the deliberations and disposition of this Assembly' would no longer be allowed. It continued by explicitly stating that one of these purely 'provincial matters' was 'the appointment of stadhouders, or to choose to withhold such appointment', as this was 'a private policy matter for the

[322] Aitzema, *Saken van Staet,* Vol. VI, p. 512.

States of each respective Province'.[323] Instead, the province aimed to get the discussion back to focussing exclusively on the 'third corner stone' of the Union; the Military. When listing the range of issues that related to 'the entire Union', and therefore of importance to the Assembly, most concerned the reorganisation of the Republic's armed forces.[324] In total, Holland presented a list of eleven discussion points which it deemed of importance to the whole Union, nine of which related solely with the Republic's armed forces. The tenth topic, however, admitted that a discussion was necessary about 'how the differences that might arise between the Provinces could be solved'. Admitting this point to the Assembly's agenda shows that Holland realised it could no longer ignore the matter of the stadhoudership without at least discussing an alternative to what was argued to be the office's most important reason for existing.

Debate soon thereafter continued, but despite of Holland's list of priorities for discussion, the focus of debate remained on the stadhoudership. In late February, the Frisian delegation, for example, gave another impassioned speech about the necessity of the office, in which the stadhoudership was described as the guardian for the preservation of the Union of Utrecht, while vehemently opposing any 'vague interpretations or presumptive opinions on the stadhoudership':

> The ancestors at the time of the Union of Utrecht judged the stadhouders to be a 'temperamentum Polyarchiae', a need and a necessity, in order to thwart and prevent such discord and conflict, yes, [to act] as a bond and chain-link of the eternal Alliance which they had entered; and if despite this prevention, the same said differences and discord may arise between the Provinces, they will have the aforementioned Stadthouders as a *panaceam* or *facram ancoram*, and sole remedy for lessening and resolving such disputes and quarrels.[325]

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[323] *Ibid.*, p. 537.

[324] *Ibid.*, p. 538:
'Of en wanneer, en op wat wyse geprocedeert sal worden tot elective van een Capiteyn Generael over het Volck van Oorloge'.

[325] *Ibid.*, pp. 542-543, 544:
'De Voor-ouders oordeelden ten tijde van de Unie van Utrecht de stadhouders als een 'temperamentum Polyarchiae', dienstig ende noodig, tot uytsluytinge ende voorkominge van

Moreover, rumours reached The Hague in early April that in Zeeland several towns and members of the nobility were now pushing for the appointment of a stadhouder and the 'First Noble' post unique to that Province, both of which had been traditionally held by the Prince of Orange. Soon afterwards, the States of Zeeland recalled its delegation to the Assembly back home to discuss these new developments.[326] In response, Holland sent a delegation of four men, led by Johan de Witt, to Middelburg to formally request the return of the Zeeuwse deputies, though in reality, as noted by Aitzema, their foremost objective was 'to divert the blow of the election of a stadhouder and *Premier Noble*'.[327] This was especially important because the States of Holland feared that an alteration of policy in Zeeland could cause Utrecht, Gelderland, Overijssel, and even some towns in Holland, to change their mind on the stadhoudership as well.[328] Considerable pressure from Holland thus ensured that the States of Zeeland remained committed to the 'special union' between the two provinces, and send back its deputies to the Assembly.

3.3.2.3 Outcome and conclusions

Throughout the proceedings at the Assembly during the spring and early summer of 1651, Holland secured the support of Zeeland, Utrecht, Overijssel, and Gelderland to leave the stadhoudership in their respective provinces vacant, despite instances of further internal disagreement on the matter (and a few outbursts of popular unrest in several *Zeeuwse* towns).[329] The Frisian deputies, moreover, reported home in May that they found the 'zeal and diligence of some Provinces to change the form of Government' so strong, that they ultimately decided to simply advise the other delegates that the least amount of

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soodanighe dissentien ende tweespaltigheden, ja als een bandt ende keeten van het eeuwigh Verbont 't welck sy onderlingh aengingen, endie indien niet tegenstaende dit preservatijf, de selve verschillen ende oneenigheden tusschen de Provincien mochten inkruypen ende plaets vinden hebben sy de voornoemde Stadthouders als een panaceam ofte facram anchoram, ende eenighste remedie tot dempinge ende slissinge van soodanighe dispuyten ende onlusten ghekeurt, gesteldt, ende bevestight'.

[326] Rowen, *John De Witt*, p. 52.

[327] Aitzema, *Saken van Staet,* Vol. VI, p. 554.

[328] *Ibid.*, pp. 559-560.

[329] Israel, *The Dutch Republic,* pp. 711-12.

change would be best.[330] However, it should be stressed that as late as 20 July 1651 a debate in the Assembly was still ongoing about creating a substitute for what was perceived as the stadhoudership's most important role in Dutch government. Ultimately, the deputies of Holland, Gelderland, Zeeland, Utrecht, and Overijssel agreed on a system in which, at the occurrence of a severe inter- or intra-provincial conflict, the stadhouder would be replaced by a temporarily appointed 'impartial, capable, peace-loving Person who is knowledgeable in matters of State'. If this person would not succeed in solving the dispute, the provinces would then resolve to a system of appointing an equal number of 'neutral arbiters', who could elect a 'Super-Arbitum' from among them to have the final word in case they could not come to a satisfactory solution.[331] Moreover, the deputies from Friesland and Groningen still achieved a small victory. They successfully insisted that a clause was added that this new mechanism would not be the case for any provinces who still had a stadhouder, or 'who might have one in the future'. By doing so, the northern provinces not only managed to secure the prominence of Willem Frederik's position in their own provinces, but they also left a gap open to the possible future restoration of the stadhoudership in the other five provinces.[332]

3.3.3 The Frisian stadhoudership and the Great Assembly

Although this thesis focuses predominantly on the stadhoudership of Holland and Zeeland, it is sensible to make a brief exception when studying the Great Assembly and include an analysis of the stadhoudership of Friesland and Groningen. As the only stadhouder left in office after Willem II's death in November 1650, count Willem Frederik of Nassau-Dietz had a strong interest in the outcome of the Great Assembly. He therefore travelled to The Hague in early 1651 in the hopes of influencing its proceedings. Moreover, the personal diary kept by Willem Frederik during this time

330 Aitzema, *Saken van Staet,* Vol. VI, p. 562.
331 *Ibid.*, p. 595.
332 *Ibid.*, p. 595.

provides significant additional insights into the contemporary debate on the position of the stadhoudership.

In the winter of 1650-1651 the position and reputation of the Frisian stadhouder outside the northern provinces had been severely damaged. During the summer of 1650, Willem Frederik had personally headed the army that besieged Amsterdam on behalf of his cousin, Willem II. Moreover, after Willem's death, Willem Frederik had unsuccessfully tried to convince the States of Utrecht, Gelderland and Overijssel to appoint Willem III as stadhouder, with himself acting as 'lieutenant stadhouder' until Willem came of age.[333] In a private letter to Constantijn Huygens, secretary to the House of Orange, Willem Frederik also wrote about his attempts to persuade the seven provinces to name Willem III as captain-general of the Republic's armed forces, with again himself appointed to assume the office until Willem had reached adulthood.[334] His efforts, though formally on behalf of Willem III, were thus met with deep mistrust by both the *staatsgezinde* factions in the States of Holland, as the remaining members of the House of Orange. The dowager princess of Orange, Amalia van Solms, and the princess royal, Mary Stuart, both suspected the Frisian stadhouder to use the power vacuum that had been created by Willem II's death to usurp the positions that had traditionally been bestowed upon the Prince of Orange.[335] The fact that Willem Frederik was acutely aware of the precarious situation he was in is shown through his diary, in which he wrote on 1 January 1651 that since the death of his 'closest friend' Willem II, he had lost 'many friends', and gained 'many enemies, and gain more every day in Holland'.[336]

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[333] Israel, *Dutch Republic,* p. 705.

[334] Willem Frederik to Constantijn Huygens, 29 January 1651, in: *De Briefwisseling van Constantijn Huygens (1608-1687)* ed. J. A. Worp (6 Vols: The Hague, 1911-17), Vol. 5, pp. 60-61.

[335] Although Willem Frederik would eventually go on to marry Amalia van Solms' daughter Albertina Agnes in 1652, Herbert Rowen noted how relations between 'the two allied houses' of Orange-Nassau and of Nassau-Diets remained strained for many years afterwards. Rowen, *Princes of Orange,* p. 101.

[336] Willem Frederik, *Gloria parendi. Dagboeken van Willem Frederik, stadhouder van Friesland, Groningen, en Drenthe, 1643-1649, 1651-1654,* ed. J. Visser and G. N. van der Plaat (The Hague, 1995); 1 January 1651, p. 738.

Being stadhouder of Friesland, Groningen, and Drenthe, the proceedings and decisions that were made at the Great Assembly considering the stadhoudership were of vital importance to Willem Frederik's position. Both the status and powers of his current office, as well as his political and military ambitions for the future, depended on the outcome of the discussions in The Hague. Willem Frederik's keen awareness of this fact is reflected in the constant correspondence he kept with the Frisian delegation in The Hague from the moment the Assembly opened on 18 January 1651. The stadhouder described in his diary how every day he received 'many Letters' from the town, containing a constant stream of news updates and the contents of the resolutions and propositions made by the other provincial delegations.[337] In early January, Willem Frederik was sent Holland's opening statement, along with the news that many of the provinces were set out 'to alter the ninth and sixteenth article of the Union'. The Frisian stadhouder interpreted the latter as a personal attack, since these were the articles directly engaging with the stadhouder's position as mediator, and thus wrote 'these will affect me the most, because they are set against me'.[338] Initially, Willem Frederik decided to wait out the storm 'with serenity and patience'. However, on 5 February he received news from The Hague that a placard had been put on the front door of his residence there, stating that the Frisian deputies at the Assembly might as well be wearing his livery, as they did not dare to act or speak in contradiction to their stadhouder's wishes.[339] In response, the stadhouder noted in his diary that 'it is not enough to sit quietly and be absent, as they cannot leave me in peace'.[340]

Shortly afterwards, Willem Frederik thus travelled to The Hague in person, where he arrived on 20 February. His arrival was expected for the funeral of Willem II, which took place on 8 March in Delft, but his resolve to become more directly involved with the developments at the Great Assembly explains his staying in The Hague for the

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337 *Dagboeken FW*, 15-25 January 1651, pp. 740-751.
338 *Ibid.*, 16 January 1651, p. 741:
'sie meinden het 9 en 16 articul van de Unie te veranderen, hetwelck mij am meesten sal raecken, wandt sie sijn op mij gebeten'.
339 *Ibid.*, 5 February 1651, p. 744.
340 *Ibid.*, 5 February 1651, p. 744.

subsequent three months. Willem Frederik described arriving in a hostile environment, as 'the Hollanders', in a campaign to discredit the office of stadhouder, were still trying to find information 'wherever they can in and around Amsterdam, to see what they can find against me, to blame me, and to discredit me with the municipalities and regents'.[341] In the following weeks the stadhouder spoke on many occasions with the delegation of Friesland, of which some feared that if Friesland were to continue 'pushing' the *heeren* of the States of Holland, they would increase their vendetta against Willem Frederik.[342] This, then, was the dominant reason why by the spring of 1651 the Frisian delegation at the Assembly abandoned its pursuit of defending the stadhoudership as necessity for each province, but instead limited itself to seeking to preserve its importance and status in the northern provinces.

On 20 May 1651 Willem Frederik arrived back in the north, where he wrote a revealing diary passage outlining his political strategy for self-preservation as the only stadhouder left in the United Provinces. He thus wrote:

> Relating to the government of Friesland, I shall behave myself well there and be in good standing with the magistrates, the nobility and land owners, the *grietzluyden*, [and will be] careful, civil, humble, speaking little, hearing everything, not participating in gossip, will make no quick promises, but when a promise has been made to keep it. Also to be in good standing with the *heeren* deputies, with the *heeren van den Hoove,* the burgomasters and *vroetschappen*. […] To take good care of my military offices, to perform them well, to push for my advancement in these, and to therefore be in good standing with the Provinces, to have a good name and reputation with the regents and municipalities, and to be civil and polite to everyone in the world.[343]

The passage demonstrates Willem Frederik's assessment of the extent to which his political position was dependent on the approval of the States' governments; particularly

[341] *Ibid.*, 20 February 1651, p. 747.
[342] *Ibid.*, 21 February 1651, p. 747.
[343] *Ibid.*, 13 May 1651, p. 751.

in a political environment in which the stadhoudership, which used to be a given part of the Dutch governmental structure, had now become optional.

3.3.4 Conclusion

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the sparse historiography on the Great Assembly has predominantly characterised its proceedings and outcome as a triumph for Holland. However, it has so far been wholly overlooked that Holland's ultimate success was only made possible due to the fact that the province was ultimately willing to compromise and discuss an alternative to the stadhouder's role as mediator and arbiter in case of internal discord between the provinces. Moreover, the discussion on the office during the Great Assembly shows that the office had in meaning and exercise grown larger than a purely provincial post; indeed, it was a provincial office with a Union-wide role. Therefore, Holland's argument that the stadhoudership fell outside the remit of the discussion topics of 'Union, Religion, and Military' failed; according to other provinces, the office was not merely a provincial office, but one that was directly linked to the survival and prosperity of the Union. The notion that the remaining provinces of the Dutch Republic thus submissively followed Holland's example of leaving the stadhoudership vacant should be revised.

Chapter 4

LITERARY PERCEPTION OF THE STADHOUDERSHIP

4.1 Introduction

The previous three chapters of this thesis have focused on the constitutional development of the stadhoudership in the Dutch Republic, and the practical use of the office by the Princes of Orange. They have shown how tasking the stadhoudership with the preservation of *eendracht* among the Dutch provinces, as stipulated by the Union of Utrecht, was the idea underpinning the perception of the office in the Dutch post-Habsburg era. It has also been demonstrated how the Prince of Orange actively used the office as a tool of mediation and conflict resolution, and justified their more controversial actions by calling upon this task. The importance of this aspect of the stadhoudership in the eyes of both the Princes of Orange themselves and their contemporaries is therefore crucial to understanding the political crises of 1618-19 and 1650. The following two chapters will build on these arguments to demonstrate the ways in which the concept of *eendracht* and the preservation of unity was central to the contemporary portrayal of the stadhoudership in Dutch visual and literary arts. This chapter will focus on popular literature dating from the period the early conception of the stadhoudership as a republican office in the 1580s up until the Stadhouderless Period and subsequent restoration of the office in 1672. In particular, it will analyse the vocabulary used by authors in reference to the stadhoudership, to explore how this fitted with the general development of the office as discussed in the previous chapters.

Theo Hermans has argued that literature was 'a phenomenon of central importance' in seventeenth-century Dutch society, contributing to the shaping of Dutch religious, civic, and political identities.[344] The United Provinces enjoyed a flourishing literary scene, not least due to a comparative lack of censorship restrictions, which encouraged the development of an extensive network of printers, publishers, and booksellers.[345] The Dutch Republic also boasted relatively high literacy rates among its citizens, especially in its urban centres.[346] A significant part of this thriving Dutch print market consisted of what I shall refer to as 'popular literature', that is, mass-distributed printed literary sources produced in order to entertain and inform an audience. Claartje Rasterhoff has emphasised the accessibility of the fast-growing commercial markets for books and prints to all levels of society, as cheap copies of many popular literary works were published, and so were often affordable to 'both the growing group of middling class, as well as to those lower on the social ladder'.[347] In this light, I use the concept of 'popular' to refer to the fact that these works were easily accessible to a wide audience, and to their cross-class appeal. The most common examples of popular literature are songs and broadside ballads, poetry, and theatre plays. The performative aspect of early

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[344] Theo Hermans, 'The World of Literature', in: H. Helmers and G. Janssen (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Dutch Golden Age* (Cambridge, 2018), pp. 289-307; p. 289.

[345] Much has been written on the literary scene of the Dutch Republic. For a general overview relevant for this period, see: 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, 1987), pp. 63-86; C. E. Harline, *Pamphlets, Printing, and Political Culture in the Early Dutch Republic* (Dordrecht, 1987); N. M. Orenstein, 'Print Publishers in the Netherlands 1580–1620' in: Ger Luijten et al. (eds.), *Dawn of the Golden Age: Northern Netherlandish Art 1580–1620* (Amsterdam, 1993), pp. 167–200; P. G. Hoftijzer and O. S. Lankhorst, *Drukkers, Boekverkopers en Lezers in Nederland tijdens de Republiek: Een Historiografische en Bibliografische Handleiding* (The Hague, 2000); Willem T. M. Frijhoff and M. Spies (eds.) *1650, Hard-Worn Unity* (Assen, 2004), pp. 257-280; J. Salman, *Pedlars and the Popular Press: Itinerant Distribution Networks in England and the Netherlands 1600–1850* (Leiden, 2013).

[346] J. Luiten van Zanden and T. de Moor, 'Mensen en economie in de Gouden Eeuw', *Leidschrift* (2008: Vol. 23, No. 2), pp. 19-21.

[347] Claartje Rasterhoff, 'The Markets for Arts, Books, and Luxury Goods', in: *The Cambridge Companion to the Dutch Golden Age,* pp. 249-267; pp. 249-250. Cf. Claartje Rasterhoff, *Painting and Publishing as Cultural Industries: The Fabric of Creativity in the Dutch Republic, 1580-1800* (Amsterdam, 2016).

modern popular literature has led Bloemendal and Van Dixhoorn to argue that 'the distinction between literary and non-literary forms of expression and communication was far less clear-cut in that period, even non-existent'.[348] Moreover, Adam Fox has pointed out that the different media of print and speech in early modern society 'infused and interacted with each other in myriad ways', adding that the introduction of print did not kill the oral tradition, but instead these two forms of media enjoyed a relationship of mutual reinforcement and engagement.[349] Popular literary genres such as songs and theatre were dependent on live performance, and poetry was also often read aloud. Thus, although this research is based upon textual sources, it must be emphasised that contemporary audiences were just as likely to have engaged with these works through a performative way as well as a written text. Moreover, the fact that many of these literary works were meant for oral performance meant that even those who were illiterate had access to them, which broadened the spectrum of their audience.

The artistic and performance-based nature of popular literature set it apart from other widely disseminated print genres, such as pamphlet literature, which was often strongly political and propagandistic. However, this does not mean that popular literature did not include political messages. Genres such as songs, poetry, and theatre often directly engaged with contemporary political issues, thereby both expressing widely shared ideas and adding new arguments to the public debate. Besides entertaining, the authors of the literary works featured in this chapter would have often additionally aimed at informing and persuading their public.[350] These literary publications thus not only reflected the political debate of their time, but also influenced this debate in return. Helmer Helmers,

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[348] Jan Bloemendal and Arjan van Dixhoorn, 'Literary Cultures and Public Opinion in the Early Modern Low Countries', in: J. Bloemendal et al (eds.), *Literary Cultures and Public Opinion in the Low Countries, 1450-1650* (Leiden, 2011), pp. 1-36, p. 6.

[349] Adam Fox, *Oral and Literate Culture in England, 1500-1700* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 7-9.

[350] Bloemendal en Van Dixhoorn have argued that literature in the early modern Low Countries 'played an important role in the shaping of the public opinion, and the expression of ideas', Jan Bloemendal and Arjan van Dixhoorn, 'Literary Cultures and Public Opinion in the Early Modern Low Countries', in: J. Bloemendal et al (eds.), *Literary Cultures and Public Opinion in the Low Countries, 1450-1650* (Leiden, 2011), p. 4.

for example, has argued that poets in the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic gradually distinguished themselves as 'an important group of opinion-formers', adding that 'almost all literary genres – ranging from songs, poems, and dramas – were used for political and religious persuasion'.[351] One of the most prominent authors of the period was Joost van den Vondel (1587 - 1679), who even during his lifetime was regarded as a 'Prince of Poets', and who often commented on political events through his poetry and plays.[352] His work will therefore feature extensively in this chapter. The importance of popular literature for the shaping of opinions and perceptions was also commented upon by contemporaries, such as Pieter Corneliszoon Hooft, who in 1642 wrote that these literary genres influenced more people than 'handwritten pamphlets or books' could ever hope to.[353] In recent years modern scholarship has increasingly begun to re-evaluate the import of popular culture for our understanding of the early modern period.[354] For example, in a 2007 study on the political culture of the Dutch Revolt Peter Arnade and Henk Van Nierop argue that 'the real political legacy of the Revolt lies not exclusively in the high

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351 Helmer Helmers, 'Popular Participation and Public Debate', in: *The Cambridge Companion to the Dutch Golden Age*, pp. 87-104; p. 97.

352 Ton van Strien and Els Stronk, *Het Hart naar Boven. Religieuze poëzie uit de Zeventiende Eeuw* (Amsterdam, 1999), p. 97; Jan Bloemendal and Frans-Willem Korsten (eds.), *Joost van den Vondel (1587-1679): Dutch Playwright in the Golden Age* (Leiden, 2012). See also: A. Sneller, *De Gouden Eeuw in gedichten van Joost van den Vondel (1587-1679)* (Hilversum, 2014).

353 P. C. Hooft, *Neederlandsche Histooriën* (Amsterdam, 1642), pp. 36-37; also cited in Jan Bloemendal and Arjan van Dixhoorn, 'Literary Cultures and Public Opinion in the Early Modern Low Countries', in: J. Bloemendal et al (eds.), *Literary Cultures and Public Opinion in the Low Countries, 1450-1650* (Leiden, 2011), pp. 1-36, p. 1.

354 For example, see: René van Stipriaan, *Het Volle Leven. Nederlandse cultuur en literatuur ten tijde van de Republiek (circa 1550 – 1800)* (Amsterdam, 2002); Horst Lademacher, *Phönix aus der Asche? Politik und Kultur der niederländischen Republik im Europa des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Münster, 2007); Jan Bloemendal et al. (eds.) *Literary Cultures and Public Opinion in the Low Countries: 1450 – 1650* (Leiden, 2011); Natascha Veldhorst, *De Perfecte Verleiding. Muzikale Scenes Op Het Amsterdams Toneel in de Zeventiende Eeuw* (Amsterdam, 2004); Arthur Weststeijn, 'The Power of "Pliant Stuff": Fables and Frankness in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republicanism', in: *Journal of the History of Ideas* (2011: Vol. 72, No. 1) pp. 1–27; Katja Gvozdeva et al. (eds.), *Dramatic Experience. The Poetics of Drama and the Early Modern Public Sphere(s)* (Leiden-Boston, 2017). An earlier example is H. Duits, *Van Bartholomeusnacht Tot Bataafse Opstand: Studies over de Relatie Tussen Politiek En Toneel in Het Midden van de Zeventiende Eeuw* (Hilversum, 1990).

texts of theorists who penned them, but perhaps more vibrantly in the actions, words, observations, and popular media that was the upheaval's daily bread. For it is in these sources that theory met practice (…)'.[355] Similarly, Nigel Smith has suggested that cultural life in the northern Netherlands was from the start of the Revolt onwards 'dedicated to understanding and promulgating the nature of the new political reality and society that had been created'.[356]

The production of various popular literary genres, such as poetry and playwriting, was traditionally based around local chambers of rhetoric (*Rederijkerskamers*).[357] In 1638 the first permanent municipal theatre of the United Provinces, the 'Schouwburg', was opened in Amsterdam, which partly professionalised the city's theatre scene. Songs were 'a medium of huge importance' in early modern Europe, as well as an integral part of daily life for both the rich and the poor.[358] Songs did not only serve as forms of entertainment or worship, but were also valuable for spreading news. Often their contents told of recent military battles, or of contemporary political developments. Broadside ballads and songs thus were a reflection of their own time, and directly engaged with it. This makes seventeenth century song culture an important tool to measure the *Zeitgeist* on contemporary politics. The most common distribution method of songs at the time in for example England and the Holy Roman Empire was by the publication of single-page broadside ballads. In the Low Countries, however, it was more common to publish a large collection of songs together in a single songbook, which could be then be

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355 P. Arnade and H. van Nierop, 'The Political Culture of the Dutch Revolt', in: *Journal of Early Modern History* (2007: Vol. 11, No. 4-5), pp. 253-261, p. 261. See also P. Arnade, *Beggars, iconoclasts, and civic patriots. The political culture of the Dutch Revolt* (Ithaca NY, 2008).

356 Nigel Smith, 'The politics of tragedy in the Dutch Republic: Joachim Oudaen's Martyr Drama in Context', in: Gvozdeva et al. *(*eds.*), Dramatic Experience*, pp. 220-249, p. 221.

357 G. W. Brandt (ed.), *German and Dutch Theatre (1600-1848)* (Cambridge: 1993), pp. 337-338; Theo Hermans, 'The World of Literature', pp. 290-291.

358 Citation from Judith Pollmann, 'The Cult of Memory of War and Violence', in *The Cambridge Companion to the Dutch Golden Age,* pp. 87-104; p. 95. Cf. C. Marsh, *Music and Society in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2010); and Stipriaan, *Het Volle Leven* (2002).

purchased from travelling merchants and in bookshops.[359] Most of the songs used in this study have been found in such contemporary songbooks. Some of the books were small and simple affairs that could be carried along in someone's pocket, while others were printed on expensive paper and decorated with different types of fonds and high quality images.[360] Different types of songbooks were thus available to and enjoyed by many levels of society, from the lower middle classes to the elite. Louis Peter Grijp has argued that many songs probably originated as part of 'low culture', but were enjoyed equally by the elite as by people from the lower classes.[361] Moreover, people would not necessarily have had to purchase a songbook in order to be familiar with the popular songs at the time, as they were often performed in the streets, in taverns, and on stage.

Besides its flourishing song culture, the United Provinces was a thriving scene for poetic and theatrical works. The Dutch seventeenth century has often been hailed as a high point for its production of the literary arts, and the period produced several authors, such as Pieter Corneliszoon Hooft, Constantijn Huygens, and the earlier mentioned Vondel, who are still considered among the literary greats. A relatively large amount of the *oeuvre* of these authors has survived; not only because of the contemporary popularity of their work (which often resulted in a significant number of reruns), but also because of the appreciation by later audiences. Because of the popularity and wide reach of their work among contemporaries, the writings of these authors are featured regularly in this chapter. This chapter will for the first time study these authors side by side, and offer an

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359 The regional difference in the publication method of song literature becomes especially apparent when we look at the numbers of songs that have survived. Several thousands of English and German broadsides have remained, while it is rare to find an original songbook from those regions. The numbers of surviving Dutch songs show the opposite pattern, with very few Dutch broadside ballads originating from the sixteenth century having survived, and only a few dozen from the seventeenth century. Instead, at least 400 Dutch songbooks printed before 1800 remain. See: Grijp and Van der Poel, 'Introduction', pp. 23-24.

360 Max Prick van Wely, *De bloeitijd van het Nederlandse volkslied. Vanaf het ontstaan tot aan de tweede helft van de zeventiende eeuw* (Haarlem, 1974), p. 43.

361 L. P. Grijp, *Het Nederlandse Lied in de Gouden Eeuw* (Amsterdam, 1991), pp. 8-9.

analysis of their literary output as part of a wider political debate on the stadhoudership and its place in the Dutch political state.

4.2 Part I: Literary representation of the stadhoudership, 1588 – 1650

4.2.1 Literary representation of the stadhoudership under Maurits & Frederik Hendrik

This section will provide an analysis of the ways in which the stadhoudership of the United Provinces was represented in popular literary genres, such as poetry, plays, and songs, during the time of Maurits, Frederik Hendrik, and Willem II. However, I will first provide an overview of the representation of Willem the Silent in popular print, as some of the dominant literary tropes that became associated with the stadhoudership in the Dutch Republic originated in the early years of the Revolt. Marijke Spies and Jan Bloemendaal have both argued that popular print played a vital role in the propaganda for the rebels in the early years of the Dutch Revolt, with poetry and songs regularly originating from within the circles around Willem of Orange.[362] During these years, admired figures from the Old Testament were commonly used in popular literature about the Revolt, and comparisons of Willem to a Dutch Mozes or David were frequent. This participated in a wider popular discourse that has been described by, among others, Eric Nelson, Wyger Velema and Arthur Weststeijn, in which the Dutch likened their young Protestant state to the renowned classical and biblical republics of the past, such as the Hebrew Republic.[363] Early examples of this can be found in the songs featured in the songbook *Geuzenliedboek* (1581), which remained popular throughout the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and in particular in the song 'Wilhelhmus' (written ca. 1570-

[362] Marijke Spies, 'Verbeeldingen van vrijheid: David en Mozes, Burgerhart en Bato, Brutus en Cato', in: *De Zeventiende Eeuw* (1994: Vol. 10), pp. 141-158; Jan Bloemendal, 'Willem van Oranje: een Hercules op Leidse planken', in: *De Zeventiende Eeuw* (1994: Vol 10), pp. 159 - 167.
[363] Nelson, *The Hebrew Republic* (2010); W. Velema and A. Weststeijn (eds.), *Ancient Models in the Early Modern Republican Imagination* (Leiden-Boston, 2018).

72), which directly compared Willem to David, who, with God's help, fled from the tyranny of Saul and led his people to freedom.

The literary representation of Willem I gained almost mythical proportions after his murder in 1584. A general discourse soon emerged in which the late Prince was hailed as the *pater patriae* of the young Republic, having given his life for the freedom of his people. A particularly poignant example of such literary myth-shaping is the play *Auriacus sive Livertas Saucia* (*Orange or the Injuring of Freedom*, 1602) by the scholar and poet Daniël Heinsius (1580 – 1655). In this play, Willem (or 'Auriacus') is inseperable from the allegorical figure of Libertas, who, upon Auriacus' death, announces that now she, too, must leave: 'Despairing, outlawed, do I leave you, *burgers,* banished do I make my departure'.[364] The close association between freedom and the Prince of Orange remained prominent in popular literature throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but, as this chapter will show, it became more narrowly linked to their capacity as captain-general of the Dutch armed forces, referring in particular to the idea of the state's freedom from foreign suppression. The biblical metaphors for the popular literary representation of the Princes of Orange also re-appeared frequently throughout this period. Although Marijke Spies has linked this trend almost exclusively to the popular literary portrayal of Willem I during the early years of the Revolt, this chapter will demonstrate that comparisons to biblical redeemers remained common in the literary discourse surrounding the stadhouders of the Dutch Republic.[365]

After Willem's death, the ongoing war between the new born United Provinces and Spain remained a constant source of inspiration in the nation's contemporary literature. Songs, ballads, and poetry commented on recent war developments and praised military triumphs. Popular literature was an important element of a state-sponsored glorification of the Dutch war effort, in which artists, authors, and publishers could expect to be rewarded by the States General for promoting Dutch military victories and triumphs in

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[364] Daniël Heinsius, *Auriacus sive Libertas Saucia* (1602), p. 84:
'perdita a vobis eo proscripta cives, exul a vobis eo'.
[365] Spies, 'Verbeeldingen van vrijheid', pp. 141-159.

their work.[366] The most common way in which the Princes of Orange appeared in popular literature up until 1648 was within this military context, in which they were celebrated in their capacity as captain-general of the Dutch armed forces. Popular contemporary ballads and poetry thus celebrated Maurits' military triumphs, such as the songs 'Van 't Innemen van Breda' (about the capture of the city of Breda in 1590) and 'Van de Velt-slagh in Vlaenderen' (which celebrated the battle of Nieuwpoort in 1600). Likewise, Frederik Hendrik's wartime victories were immortalised in verses that praised the Prince's heroic military leadership, such as 'Gesang tussen de Maegt van 's Hertogenbos en de Prins van Oranjen' (1629), and 'Aenspraeck tot de edele Batavieren, ter eeren den E.D. Prins Frederick Hendrick van Nassou' (1630s). Contemporary popular literature in this period, then, predominantly portrayed the Prince of Orange in his capacity of captain-general, rather than as a stadhouder, being thus mostly represented as a military rather than a political figure. This is particularly well illustrated in a short poem by Jacob Westerbaen (published in the 1630s, but exact date unknown), in which the author admonishes the stadhouder's wife, Amalia van Solms, to stop imploring him to come home from the battlefield and instead accept her life as a 'soldier's wife':

> Thou cannot marry Frederik
> without becoming a soldier's wife,
> as he will continue […]
> to lead the States' army into battle.[367]

This particular verse personifies Frederik Hendrik exclusively as a soldier, without reference to his political office or princely status.

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[366] Judith Pollmann, 'The Cult of Memory of War and Violence', in: *The Cambridge Companion to the Dutch Golden Age,* pp. 87-104; p. 88-89, p. 97.

[367] Jacob Westerbaen, 'Antwoort van mijn Heere den Prince van Orangien; Op den Brief van Mevrouwe de Princesse', in: *Ibid.*, *Gedichten, Verdeylt in vyf boecken* (The Hague, 1657), pp. 251-252:
'Ghy kost met Frederijck niet trouwen
Of moet oock zijn een Krijghs-mans Vrouwe
Soo lang hy met zyn Oorloghs-helden
Het Staten-leger voert te velde'.

However, it would be wrong to think of these songs and poems diminishing the role of the Prince of Orange to a mere military figure, while aiming to glorify the Dutch war effort. Instead, the office of captain-general was consistently represented as a centralising figurehead that unified the nation's war effort, and behind which all seven provinces should rally. The Prince was thus portrayed as the literary personification of the 'spirit' of the Union of Utrecht, which had been created to unify the provinces in a collected war campaign to fight off Spanish rule. For example, the poem 'Aen de Vrye Nederlanden' ('To the Free Netherlands', 1623) by Constantijn Huygens called upon the Dutch to 'close the seven loyal hands' for the 'Chief of their defence'.[368] Similarly, the song 'Aenspraeck tot de Edele Batavieren' (1630s) depicted how Frederik Hendrik admonished the States to 'tightly bind together the bond of Unity' in order to defeat the enemy.[369] Another example can be found in Westerbaen's poem 'Uytvaeert van Sijne Doorluchtige Hoogheyd Frederick Hendrick' ('Funeral of His Highness Frederik Hendrik', 1647), which states how the Prince, in his capacity as captain-general, had 'bound all together in Unity's tight embrace'.[370]

The concept of unity in association with the captain-general was closely linked to the ideal of national freedom from foreign suppression. As stipulated by the Union of Utrecht, unity among the provinces was necessary to coordinate a centralised war campaign in order to maintain the state's independence. In this context, the captain-general was represented as the Dutch champion for the nation's freedom. This direct link between unity and national freedom, as championed by the captain-general, was constantly echoed in contemporary popular literature. For example, Joost van den Vondel

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368 Constantijn Huygens, 'Aen de Vrye Nederlanden' (1623), in: *De gedichten van Constantijn Huygens,* ed. Jacob Worp (9 Vols: Groningen, 1892-99), Vol. II, pp. 24-25:
'Siet de Hooftmann van uw' wacht
Staet u weer voor uyt en wacht.
Sluyt de Seven trouwe handen'.

369 [Anon.], 'Aenspraeck tot de edele Batavieren. Ter eeren den E. D. Prins Frederick Hendrick van Nassou', in: *Het nieuwe Nassouse Het Blasende veelderhande Victory-gesangen, bevochten door de Princen van Orangien; als mede de voornaemste Veld- en Zee-slagen die in haer tijden voor-gevallen zijn* (1675).

370 Westerbaen, 'Uytvaert van Sijne Doorluchtige Hoogheyd Frederick Hendrick' (1647), in: *Gedichten,* p. 288.

hailed Frederik Hendrik's victory at Grol in 1627 with the jubilant lines: 'And thou, oh FREDERICK!, who proudly sits on his horse, / and with his sword fights and labours for Holland's freedom'.[371] In 1632, Frederik Hendrik's successful capture of the city of Maastricht was celebrated with the poem 'Stedekroon van Frederik Henrick' ('A City's Crown for Frederik Hendrik', 1632), which stated that as the captain-general had 'killed' Spanish rule in the region, 'FREEDOM now plants her banner on its grave'.[372]

Closely linked to the idea of the captain-general as the champion of the nation's freedom was the popular literary trend of comparing those in office with figures from the Old Testament who, with the guidance of God, had delivered their people from tyranny and led them to freedom. As noted above, this depiction participated in a wider literary trend at the time of comparing the nascent Dutch republican state to the admired classical republics of the past, such as the Roman Republic, or the Venetian Republic.[373] An especially popular allegory was to compare the origins of the Dutch Revolt and its struggle for independence to the flight of the Jewish people from Egypt, and the Dutch republican state to the biblical Hebrew Republic.[374] Evidently drawing inspiration from such allegories, then, contemporary popular culture frequently compared the Prince to the biblical leaders that had played a key part in the God-led liberation of the Jewish people and the creation of their own state, such as Moses and David. Marijke Spies has dated the use of this trend in popular literature principally to the time of Willem I. Yet closer examination reveals that it remained a popular literary trope for the depiction of the captain-generals throughout the Eighty Years War. A prime example of this in the time of Maurits can be found in Joost van den Vondel's epic poem 'Verghelijckinghe vande

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[371] Vondel, 'Verovering van Grol, door Frederick Henrick, Prince van Oranje' (1627), in: *De werken van Vondel,* eds. J. F. M. Sterck et al (10 Vols: Amsterdam: 1927-37), Vol. 3:
'En ghy, o FREDERICK! Die fier en trots te paerde
Voor Hollands vrydom vecht en yvert met den swaerde'.
[372] Vondel, 'Stedekroon van Frederick Henrick' (1632), *De Werken van Vondel*, Vol. 3:
'Nu Mars syn rol volspeelt op 't wreed toonneel:
En d'uitvaert van Castiljen word beluid
[…] De VRYHEID op dit graf haer' standert plant'.
[373] Velema and Weststeijn (eds.), *Ancient Models in the Early Modern Republican Imagination,* (2018).
[374] Nelson, *The Hebrew Republic* (2010).

Verlossinge der kinderen Israels met de vrijwordinghe der Vereenichde Nederlantsche Provincien' ('Comparison of the redemption of the children of Israel to the liberation of the United Dutch Provinces', 1612). The poem, which had originally accompanied Vondel's first play *Pascha* ('*Passover*', 1610), made an extensive comparison between the Old Testament story of the enslaved Jewish people in Egypt and the contemporary situation of the young Dutch state, where its people were fighting against being 'enslaved' by Spanish rule. In this analogy, Vondel presented Maurits as a present-day Moses, who in his capacity as captain-general of the Republic's armies would deliver the Dutch people from Spanish oppression and lead them to freedom:

> 'O how miraculously Moses joins with Orange! […]
> One [Moses] led the Hebrews through the red waves,
> The other [Maurits] leads his people through a flood of tears,
> Straight through the tumultuous lake of mud, brains and blood;
> One freed the slaves, and the other lifts the Hat
> of Freedom in the air'.[375]

Another poignant example of a literary representation of the Prince as a 'biblical redeemer' is the song 'Triumph-Liedeken, ter eeren den edelen prins Mauritius' ('Victory Song, in honour of the noble prince Maurits', 1613). This song portrayed Maurits as a brave and 'devout Hero', who, like a young David, was sure to bring down Goliath (representing the Spanish armies) and bring victory to the Dutch state 'for [the benefit of] God's Word, and the freedom of the Nation'.[376] Similarly, the poem 'Aen de Vrye

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[375] Vondel, 'Verghelijckinghe vande Verlossinge der kinderen Israels met de vrijwordinghe der Vereenichde Nederlantsche Provincien' (1612), *De werken van Vondel*, Vol. 1, pp. 262-264:
'O wonderbaerlijck schict sich Moyses met Orangien! […]
Den eenen gaet d'Hebreen de roode golven banen,
En d'ander leyt de syn door eenen vloet van tranen,
Al recht door't gholvigh Meyr van klibber breyn en bloedt;
De Slaven d'een ontslaet en d'ander steeckt den Hoet
Der vrijheyt inde locht.'
The 'Hat of Freedom' was a commonly used metaphor in Dutch contemporary literature and imagery. It was imagined as a hat on top of a long flag pole, and it represented the freedom and independence of the United Provinces.
[376] 'Triumph-Liedeken', in: *Het Nassouse trompetje* (1675), pp. 128 – 135, p. 129:

Nederlanden' ('To the Free Netherlands', 1623), by Constantijn Huygens, described the captain-general to the Dutch people as 'your David', who would bring 'that might Giant' (Spain) down to its knees.[377]

Likewise, the literary trope which had originated in the contemporary popular literature on Willem I as the 'Father of the Fatherland' lived on for his successors. For example, the song 'Van de velt-slagh in Vlaenderen' specifically referred to Maurits as a fatherly figure who led his 'children' into battle:

> 'Courage, Courage, my Children,
> exclaimed the Prince to all,
> their might [of the Spanish] is fading.
> Now, like a Father,
> I want to live and die alongside you'.[378]

Moreover, the earlier mentioned poem 'Aen de Vrye Nederlanden' (1623) described how Willem I of Orange had took the Dutch provinces in 'a fatherly embrace', and how his murder had made a 'Wees en 'Weêw' ('orphan and widow') of the new Dutch state and its people because their 'Vader, en uw' Helt' ('Father, and thine Hero') had died.[379] A poem by Jacob Westerbaen published in the 1630s similarly compared Frederik

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'voor Godes Woordt, en des Landts vryheydt schoon'.

[377] Huygens, 'Aen de Vrye Nederlanden' (1623), in: *Gedichten* Vol 2, pp. 24-25:
'Hoe die hooge Reusen hooghd
Voor uw' David heeft gebooght'.

[378] Anon., 'Van de velt-slagh in Vlaenderen' (1600)in: *Het Nassouse trompetje* (1675):
'Coragie, Coragie mijn Kinderen
Riep den Prins, in 't openbaer.
Haer macht begint te minderen,
Nu wil ick als een Vaer,
Met u leven en sterven'.

[379] Huygens, *Aen de Vrye Nederlanden* (1623) in: *Gedichten*, Vol. 2, pp. 24-25:
'Willem was het die u kusten […]
Die u Vaderlijck omarmden. […]
Maer hoe werd u weer te moede […]
Weder Wees' en Weêw geworden,
En uw Vader, en uw Helt

Hendrik's position as captain-general of the United Provinces to the responsibility that a patriarch has for his family:

> 'My first bride are our towns;
> all her citizens are my children'.[380]

Another example can be found in the earlier referenced poem 'Verghelijckinghe van de verlossinge der kinderen Israels', in which Vondel compared the Princes of the House of Orange as the 'Beschermeren en Vooghden' ('protectors and guardian parents') of the Dutch people.[381]

If the emphasis in the representation of the Princes of Orange in popular literature during the first half of the seventeenth century was predominantly in their capacity as captain-general, there are also a number of examples which depict them principally in their capacity as stadhouder. One such works is Vondel's poem 'Begroetenis aen den doorluchtighsten en hooghgeboren Vorst Frederick Henrick' ('Greetings to the highborn Prince Frederik Hendrik', 1626), which the poet wrote on the occasion of Frederik Hendrik's appointment to the stadhoudership of Holland, Zeeland, Gelderland, Overijssel and Utrecht. In the poem's first verse, Vondel announces how the appointment of a new stadhouder had already caused an increase of *eendracht* among towns and citizens:

Voor uw voeten saeght gevelt?'

[380] Westerbaen, 'Antwoort van mijn Heere den Prince van Orangien', *Gedichten,*, p. 251:
'Myn eerste bruyd zyn onse Steden:
Myn kinders al haer burger-leden'.

[381] J. van den Vondel, *Verghelijckinghe vande Verlossinge der kinderen Israels met de vrijwordinghe der Vereenichde Nederlantsche Provincien* (1612):
'en die van t'Huys Nassou,
Den Nederlanders tot Beschermeren en Vooghden,
Die t'samen hunnes volcks verlossinghe beooghden.'

We see the *burgerijen*
And major cities bloom and grow happy.
More *eendracht* can be seen, more love, and less hatred.[382]

The poem continues to predict an increase in prosperity for the Republic under the new stadhouder. It ends with a taunt towards the Spanish enemy that their hope that that discord and civil strife would befall the young Dutch state is in vain, due to the stadhouder being a 'balm' for the wellbeing of the state: 'what oils are for a wound, he [the stadhouder] is for our state'.[383]

The poem *Amsteldams Wellekomst aen den doorluchtighsten en hooghgeboren Vorst Frederick Henrick ('Amsterdam's Welcome to the distinguished and noble Liege Frederik Hendrik',* 1628) was published by Joost van den Vondel on the occasion of the stadhouder's visit to Amsterdam in 1628. Frederik Hendrik had been invited by the city government to act as a mediator in its conflict with the local Church Council (see Chapter II). The Amsterdam regents had recently allowed meetings of Remonstrants to take place, but this was met with protests from the Church Council on 7 April 1628. The stadhouder arrived in the city on 10 April in order to find a solution to the emerging conflict, and left again four days later after a preliminary agreement had been reached between the two parties. The town's regents had asked Vondel to compose a poem upon the occasion, and the result is one of the few contemporary examples in which a Prince of Orange is praised exclusively in his role as stadhouder. Moreover, it represents the stadhouder as per its most prominent role as instructed in the Union of Utrecht: that of a mediator of conflict. *Amsteldams Wellekomst* thus praises Frederik Hendrik as the one authority who could end discord and bring warring parties together:

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382 Vondel, 'Begroetenis aen den doorluchtighsten en hooghgeboren Vorst Frederick Henrick', in: *De Werken,* Vol. 2, p. 509:
'Wy sien de burgeryen
En groote steên alreede ontluycken en verblyen.
Meer eendraghts wordt gespeurt, meer liefde, en minder haet.'
383 *Ibid.*, p. 518:
' 't Geen olie is de wond, dat is hy onsen staet'.

Regulations and towns' laws
receive new strength
where ever you direct your footsteps,
And hatred and discord
disappear like smoke and mist:
And those untamed tongues,
who so boldly and unreservedly
echoed uprisings, blood and murder,
are silenced in every place.[384]

4.2.2 Literary Representation of the stadhoudership during the Truce Period Conflicts

Thus far, the examples we have examined of the literary depiction of the Princes of Orange in their respective capacities of stadhouder and captain-general have exclusively been in praise of the Prince. However, examples of open criticism in popular literature of the stadhouder became more visible during the height and aftermath of the Truce Period Conflicts, in which Maurits intervened in the growing conflict between the Remonstrants and Contra-remonstrants. This ultimately ended with the Synod of Dort and the execution of Johan van Oldenbarnevelt, the old Land's Advocate of Holland. Oldenbarnevelt's walking stick, which the elderly statesman had needed for support when climbing the scaffold, became a particular symbol of tyrannical cruelty and the danger of '*staatszucht*' ('power hungry') of which Maurits was sometimes accused.

Among the most critical authors who published literary works that condemned the stadhouder's role in the resolution of the conflict was Joost van den Vondel. Vondel, who

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[384] Vondel, 'Amsteldams Wellekomst aen den doorluchtighsten en hooghgeboren Vorst Frederick Henrick' (1628) in: *De Werken van Vondel*, Vol. 3, p. 182:
'Waerge komt uw' treden setten
Krygen keuren en Stads wetten
Nieuwe Kracht, en haet en twist
Stuyven wegh als roock en mist:
En die ongetoomde tongen,
Die soo stout en onbedwongen
Galmden oproer bloed en moord,
Swygen stil aen yeder oord.'

only several years prior had likened Maurits to a biblical redeemer in his epic poem 'Verghelijckinge vande Verlossinge der kinderen Israels' (1612), now accused the stadhouder of having tyrannical tendencies. His first literary reaction to the stadhouder's involvement in the conflict was his poem 'Weegschael van Hollandt, of de Hollandtsche Transformatie' ('Measuring Scales of Holland, or Holland's Transformation', 1618), in which Maurits was presented as having betrayed his position as a stadhouder, and thus as a servant of provincial authority, by suppressing the liberties of the cities of the Province of Holland through the use of military force:

> Letters clearly mention
> The Holy Liberties of every city.
> Gommer [Gomarus] saw here and there,
> Until my Lord the Prince
> Comforted Gommers' side, which hang on top,
> With his sword of steel,
> Which weighed so heavy,
> That all other things were too light to counterweight it.
> After that all worshipped Gommers' doctrine
> And Armyn [Arminius] was kicked out.[385]

Throughout the poem Vondel emphasised that matters of religion fell under the authority of the local town governments in Holland, depicting the stadhouder's intervention as a threat to the town's independence. When Oldebarnevelt was executed in 1619, Vondel commemorated the statesman with several poems which further

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[385] Vondel, 'Weegschael van Hollandt, of de Hollandtsche transformatie' (1618) in: J. van den Vondel, *J. van Vondel's Hekeldichten*, ed. J. Bergsma (Zutphen 1909), p. 1:
'Brieven die vermelden plat
't Heiligh Recht van elke Stadt.
Gommer zach vast hier en gins,
Tot zoo lang mijn Heer de Prins,
Gommers zijd', die boven hing,
Trooste met zijn staele kling,
Die zoo zwaer was van gewigt,
Dat al 't ander viel te licht.
Toen aenbad elk Gommers pop
En Armyn die kreegh de schop.'

denounced the stadhouder's involvement in the conflict. His poem 'Jaargetyde van wylen Joan van Oldenbarnevelt, Vader des Vaderlants' ('Season of the late Johan van Oldenbarnevelt, Father of the Fatherland', 1619) accused Maurits of crushing the 'freedom' and 'rights' of the towns.[386] Moreover, Vondel depicted Oldenbarnevelt as the true 'Father of the Fatherland', thus redeploying a literary trope often associated with the Princes of Orange to describe the late Land's Advocate. Vondel's 'Jaargetyde' was quickly followed by his poem 'Op den Burger-krijgh der Roomeren' ('On the Civil War of the Romans', 1620), in which he compared Maurits' interference in the conflict to both the uprising of the Roman nobility against the tyrannical king Tarquin, and the seizure of power by Julius Caesar. In both analogies, Maurits is compared to statesmen who had disregarded the state's liberties in favour of their own power. Particularly significant is the line 'The power hunger of a soldier caused the death of many a Hero', through which Vondel described all three men, thereby grouping Maurits directly with the classical despots.[387] Vondel concluded his critique with the poem 'Gespreck op het Graf van wijlen den Heere Johan van Oldenbarnevelt' ('Conversation on the Grave of the late Mr Johan van Oldenbarnevelt') in 1625, the year of Maurits' death, in which he remembered the stadhouder as a 'Dwingelandt' ('tyrant') who 'broke the Liberties of the free towns'.[388]

However, literary counter-arguments were also made in the years after Oldenbarnevelt's execution, according to which the stadhouder was hailed as the champion of political stability and *eendracht*. The most notable examples of these were from the hand of Constantijn Huygens, as in, for example, his epic poem 'Aen de Vrye Nederlanden' ('To the Free Netherlands', 1623). In the poem, Huygens encouraged the seven provinces to close their 'seven loyal hands' and stand united behind Maurits.[389] This

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386 Vondel, 'Jaargetyde van wylen Joan van Oldenbarnevelt, Vader des Vaderlants' (1619) in: *Hekeldichten*, pp. 85-86:
'de VRYHEIT quijt, en 't RECHT'.
387 Vondel, 'Op den Burger-krijgh der Roomeren' (1620) in: *De Werken van Vondel*, Vol. 2, p. 396:
'De state-sucht eens soldaets was veler Helden dood'.
388 Vondel, 'Gespreck Op het Graf van wijlen den Heere Joan van Oldenbarnevelt' (1625) in: *De Werken van Vondel,* Vol. 2, p. 421.
389 Huygens, 'Aen de Vrye Nederlanden' (1623) in: *Gedichten,* Vol. II, p. 30:

poem also drew on the common trope of characterising the stadhouder as both a 'father' and 'redeemer' to the nation, and opens by invoking the memory of Willem I, who had held the nation in his 'fatherly embrace', and whose death had left the state 'orphaned and widowed'.[390] It then recounts how hope was restored when a young Maurits followed in his father's footsteps and took up the struggle against Spain, like a 'David who was to meet Goliath'.[391] The notion of Maurits' stadhoudership as bringing political stability and *eendracht* was reinforced by Huygens' poem 'Scheeps-praet, ten overlyden van prins Mauritz' ('Ship talk, on the occasion of the death of prince Maurits', 1625), which was published on the occasion of Maurits' death, and the subsequent succession of Frederik Hendrik as stadhouder and captain-general. The poem portrayed Maurits as a as 'a skipper with no equal', who had 'steered the free ships' (representing the seven provinces) on a safe course through dangerous waters for many years.[392] But now, skipper 'Mouring' (a contemporary nickname for Maurits) had become tired, which, according to Huygens, had turned him 'from a lion to a sheep'. The future, however, looked bright with the arrival of the new stadhouder, 'moy Heintje' ('pretty Hein', a popular nickname for Frederik Hendrik). Frederik Hendrik had taken over command of the 'ship', thereby signalling a new period of political leadership centred on the stadhouder.[393]

'Siet de Hooftmann van uw' wacht
Staet u weer voor uyt en wacht.
Sluyt de Seven trouwe handen
Die de twee en acht vermanden'.

[390] Huygens, 'Aen de Vrye Nederlanden' (1623) in: *Gedichten* (9 Volumes), Vol. II, pp. 24-30:
'Wilhem was het … die u Vaderlijck omarmden, […]
Maer hoe werd u weer te moede […]
Weder Wees' en Weêw geworden'.

[391] *Ibid.*, p. 30:
'Hoe die hooge Reusen hooghd
voor uw' David heft gebooght'.

[392] Huygens, 'Scheeps-praet, ten overlyden van prins Mauritz' (1625), in: *Gedichten*, Vol. II, pp. 126-127.

[393] *Ibid.*, pp. 126-127.

4.2.3 Literary Representation of the stadhoudership under Willem II (1648 – 1650)

The themes discussed above remained prominent in the popular depiction of the Prince of Orange throughout the first half of the seventeenth century, and many were even applied to Willem II while he was still a child. The childhood of Willem II of Orange, son of Frederik Hendrik, is particularly noteworthy because he was the only future Prince of Orange who grew up amid wide public expectation that he would succeed his father as stadhouder and captain-general. This is further evidenced by the fact that Dutch popular literature frequently applied those tropes traditionally used to depict the political and military positions of the Prince of Orange to a young Willem II. This also demonstrates the sense in which these positions were increasingly regarded as semi-hereditary (if not officially, then at least out of tradition). This can already be seen in the many celebratory poems and songs written on the occasion of Willem's birth on 27 May 1626, in which he is consistently presented as the heir to his father's office. An example is a witty epigram by Constantijn Huygens, who had just entered Frederik Hendrik's services as his private secretary. In the short verse, Huygens celebrated the fact that the stadhouder's new-born child was a boy, as a girl would not be able to succeed Frederik Hendrik in any of his positions, and would have therefore been met with less celebration (or bell ringing) in the land:

> 'Orange has a child; what does it wear, trousers or a skirt?
> The question is asked too late, one can hear the answer from the bells.
> But if it had not been a Son, what would we have done?
> Had the bells not rang with as much fervour?
> Yes, without a doubt, they would have rung the bells,
> But without the clapper inside.'[394]

[394] Huygens, '27. Meij 1626. Geboortedagh van Prins Willem van Orange' (1626), in: *Gedichten.*, Vol. 3, p. 150:
'Oragnen heeft een kind; Wat draeght het, Broeck off Rock?
Dat's nu te laet gevraeght, men hoort het aen de klock.
Maer waer 't geen Soon geweest, wat hadden wij gedaen?
Hadd niet het klock-gerucht all even wel gegaen?

Besides the humorous tone of the verse and its double entendre, the poem also testified to the certainty felt (or at least promoted) amongst the circles of the Orange court of the family's dynastic claim to these positions.

Another poem published for the birth of Willem II focused on his father, whose stadhoudership was praised as having brought harmony and prosperity to the provinces. In this 'Oranje-May-Lied' ('Orange May Song', 1626) by Vondel, the state of the nation was described as a pastoral Arcadia, provided by the peace and eendracht instilled by Frederik Hendrik, who is able to disperse 'twist en tweedracht' ('conflict and discord') in an instant.[395]

When Willem was ten years old, he performed one of his first official public duties by laying the first stone of the 'Nieuwen Doelen' building in the Hague, which was to house the local *schutterij* (citizen militia). The boy, who was already widely praised in popular culture as the successor to his father's offices, was thus from a young age already asked to perform ceremonial tasks that were related to the Republic's military infrastructure. Two commemorative poems were published, both of which demonstrated a firm expectation that the young Willem would follow in the footsteps of his illustrious forebears. They, too, apply many of the literary tropes traditionally associated with the Prince of Orange. The first poem was written by Jacob Westerbaen and emphasised the image of the Prince as the heroic military leader who would lead the nation in its unified struggle for freedom, predicting the young Willem's future accordingly:

> That tender hand, which will in only a few years
> grow to manhood and bravery
> in order to protect the freedom of the nation and people'.[396]

Jae, buyten twijffeling, men hadde'r oock geluydt,
En klock op klock geroert, maer met de' klepel uyt.'

[395] Vondel, *Oranje-May-Lied* (1626), in: *De Werken,* Vol. 2, p. 762-764.

[396] Jacob Westerbaen, 'Op het leggen van den Eersten Steen tot den Nieuwen Doelen in 's Graven-Hage, gedaen door Prins Wilhem, den jongen Prins van Oragnen, in 't jaer 1636' (1636), in: *Gedichten,* p. 245:
'De teere hand, maer die in weynigh jaeren

The second poem was written by Constantijn Huygens, and drew on the biblical figures of Moses and David as redeemers of their people. Huygens thus compared the laying of the first stone by Willem to David's victory over Goliath by the throwing of a single rock:

> The Hand will not go astray
> Her aim shall be the forehead, and Goliath shall fall
> And David shall do this, with the first stone'.[397]

Although the poem is focused on Willem's future military career, Huygens' vision for the young Orange's future is similar to those of his predecessors: Willem, too, would lead the Dutch into battle and, by divine guidance, to triumph and freedom from their powerful enemy.

When Willem was fourteen he married his cousin, the nine year old English princess Mary Stuart. On the occasion of this match, Westerbaen repeated his expectations of Willem's future as a military leader who would protect the state's freedom. His poem 'Goede-Reys-Wensch aen den Doorluchtigen, Hoog-gebooren Prince Willem' (1641) specifically celebrated the military advantages of the match, expressing the expectation that the marriage between Orange and Stuart would strengthen the Republic's military position against Spain:

> This tender entwining of Roses and Oranges
> With sweet Lily leaves

Noch groeyen sal tot manne-dapperhyd
Om land en volck in vryheyd te bewaeren.'

[397] Huygens, 'De eerste steen vanden Doel in 's Gravenhaghe geleght by Prins Willem van Orange' (1636), in: *Gedichten*, Vol. III, p. 32:
'T sal aen de Hand niet schorten,
[…] Haer doel sal 't voorhooft zijn, en Goliath sal storten,
En David sal 'them doen, en met den eersten Steen.'

Strengthens the Lion's heart, in order to better resist
the Spanish violence.[398]

Willem II succeeded to his father's office's upon Frederik Hendrik's death in 1647. Numerous songs and poems were published that mourned the old Prince while hoping for a great future for his successor. Most of these continued to celebrated Willem II as the champion of the Republic's freedom against the mighty Spanish armies, despite the fact that by 1647 a peace agreement with Spain was all but officially ratified. For example, the final verse of the 'Song of mourning, about the death of Prince Hendrik' (1647) sang:

Now is the time of his Son
Our Dutch Prince, a sprite of Orange.
Pour in him, such a pious Spirit,
as his forefathers had been;
a menace for the Spaniards.[399]

Many of the aforementioned tropes continued to be associated with the popular depiction of the Princes of Orange throughout the seventeenth century. However, there is one particular aspect of the representation of the political position of the Princes in contemporary cultural media that can only be seen in the period before 1650, which is the depiction of the political relationship between the Prince and the provincial States' governments. This means that the events of that year resulted in a breaking point with

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398 Westerbaen, 'Goede-Reys-Wensch aen den Doorluchtigen, Hoog-gebooren Prince Willem, Gebooren Prince van Orangien, Grave van Nassauw' (1641), in: *Gedichten*, p. 317:
'Dit liefelijck vermengh van Roosen en Oranjen
Met soete Lely-blaen
Versterckt het Leeuwen hert, om het geweld van Spanjen
Te bet te wederstaen.'

399 Anon., 'Treurliedt. Over de doodt van Prins Hendrik' (1647), in: *Het nieuwe Nassouse trompetje* (1675):
'Sijn Soon is nu ter tijdt
Ons Neerlands Prins, een Spruytjen van Oranjen
Stort Heer in Hem, soo Vroomen Geest,
Als sijn Voor-vaders zijn geweest,
Een schrick voor Spanjen.'

the traditional literary representation of the stadhouder. Only after the occurrence of the major political rift of 1650 between Holland and the House of Orange did contemporary popular literature start to portray the dynamic between the Orange stadhouder and the States as two opposing political forces. Throughout the first half of the seventeenth century this relationship had consistently been depicted as one of successful collaboration between equal partners, in which the Prince fought for the republic's freedom from foreign oppression, while the regents were responsible for the state's good governance and domestic prosperity. This representation was naturally an oversimplification of the political reality, in which the Prince was both a military commander as well as a political player, but it fitted neatly with the general trend in which ballads and poetry largely focussed on the Prince's position as captain-general, while his political office of stadhouder was mentioned far less frequently.

This idea of collaboration can be found in literary sources dating from as early as the late sixteenth century, during the first years of Maurits' stadhoudership. For example, the song 'Van 't Innemen van Breda' ('On the Capture of Breda', 1590), written to commemorate Maurits' successful siege of the city of Breda that year, expressed the hope that the captain-general and the States would together succeed in 'their work' of steering the country to safety and prosperity:

> Praise and pray to the Lord,
> that he will preserve
> the Count of Nassou's Noble Blood
> and as the Country's *regeerders*
> that they may prosper
> in their well commenced work.[400]

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[400] [Anon.], 'Van 't Innemen van Breda' [1590], *Het nieuwe Nassouse Trompetje* (1675), pp. 10-18; p. 18:
'Looft ende bid des Heeren naem,
Dat hy doch wil bewaren,
Den Graef van Nassou 't Edel bloet,
Oock al des Landts Regeerders goet,
Dat sy mogen voortvaren,

Similarly, the ballad 'Aenspraeck tot de edele Batavieren' [1620s] described how Frederik Hendrik and the States together steered 'our robust ship' through 'many reefs and cliffs', thereby using the popular trope of the 'ship of state' to symbolise the country's welfare.[401] Many contemporary poems also credited the Republic's prosperity to the joint care of the Prince and the regents, such as a short verse by Johan Beets, published in 1639 as an ode to the regents of Beets' hometown Hoorn:

> All wonder how this may end;
> Full of hope but not without fear.
> His Highness and my lords the States
> Wake over us constantly,
> They scarcely rest by night or day. […]
> Praise your Prince […]
> Who has risked life and limb
> So often for the security of the dear Fatherland. […]
> Praise the care of your States
> Whose vigilance never slumbers.[402]

Met haerlien wel begonnen werck.'
Maurits is referred to here as the 'graef' of count of Nassou because he had at that time not yet inherited the title of Prince of Orange from his older half-brother.

[401] [Anon.], 'Aenspraeck tot de edele Batavieren, Ter eeren den E.D. Prins Frederick Hendrick van Nassou' [date unknown; probably second half 1620s] in: *Het nieuwe Nassouse Trompetje* (1675), pp. 25-30; p. 29:
'dat ons driftigh Schip,
Mach door menigh Banck en Klip'.

[402] J. Beets, 'Aen mijn E. heeren den Borgemeesteren ende regeerders der Stede Hoorn' (1639), in: *Ibid.*, *Dichtkonst van verscheidene stoffen* (1668):
'Elk haekt hoe dit afloopen wil;
Vol hoops maer niet van vreez' verlaten.
Zijn hoogheidt en de Heeren Staten
Zijn hier gestadigh in gewagh.
Daer is nau rust by nacht of dagh'. […]
Prijst uw Prins […]
Die 't lijf voor 't lieve Vaderlandt
Zoo menighmael veronderpandt. […]
Prijs hier de zorgh van uwe Staten
Die niet een oogh tot sluimer laten.'

A strict separation between the respective spheres of military and governance remained a prevalent feature of the popular representation of the Prince and States throughout this period. In 1647, for example, a ballad circulated that paid tribute to the new stadhouder and captain-general, Willem II, emphasising the division of responsibilities between the Prince and the States:

> Princely God, may You keep our Prince,
> the Young Orange sprite,
> so that he, for the general welfare,
> shall defend the interest of the land:
> [And that] our Lords the States may rule wisely,
> with good understanding and bold governance.
> In this way, o Heavenly Majesty,
> shall Your Church grow. [403]

4.2.3.1 The Peace of Münster (1648)

The first section of this chapter sought to demonstrate how the prevalent image in popular literature of the stadhouder focused on the persona of the Prince of Orange as a national figurehead who united the Dutch Republic in its fight for freedom from foreign rule. The signing of the Peace of Münster in 1648 meant that this goal of independence and freedom was now fulfilled. If both Frederik Hendrik and Willem II had personally been opposed to the treaty, contemporary popular literature shows that the misgivings of the House of Orange towards the peace treaty did not damage the image of the Princes of Orange as the country's most stalwart champion for peace. In fact, analysis of the

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[403] Anon., 'Treur-liedt. Over de doodt van Prins Hendrick' (dating 1647), in: *Het nieuwe Nassouse Trompetje* (1675), p.138:
'Prinss'lijcke Godt wilt onse Prins bewaren,
De Jongh Oranje Spruyt,
Op dat hy magh voor het Gemeen welvaren
's Landts saecken voeren uyt:
Ons Heeren Staten wijss'lijck doet regeeren
Door wijs verstandt en kloeck beleydt,
Soo magh, o Hemels Majesteyt,
U Kerck vermeeren'.

songs and poems published in 1648 to commemorate the Peace of Münster shows that Willem II and his ancestors were praised as primarily responsible for bringing about this peace, depicted as the climax of many years of military leadership. There was thus a noticeable discrepancy between the political reality of the peace conclusions, in which it had been the provincial States (and particularly Holland) that had worked towards the peace formation, and the popular representation of the occasion, in which the Princes of Orange were celebrated as the main champions of the event.

Two such examples will be discussed here. The first is the epic poem entitled 'Op de Vrede tusschen Philippus de Vierde, koningh van Spangen, ende H.H. Staten der Vereende Nederlanden' ('On the Peace between Philip IV, King of Spain, and the *Hoge Heren* the States of the United Netherlands', 1648) by Jacob Westerbaen. This lengthy poem describes an allegorical scene in which stadhouder Willem II, as a 'Dutch Augustus', was crowned with a wreath made of olive branches, after he had brought peace to the Republic by 'chasing away warfare from the country'.[404] The final verse emphasises the ways in which the previous captain-generals of the House of Orange had contributed to this glorious moment as they had fought to bring peace and freedom to the Republic: 'The first Willem took up the sword for [the sake of] the Nation / this one [Willem II] returns it to its scabbard and gives peace to the Land'. [405]

On the same occasion, the poet Jan Vos published the similarly titled 'Vrede tusschen Filippus de Vierde, Koning van Spanje; en de Staaten der Vrye Nederlanden' ('Peace between Philip IV, King of Spain; and the States of the Free Netherlands', 1648). In this poem, Vos gave voice to the idea that the Dutch nation owed an enormous debt of gratitude to Willem II and his predecessors for the peace and independence that they

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[404] Westerbaen, 'Op de Vrede tusschen Philippus de Vierde, koningh van Spangen, ende De H.H. Staten der Vereende Nederlanden' [1648], in: *Gedichten,* p. 306:
'Men vlecht' en waerder krans van spruytjes van Olyve
Voor den Oranje-Vorst, den Nederlansch' August,
Dewijl wy onder hem den krijgh te land uytdrijven.'
[405] *Ibid.*, p. 306:
'Een Wilhem heeft voor 't Land het swaerd eerst opgeheve,
Dees steeckt het wee in schee en geeft de Vree op aerd'.

had brought to the Republic, adding that 'the rising of the Orange sun' allowed for 'free breath in this breast'.[406] Vos also specifically honoured Frederik Hendrik and complimented both father and son on the making of the peace with Spain: 'Your father fought for peace; thou hast driven away the bloody clouds'.[407] Vos not only praised the Princes of Orange but also Amsterdam's regents, who 'by means of various political skills, chained the raging War, with iron chains, to the benefice of the cities, and [who] elevated the sacred Peace in the Netherlands for eternity onto the altar'.[408] However, this was as much a reflection of the political reality (in which Amsterdam had been among the main proponents of peace) as of Vos' habit to flatter the powerful magistrates of the city in the hope of receiving patronage or rewards.

It is particularly noteworthy to point out that both these literary panegyrics were written by authors who only two years later became vocal supporters of the anti-Orangist States' party after 1650. This demonstrates again that the notion of labelling an author as being 'anti-stadhouder' or 'Orangist' only makes sense *after* the political breaking point of 1650 took place.

4.2.3.2 The Attack on Amsterdam (1650)

The official ending of eighty years of hostilities with Spain had led to a flurry of literary publications in homage to the peace, which celebrated Willem II and his ancestors as those who had made it happen. Yet only two years later, the Prince's stadhoudership in the United Provinces became a subject of controversy, as the conflict over the decommissioning of soldiers that had arisen between Holland and the other Provinces

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[406] Jan Vos, 'Vreede tusschen Filippus de Vierde, Koning van Spanje; en de Staaten der Vrye Neederlanden' in: *Alle de Gedichten van de Poeet Jan Vos* (Amsterdam, 1662):
'lang leef de dappre Wellem, […]
Gy doet mijn borst, in dit gewest, weer aassem haalen,
Opgaand' Oranje zon!'
[407] *Ibid.*,:
'Uw' Vader vocht om vreê;
gy drijft de bloedge wolken, […] voor u wech.'
[408] Vos, *Alle de Gedichten*, pp. 91-21.

escalated over the summer of 1650. Willem's attempt to resolve the dispute in July by staging a surprise assault on Amsterdam led to a flood of literary reactions, including songs and poetry. These early literary works are particularly noteworthy as they demonstrated some of the main themes which would become prominent in both the negative and positive representation of the stadhouder during the Stadhouderless Period. Authors supporting Willem's actions emphasised the stadhoudership's responsibility of preserving unity within the United Provinces on both a provincial and national level, and argued that his actions had prevented a political schism between Holland and the other provinces. Others, however, presented Willem's behaviour towards Holland as a betrayal of the individual liberties of the province and its towns which he, as Holland's stadhouder, was supposed to serve and protect.

To the first category of authors belonged Constantijn Huygens, the loyal and long-serving member of the stadhouders' household. After having served as personal secretary to Frederik Hendrik, Huygens continued working in this position for Willem II, and thus had a personal interest in defending the stadhouder's actions. In 1650 Huygens published a scathing epigram on the aftermath of Willem's assault on Amsterdam, in which he mocked the city's regents for behaving in a 'surly' fashion after the Prince thwarted their 'selfish' political behaviour:

> Why was it, that Amsterdam was so surly,
> And not for the Prince?
> Much truth can be found in a few words:
> [It was] because the Prince was for Amsterdam.[409]

[409] The joke lies in the double meaning in Dutch of the word 'for'; 'for the Prince' means 'in support of the Prince', whereas 'for Amsterdam' means 'positioned (with his army) in front of Amsterdam'. Huygens, 'Amsterdam ontroert' in: *Ibid.*, *Koren-bloemen. Nederlandsche Gedichten van den Heere van Zuylichem* (Amsterdam 1672), Vol. II, p. 281:
'Hoe quam 't, dat Amsterdam so gramm was,
En waerom was 't niet voor den Prins?
In seven woorden gaet veel sins:
Om dat de Prins voor Amsterdam was.'

A more elaborate defence of the stadhouder's actions came from the fervently Orangist poet Jan Zoet. Zoet lived and worked in Amsterdam for most of his life, including during the time of Willem II's siege of the city. His poem "t Hollands Rommelzootje' ('The Debris of Holland', 1650) was accompanied by a brief essay in which Zoet gave his opinion on the powers and jurisdiction of the stadhouder. In the essay and poem Zoet strongly rejects any accounts which accused the stadhouder of having acted out of any 'dangerous and power hungry intentions', or which suggested that Willem II had been out to claim 'the supreme power of the state'.[410] Instead, Zoet defended the stadhouder's actions by stating that he had brought 'the city to order', and that his only aim had clearly been to unite Holland with the decision of the other Dutch provinces by removing some of the 'stubborn elements' from Amsterdam's town government.[411] Zoet further emphasised that the stadhouder had had the legal right to interfere with the city's governance in order to prevent Amsterdam and Holland from 'breaking' with the other towns and Provinces. Willem, he argued, had acted with full permission from the States-General, and had therefore acted on behalf of the whole Republic. Zoet's 't Hollands Rommelzootje' thus sought to support Willem's actions by arguing for their legality through emphasising the stadhouder's task of preserving the Republic's internal unity by interfering in case of discord. His passionate defence of the stadhouder's prerogatives did not make him many friends among Amsterdam's magistrates, who banished Zoet from the city for a period of six years.

The portrayal of the stadhouder's actions in the summer of 1650 as an act of legitimate interference in a domestic conflict, as seen in Zoet's poem, was a consistent theme in contemporary popular literature in support of the Prince. For example, an anonymously published poem defended Willem II's attack on Amsterdam by claiming that the stadhouder had acted 'to preserve the state'. Amsterdam, in contrast, had been undermining the interest of the Republic by creating discord among the provinces.[412] The

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[410] Jan Zoet, *'t Hollands Rommelzootje* (1650), p. 2.
[411] Zoet, *'t Hollands Rommelzootje* (1650), pp. 3-4.
[412] [Anon], *Bickers Laurecrans of Victory waghen* (1650), p. 10:
'd' Hemel wil ons PRINS oock Zeeg'ne,

poem accused Amsterdam's powerful mayor Cornelis Bicker and his brother Andries of being 'Traitors of the Fatherland' by making secret trading pacts with the English ('Would bonding which such devils / Not break the Union?'), selling out the Dutch nation to gain more power for themselves ('Is this how you seek to become / a Sovereign of our nation?').[413]

On the other side of the literary debate were publications which condemned Willem II's actions by emphasising the stadhouder's subservience to the provincial States. The Prince was thus said to have undermined the sovereignty of the States of Holland with his actions and to have violated the local liberties and prerogatives of the province and its towns. One of the most outspoken literary figures criticising the stadhouder's behaviour was Joost van den Vondel, who, like Jan Vos, was a loyal supporter of the local magistrates of his hometown of Amsterdam. Soon after Willem's attack on Amsterdam, Vondel published his poem 'Monsters onser Eeuwe' ('Monsters of our Time', 1650) in which he described Willem as a power hungry 'monster' who launched a 'rabid' attack on Amsterdam:

> One does not have to journey to Africa
> In order to see Monsters:
> Europe breeds them in her own palaces

Wiens trouw Bloedt ons sal verdeeg'ne, […]
Oms ons Staet, in Staet te houwen'.

[413] [Anon], *Bickers Laurecrans of Victory waghen* (1650), pp. 3-4:
'BIKKER, BIKKER, is dien quant,
Den Verraer van 't VADERLANDT. […]
Oock heeft SCHAEP sich laeten vinden,
Om dees gruwel los te binden,
voor het ENGELS PARLEMENT,
Die men oock als Schellem kent,
Denckt als sulcke Duyvels stoocken,
Is dat d'UNY niet ghebroocken? […]
BIKKER wout ghy soo casseeren,
't Landt met Enghelsche Lardeeren,
Soch ghy soo een Souveryn,
Van ons VADERLANT te syn?'

Without mercy. […]
Orange marches onto Holland,
Sitting high up in his harness,
Onwards in a hellish fury to Amsterdam,
The endangered friend of the Land.
He hopes to rabidly thrust his joust
Through the very heart of the country.
How has virtue lost her colour?
Where has her shine gone?[414]

Vondel thus presented the stadhouder as a power-mad antagonist who threatened 'the heart' of the country by attacking its towns and local liberties.

Another good example of this line of argument can be found in Jacob Westerbaen's 'Aen de heb-zucht der Princen' ('On the Greed of Princes', 1650). This poem sharply condemns the stadhouder's attack on Amsterdam as a violation of the town's liberties, and accuses Willem of having overstepped the boundaries of his office's authority. Similar to 'Monsters onser eeuwe', Westerbaen's poem echoed the idea that this transgression occurred as a result of the Prince's dissatisfaction with the subservient position of the stadhouder. The poem thus stated that:

Neptune and Jupiter and Pluto; they shared it [i.e. power]
Amongst the three of them; and each knew where he would rule
And was satisfied and content with his lot.

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[414] Vondel, 'Monsters onser eeuwe' (1650), in: *Hekeldichten,* p. 124:
'Men hoeft om Monsters niet te reizen
Naer Afrika:
Europe broetze in haer paleizen,
Volg ongena. […]
Oranje, in 't harnas opgezeten,
rukt Holland in,
Op Amsterdam te helsch gebeten,
's Lants nootvrindin.
Hij wenscht zijn dol rappier te stooten
Door 't hart des landts.
Hoe heeft de deugt haar verf verschoten!
Waer is haer glans?'

One did not want to interfere with the sovereignty of the other;
But Princes here are never satisfied with their share,
They steadily try for more even though they have much already.[415]

4.3 The myth of 'anti-stadhouder' sentiments in popular literature before 1650

This first part of this chapter has shown that writers such as Jacob Westerbaen, Johan Beets, and Joost van den Vondel published admiring prose on the stadhouders of the first half of the seventeenth century, whereas they all became known as anti-Orangist authors after 1650. This has frequently led to them being regarded as 'anti-stadhouder', whereby their favourable writings on Maurits or Frederik Hendrik have often been dismissed or neglected. Vondel's literary criticism of Maurits in the last years of this stadhouder's life, in particular, has led literary critics and historians to label Vondel as being fiercely anti-stadhouder, which was only further strengthened by Vondel's many anti-Orangist writings after 1650.[416] Eddy Grootes, Jan Bloemendal, and Agnes Sneller, for example, have struggled to explain Vondel's laudatory writings on both Maurits and Frederik Hendrik, such as his epic poem 'Verghelijckinghe vande Verlossinge der kinderen Israels' (1612). Mieke Smits-Veldt and Marijke Spies have even explained this apparent contradiction in Vondel's political opinion by reducing him to a mere 'mouthpiece' of the Amsterdam regents, who simply wrote according to their message.[417] Yet these attempts

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[415] Westerbaen, *Aen de heb-zucht der Princen* [1650], in: *Gedichten,* p. 387:
'Neptuyn en Jupiter en Pluto, met haer drien,
Die deelden 't al, en elck wist waer hy sou gebien
En hiel sich met zyn lot vernoegt en wel te vreden,
Den een wouw in 't gezagh van d' andere niet treden:
Maer Princen zyn hier noyt verzaedight met haer deel,
Sy trachten staegh nae meer al hebben sy al veel.'

[416] See: Eddy Grootes, 'Vondel and Amsterdam', in: Jan Bloemendal and Frans-Willem Korsten (eds.), *Joost van den Vondel (1587-1679). Dutch Playwright in the Golden Age* (Leiden 2012), pp. 101-114; Sneller, *De Gouden Eeuw* (2014).

[417] Mieke B. Smits-Veldt and Marijke Spies, 'Vondel's Life', in: Bloemendal and Korsten (eds.), *Joost van den Vondel (1587-1679),* pp. 51-84; p. 62.

at explaining the apparent shift in opinions on the stadhoudership in contemporary popular literature are unsatisfactory. To label Vondel and his literary contemporaries as staunchly 'anti-stadhouder' is to misunderstand the political reality of the United Provinces in the first half of the seventeenth century. Throughout this period, the existence of the position of the stadhoudership itself was not controversial, but a given fact of the political structure of the emerging republic.

It also underestimates the enormous impact 1650 made on political thinking. It does not make sense to think of an author's publications dating from before 1650 as anti-stadhouder in the same way it does after this year. Before this period, a debate on the desirability of the existence of this position had not yet begun. This only came into being after the States of Holland decided to leave the position vacant following the death of Willem II. It was Maurits' controversial intervention in the Truce Period conflict that had sparked the indignation of many contemporaries, and what Vondel and others rejected in their writings was the way in which Maurits had *acted* in his capacity as stadhouder. They did not reject the office itself, and nor did they question its existence. Further evidence for this can be found in the many positive poems that authors like Vondel and Westerbaen dedicated to Frederik Hendrik, as well as in the fact that in 1622 Vondel was commissioned by the States of Holland to write an inscription for the tomb of William I of Orange in Delft. In this poem, Vondel praised the first Orange stadhouder as the champion of the nation's freedom and liberties, who sacrificed himself for this cause; '[he] sealed the Freedom and her liberties with his blood'.[418] Thus even at the height of publishing poetry that reviled Maurits, Vondel could still idealise the office of stadhouder as a saviour of the nation.

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[418] Vondel, 'Opdraght der afbeeldinghe van prins Willems graf, aen de Staten der vereenighde Nederlanden' (1622), in: *De Werken,* Vol 1, p. 47:
'Met Dwingelanden haet, en in manhafte tochten
Ter Hellen heeft gedoemt de westersche gedrochten,
D'handvesten voorgestreen, en dapper van gemoed
De Vrijheijd en haer recht besegelt met sijn bloed.'

4.3.1 Conclusion

Dutch popular literature throughout the late sixteenth and first half of the seventeenth century demonstrates several consistent themes in the representation of the stadhouder. The Prince of Orange was frequently presented as a patriarch of the nation, and mostly depicted in his capacity as captain-general of the Republic's armed forces, encouraging the provinces to unite in the fight for the freedom of the state from foreign oppression. This metaphor included the comparison of the Princes of Orange to biblical figures such as David or Moses. These tropes were not only applied to Willem I, as Marijke Spies has argued, but also to the stadhouders Maurits and Frederik Hendrik, and to the latter's son, Willem II. Although popular literature during this period emphasised the Prince of Orange in his military role, the concept of *eendracht* and conflict resolution in relation to the stadhoudership was also present in numerous poems and songs. A critical image of the stadhouder in this period mainly arose as the result of the internal religious and political conflicts that arose during the Truce Period, which led to stadhouder Maurits of Orange being regularly represented as a suppressor of the town's and Provinces individual liberties. However, it is important to note that the popular literature that was critical of Maurits should not be interpreted as rejecting the office of stadhouder itself, but instead as criticising Maurits' way of resolving the conflict. Nevertheless, the critical imagery of the stadhouder that had its origin in the conflicts of the Truce Period proved to be persistent. The idea of the stadhouder as a modern Julius Caesar and suppressor of the liberties of the Republic's Provinces and cities, as well as the themes of 'staatszucht', returned with Willem II's infamous attack on Amsterdam in 1650. In subsequent years, they would form the basis for the anti-stadhouder sentiments of the supporters of the 'True Freedom' government.

4.4 Part II: The Stadhouderless Period (1650 – 1672)

The previous section showed how the representation of the stadhoudership in contemporary popular literature in the period 1585 – 1650 was based on several well-established themes. Overall the stadhouders were praised and revered as the champions

of the freedom and *eendracht* of the United Provinces. If fierce criticism on Maurits' role in Van Oldenbarnevelt's execution was voiced through various popular literary genres, it is important to emphasise that this criticism did not extend to the office of the stadhoudership itself. However, the Stadhouderless Period of 1650 – 1672 fundamentally shifted the established narrative on the stadhouder in popular literature, as it participated in the wider debate on the desirability of the office itself. The political developments during this period, beginning with the decision at the General Assembly in 1651 to not appoint a stadhouder for a majority of the provinces, or a captain-general for the Union's armies, sparked a fierce debate between those supporting the new 'True Freedom' regime, and the supporters of the stadhoudership and the House of Orange. Contemporary popular literature not only reflected this political debate, but became another tool through which people could engage with it. For example, authors who supported the reinstatement of the stadhouder, such as Jan Zoet, focussed their writings on arguing for the office's right to exist, instead of merely praising the stadhouder himself.

During the Stadhouderless Period, the established tropes of the stadhouder as a redeemer and guardian of the nation's freedom remained prominent across literary genres, but new themes also emerged. The turbulent internal political developments in this period and the economic burden of the Anglo-Dutch wars of 1652 - 1654 and 1665 - 1667 created the possibility of representing the stadhoudership as an office with the potential to restore harmony and prosperity to the country. Moreover, in response to the ongoing internal political discord, the image of the stadhouder as a guardian of unity and *eendracht* in the United Provinces became an even more prominent feature. However, the Stadhouderless Period also witnessed the publication of literature arguing expressly against the reinstatement of a stadhouder, which often emphasised the concept of 'freedom' in the context of the preservation of local independence (specifically on a provincial or municipal level). Supporters of the stadhouder and the House of Orange had traditionally hailed the Princes of Orange as the protectors of the nation's freedom against foreign tyranny, based on their leading role in the war against Spain. However, pro-States literature used the concept to emphasise the freedom in the meaning of the independence of local liberties. Both parties used the Dutch word 'vrijheid' ('freedom')

in their discourse, but for pro-stadhouder writers 'vrijheid' referred to the freedom of the Republic from foreign oppression. In contrast, literature arguing in favour of the True Freedom regime used 'vrijheid' to signify the liberties of the provincial and municipal governmental institutions within the Republic. During the Stadhouderless Period, the latter built a narrative in which the stadhouder was represented as a threat to this type of freedom, which had been 'proven' by Maurits in 1619 and by Willem II in 1650. Crucial to this argument against the stadhouder was the concept of '*staatszucht*' ('lust for power'), which had already been voiced in Vondel's criticism on Maurits' behaviour in the 1620s, but was now re-appropriated as an argument against the office itself. As a literary argument during the 1650s and 1660s, the theme of *staatszucht* was based on the notion that the risk of a stadhouder abusing his power to suppress the States' freedom in favour of their own power was too great for the office to be allowed to exist.

4.4.1 The beginning of the Stadhouderless Period (1650 – 1651)

When Willem II unexpectedly died of smallpox on 6 November 1650, the political debate on the role of the Princes of Orange in Dutch politics in general, and on the stadhoudership in particular, intensified further. This debate, caused by Willem's problematic legacy as a stadhouder, was reflected in the mixed literary responses to his death, of which an overview will be given below.

The stadhouder's surprise attack on Amsterdam in July, which was followed rapidly by Willem II's death in November and the subsequent General Assembly in 1650 – 51, launched the debate concerning the future of the stadhoudership within the Dutch Republic. The legacy of the stadhoudership of the Princes of Orange became significantly polarised, and divided Dutch political thinking and society. This was reflected in popular literature of the time, as the traditional depiction of the stadhouders as the stalwart champions of freedom and *eendracht* gave way to a more complex and politicised imagery.

Shortly after Willem II's death, Jan Zoet published the poem 'Lijk-Toorts en Geboorte-Zang' ('Death Torch and Birth Song', 1650) in which he lamented the death of the late Prince of Orange whilst also celebrating the birth of his son, Willem III. The

poem, through which Zoet engaged directly with the public debate on the future of the stadhoudership, made a passionate defence of the office's importance. The poem's opening lines emphasise the significance of the stadhouder's role as the guardian of the Republic's internal *eendracht*: 'Who now shall banish Discord from the Land? / Who will be a Guardian for the Peace?'.[419] After further lamentations about the death of Willem II and the vulnerable state in which the Republic now found itself without its unifying figurehead, the poem continues by making an impassioned case for the appointment of the infant Willem III to his father's offices. In doing so Zoet drew heavily on established literary tropes of the Prince of Orange, such as comparing Willem III to a young David. He prophesied that the Old Biblical figure of Jacob, whose sons became the leaders of the twelve tribes of Israel, would 'act as a Guardian' to the fatherless child.[420] Moreover, a reference to Ezekiel 37: 24 linked the poem to a passage in the Old Testament in which God appointed David as king of the people of Israel to lead them on to Zion; a metaphor for Zoet's belief that Willem III should inherit his father's offices in order to continue leading the Dutch to peace and prosperity.

At the same time that Jan Zoet published his 'Lijk-Toorts en Geboorte-Zang', Joost van den Vondel produced a very different literary contribution to the public debate. His poem 'Overval en Afval' ('Assault and Downfall', 1650) offered a sharp condemnation of Willem II's short career as stadhouder and emphasised the notion that the Prince had abused his political position to suppress the liberties of Holland's towns. The poem was specifically written to accompany the release of a memorial coin issued by Amsterdam which was dedicated to the turbulent political events of 1650. For this purpose the poem consisted of two verses, one for each side of the coin [see also Appendix, No. 16]. One side, '*Overval*' ('Assault'), commemorated the attack on Amsterdam and accused the

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[419] Zoet, 'Lijk-Toorts en Geboorte-Zang' (1650) in: Jan Zoet, *D'Uitsteekenste Digt-kunstige Werkken, door Jan Zoet, Amsterdammer* (Amsterdam: 1675), p. 2:
'Wie zal de Twist ten Lande uitdrijven?
Wie, voor de Vrede, een Wachter blijven?'
[420] Zoet, 'Lijk-Toorts en Geboorte-Zang' in: *Digt-kunstige Werkken*, p. 7:
'Mog Jacob nu tot Voogt verstrecken;
[…] als David hier de Rijxstaf sweit.'

stadhouder of *heerschzucht,* and of betraying the liberties of the cities of Holland which he, as the province's stadhouder, had sworn to protect: 'who never has seen betrayal, can learn it in Amsterdam'.[421] The other side of the coin, entitled *'Afval'* (which can be translated as both 'downfall' and 'waste'), portrayed Willem's sudden death from smallpox as a punishment for his *hubris*. In the accompanying poem, Vondel accused Willem of disrupting the peace and freedom of the States, and compared him to the mythological figure of Phaeton, who was struck down by Jupiter before he could do further damage to the land:

> The second Willem attempted to plague our Land,
> where Peace and Freedom had been planted,
> with the burdens of war.
> And so Orange fell, like Phaeton,
> As he could no longer follow his father's path,
> And could not be saved by reason. […]
> When the game changes,
> Pride causes one's downfall.[422]

The future of the stadhoudership in the United Provinces was officially decided upon at the Great Assembly of January 1651, which was attended by representatives from all seven provinces of the Republic. Modern scholarship has made no mention of any direct reaction in popular literature to the outcome of the Grand Assembly, but I have identified two poems from the period whose contents make it more than probable that they were intended as a contribution to the public debate on the stadhoudership. The

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421 Vondel, 'Op den gedenkpenning an den Overval en Afval' in: *Hekeldichten*, p. 120:
'wie noit verraet vernam, ga leeren t'Amsterdam'.
422 *Ibid.*, p. 121:
'Des tweeden Willem, die ons Lant,
Daer Vrede en Vrijheit was geplant,
Met oorlogslasten zocht te plagen.
Dus stort Oranje, als Faeton,
Die 's vaders spoort niet volgen kon,
En met geen reden was te houden. […]
Als 't spel verkeeren zal,
Komt hoogmoed voor den val.'

first of these is a small verse by Constantijn Huygens, who remained in the service of the House of Orange after the death of Willem II. Huygens had earlier mourned the death of Willem II, and now compared the outcome of the Grand Assembly to the 'death' of the stadhoudership itself. He also chastised people for rejoicing about the decision by using the familiar trope of presenting the Orange stadhouders as the patriarchs of the Dutch state:

> Orange has been overthrown; people laugh, and ask, "what is wrong?"
> O children, thou are dancing, but around your father's coffin.[423]

Another reaction came from Joost van den Vondel, who published a very different reaction to mark the occasion. I argue that these two very short verses, which have until now only generally been dated to the early 1650s, should be interpreted as the poet's reaction to the Grand Assembly's outcome. Moreover, placing both poems in this context provides a new political dimension to their meaning, making them a celebration of the Grand Assembly's decision to leave the stadhoudership vacant and the Prince of Orange without any important political offices. With this meaning in mind, the first poem should be read as an allegory of the time in which Holland still had a stadhouder, referring to the period of Willem II. In this verse, entitled 'On the Chained Lion', we find a subjugated lion (representing the States of Holland) unable to properly protect the freedom and liberties of its citizens:

> **On the Chained Lion**
> The Lion of Holland dozes in the dust,
> Chained by his neck to the Court.[424]

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[423] Undated and untitled poem, found in: Huygens, *Gedichten,* Vol. 4, p. 260:
'Oragnen light om veer; men lacht en sight, wat nood ist?
O kinderen ghij danst, maer om uws vaders doodkist.'
[424] Vondel, 'On the Chained Lion' [undated], in: *De Werken,* Vol. 5, p. 525.

In the second verse, however, the lion has been freed from such oppressive forces and is again wide awake to preserve the provincial liberties, as an allegory for Holland being 'freed' from the stadhoudership after the Grand Assembly:

> **On the Unchained Lion**
> The Lion is unchained, and stands at guard,
> He preserves the freedom with his strength.[425]

In Vondel's analogy, the stadhoudership was thus represented as an office that not merely threatened, but actively suppressed provincial liberties and independence.

4.4.2 Literary representation of the stadhoudership in the 1650s

Willem II's death and the subsequent decisions taken at the Great Assembly marked the beginning of the first Stadhouderless Period, which lasted until the office's eventual restoration in 1672. The fierce popular debate on both the nature and the desirability of the stadhoudership that raged throughout this period has been the subject of many historical studies, most of which focus predominantly on pamphlet literature.[426] However, there remains now no holistic study of the extent to which this debate played out in contemporary popular literature. This section will therefore explore the ways in which these literary genres were instrumentalised throughout the Stadhouderless Period to express the viewpoint of both supporters and opponents of the stadhoudership.

The first years of the 1650s were characterised by political and economic turmoil in the United Provinces. In 1652 war broke out between the Dutch Republic and the English Commonwealth. The first Anglo-Dutch war (1652 – 54) reinvigorated the debate concerning the desirability on the respective offices of captain-general and stadhouder, as the war signified the first time that the Republic fought a foreign nation without the

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[425] Vondel, 'On the Unchained Lion' [undated], in: *De Werken,* Vol. 5, p. 525.

[426] See for example: Groenveld, *De Prins voor Amsterdam. Reacties uit pamfletten op de aanslag van 1650* (1967); Geyl, 'Het stadhouderschap in de partijliteratuur onder De Witt' (1971); Van de Klashorst, "Metten schijn van monarchie getemperd' (1986); Stern, *Orangism in the Dutch Republic in Word and Image, 1650-1675* (2010); Deen et al (eds.), *Pamphlets and Politics* (2011); Reinders, *Printed Pandemonium* (2013).

leadership of a Prince of Orange. This debate is allegorically represented in the epic poem 'Zeekrygh tusschen de Staaten der Vrye Nederlanden, en het Parlement van Engeland' ('Sea War between the States of the Free Netherlands, and the Parliament of England') by the Amsterdam poet Jan Vos. The poem, which was published in 1653, is an example of popular literature that has remained largely overlooked by modern historians, despite offering a privileged insight into the contemporary political debate. In 32 pages, Zoet provides an extensive reconstruction of a fictional dialogue between supporters and opponents of the reinstatement of the two offices while drawing on classical allegories by presenting the situation as a discussion between a group of Roman gods on Mount Olympus. The setting, in which the future lot of the United Provinces is discussed, is thus likened to a moment in classical mythology, in which the ancient gods discuss the fate of ancient states such as Rome or Troy.

The poem opens with a scene in which the Roman gods have gathered to discuss the current war between England and the Dutch Republic. Juno has sided with the English, but Mercury, who as God of seafaring and trade is an allegorical representation of Holland, supports the Dutch and speaks of his hope for a swift peace. When Juno tries to assert her superiority over Mercury, he replies:

> 'She prides herself on a noble lineage: but own virtue is best.
> Those who pride themselves on their Dynasty, boast with the praise of others.
> Each must find their nobility in their own virtues'.[427]

Mercury's statement should be read as a direct reflection by Zoet upon the argument that the stadhoudership should be restored for the infant Willem III. This turned on the feeling that because he was entitled to a position of political and military importance due to his ancestors' glorious deeds. This argument becomes a recurring

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[427] Vos, 'Zeekrygh tusschen de Staaten der Vrye Nederlanden, en het Parlement van Engelandt' (1653), in: *Alle de gedichten*, p. 321:
'Zy roemt op eêl geslacht: maar eigen deugdt is best.
Wie op zijn stamhuis roemt, pronkt met het lof van vrinden.
Elk moet zijn adeldom door eigen deugden vinden.'

theme in the poem, as the gods discuss whether Willem III should be reinstated in the offices of his forefathers based on their service to the country. Mercury argues that Minerva (an allegory for the States General) is more than equipped to lead the Dutch war effort, reasoning that Willem III is too young for such responsibilities. He also reminds the other gods of Willem II's short period in office, during which 'he punctured the Unity which he was supposed to protect'. Mars, the God of War (an allegory for Willem Frederik van Nassau-Dietz, the stadhouder of Friesland and Groningen who made several attempts throughout the early 1650s to be appointed captain-general of the Republic's armies) retorts with the pro-Orangist argument that Willem III should not be held responsible for the faults of his father. Instead he reminds the others of Frederik Hendrik ('his grandfather') who had left a much more positive legacy as stadhouder. The whole scene reads as follows:

> 'We are siding with Mercury', said the island gods;
> 'But only when he makes Tetis' son [Willem III] Commander of the Waters.'
> That God [Mercury] said: 'what makes you wish for such a demand?
>
> Is it his Father's service? He is reviled by the people,
> Because he punctured the Unity, which he was supposed to protect.'
>
> 'One should not blame a father's guilt', said Mars, 'on his children.
> One should, for his grandfather's services, put the sword in his hands.'
> The river and field gods agreed to the same. […]
>
> [Mercury:] 'As long as Juno rests, I need no other than Minerva at sea:
> Because she weapons herself with seven braveries.
> The Might and Wisdom are the strengths of the cities.
> The youngling is too weak to hold the sword of sea.'[428]

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[428] *Ibid.*, pp. 322-323:
'Wy, riepen d'eilandtgoôn, zijn tot Merkuur geneegen;
Indien hy Tetis zoon tot Waterhooftman maakt.
Wat doet u, sprak die godt, tot zulk een eisch beweegen?
Is 't zijne vaaders dienst? die wordt van 't volk gewraakt,
Om dat hy Fokus, die hy hoên moest, heeft doorsteeken.

The gods then discuss the possibility of appointing a temporary guardian to act on behalf of Willem III. Mars/Willem Frederik claims this position on behalf of his family connection to the young Prince of Orange, but is rebuffed by Mercury for being untrustworthy. Zoet thereby offers an astute insight into the real situation of Willem Frederik at the time, who was both distrusted by the States of Holland due to his involvement in the attack on Amsterdam in 1650, and by the circles around Willem III (such as that of Amalia van Solms), which feared he would usurp the positions traditionally held by the Prince of Orange. In Mercury's rejection of Mars, Zoet not only warns of the danger of a potential future conflict between the House of Orange and the House of Nassau-Dietz, but also comments on the nature of the stadhoudership and captaincy-general. He reminds the audience that neither office was hereditary by right, even though may have appeared to be the case 'by common tradition':

> 'I am', said Mars, 'his cousin, trust his sword to me'.
> 'No, God of War', said Mercury, who could not trust Mars, […]
> 'You would carry the sword for yourself, and not on behalf of your cousin.
> It is often seen that something given as a loan is turned into a hereditary right by common tradition.
> You cousin might, when he grows, turn against this. […]
> There is no bloodier fight than that between blood relatives. […]
> Many fight for power, even when they might lose the country while doing so'.[429]

Men moet geen vaaders quaadt, riep Mars, aan kindren wreeken.
Men geef hem, voor de dienst van grootvaâr, 't zwaardt in handen.
De stroom- en akkergoôn beslooten 't zelfde meê.
Die loont men, zegt Merkuur, met staadigh' offerbranden.
Ik hoef, zoo Juno rust, niet dan Minerf op zee:
Want deeze wapent zich met zeven dapperheeden.
De Kracht en Wijsheidt zijn de starkten van de steeden.
De Jongling is te zwak om 't zeezwaardt vast te houwen.'

[429] *Ibid.*, p. 323:
'Ik ben, riep Mars, de neef, betrouw aan my zijn dolk.
Neen, Krijgsgodt, sprak Merkuur, die Mars niet kon betrouwen,
Om dat hy zijne beurs te naar komt met zijn volk,
Gy zoudt het zwaardt voor u, en niet voor neef aangorden.
Veel ziet men leengoedt, door 't gebruik, een erfrecht worden.

Vos's 'Zeekrygh' thus provides a detailed insight into contemporary arguments used in favour of and against the desirability of a stadhouder and captain-general, and of the position of the House of Orange in Dutch politics more broadly. Moreover, with the poem Vos himself contributed to the debate by rejecting both the idea that either office was hereditary out of 'common tradition', and that they should be bestowed on Willem III out of gratitude for the services of his forefathers. Secondly, Vos asserts the possibility of a (potentially militarised) conflict between the two branches of the House of Nassau over the respective positions of stadhouder and captain-general, which, he argues, would have devastating consequences for the country. However, through the insistence that 'Minerva's' (i.e. the States-General's) wisdom and bravery was more than able to protect the Republic, Vos supplies a solution to this perceived danger: to ban both the Prince of Orange and his untrustworthy relatives from these offices and leave them vacant, and, instead, to have the Republic be ruled exclusively by the States' governments.

Another contribution from the field of popular literature to the debate on the desirability of the stadhoudership came in the form of the play *Lucifer* (1654) by Joost van den Vondel. Dutch historian Helmer Helmers has argued that *Lucifer* should be read as a war play, both because it tells a story of war, and because it was written during one [i.e. the Anglo-Dutch war].[430] In contrast, F.W. Korsten has suggested that the play should be read as a general disquisition on the political nature of sovereignty and the legality of political uprisings, whereas literary critics such as Cyriel Verschaeve and G. Kazemier have described *Lucifer* purely as a religious play.[431] However, I suggest there is another dimension to *Lucifer* which has been overlooked. This is its status as a representation of the political events of 1650, and thereby as a contribution to the contemporary debate on the stadhoudership. The story of *Lucifer*, which focuses on the downfall of 'stadhouder'

Uw Neef zou, als hy wies, zich hier weêr tegens kanten. […]
Geen bloediger krakkeel dan tusschen bloedtverwanten. […]
Veel twisten om 't gezagh al zou men 't landt verliezen.'

[430] Helmers, *The Royalist Republic,* p. 208.

[431] Korsten, *Vondel belicht,* pp. 197-202; C. Verschaeve (ed.), *Vondel's trilogie. Lucifer. Adam in Ballingschap. Noah* (Brugge, 1935); G. Kazemier, 'Vondel's *Lucifer* en leer van de praedestinatie', in: *De Nieuwe Taalgids* (1936: Vol. 30), pp. 184-87.

Lucifer, holds more than a coincidental similarity to the political events of the early 1650s. I argue that Vondel's *Lucifer* should be read as the author's allegorical vision of the beginning of the Stadhouderless Period, as well as a legitimisation of leaving the post of stadhouder and captain-general open.

Lucifer was first performed at the Amsterdamse Schouwburg on Monday 2nd February 1654, with a second performance held on Thursday 5th February. After these two performances the play was banned by the strict Calvinist church council of Amsterdam due to it being set in Heaven, which the council regarded as blasphemous. However, I suggest that a probable additional motivation for the ban was *Lucifer's* strong anti-Orangist message, as the Calvinist church was traditionally a staunch supporter of the House of Orange. Despite the ban, both performances drew a considerable audience and a subsequent print run of the play of 1000 copies sold out so quickly that a rerun swiftly followed.

The central persona of the play is the angel Lucifer, who, as one of God's most trusted servants, is heralded by the title 'stadhouder'. When it becomes known that God intends to elevate Man above all others in Heaven, Lucifer's pride and dissatisfaction with his position are encouraged by his group of sycophantic followers. The ensuing conflict leads to an armed rebellion, which results in Lucifer being cast down from power and banished from Heaven.

During the first two acts, Lucifer learns of God's plans and is furious at the thought that he should be forced to bow to the authority of those he regards beneath himself: 'should we, Stadhouder of God's might, kneel for this borrowed authority […]?'.[432] His supporters convince him to lead a military uprising against God in order to make Him abandon the idea. The third act emphasises that the 'Luciferists' think that only violence can solve the conflict that has arisen: 'Luciferists want to solve the conflict with violence:

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[432] Vondel, *Lucifer* (1654), p. 18:
'Zullen wij, Stadhouders van Gods magt,
Voor dit geleend gezag, een wulpsch vermogen, knielen?'

/ Only violence, and force, and revenge, and coercion matter here'.[433] This is Vondel's representation of how Willem II thought he could solve the conflict of 1650 through violence and assault, leading him thus to 'rise up' against his superiors, the States. This situation plays out in the following scene, in which Lucifer's supporters defy God's sovereignty, and instead proclaim Lucifer as their new king and god:

> [Belzebub to Lucifer:]
> 'Climb the steps, o bravest of Heroes.
> Lord Stadhouder, be seated on your throne, so we may swear loyalty'. […]
>
> Luciferists:
> With triumph do we crown God Lucifer.
> Praise him: worship his Star.'[434]

A choir of angels then sings of how Stadhouder's Lucifer *staatszucht* is at the root of the conflict dividing Heaven; a theme which Vondel had already used frequently in his poems criticising of both Maurits and Willem II.

> *'Rei* of Angels:
> 'Staatzucht' will disrupt every Order:
> Heaven, earth, sea and beach,
> Will burn in a bright fire.
> 'Staatzucht', once legitimised
> by triumph, will furiously

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[433] *Ibid.*, p. 40:
'Luciferisten willen conflict met geweld beslechten:
Hier geld alleen geweld, en kracht, en wraak, en dwang.'
[434] *Ibid.*, pp. 48-50:
'Belzebub:
Zoo stijg de trappen op, o allerbraafste Held.
Heer Stedehouder, stijg dien troon op, dat we u zweren. […]
Luciferisten:
Wij met triomf kroonen God Lucifer.
Bewierookt hem: aanbidt zijn Ster.'

defy God and every power.
'Staatzucht' knows God nor blood'.[435]

Thus, Vondel argues that the possibility of a stadhouder's dissatisfaction with his subordinate position poses a continuous threat to the peace and harmony of the state.

The fourth act centres on a dialogue between the archangel Raphael and Lucifer, in which the former scorns the fallen angel for having overstepped the boundaries of his previous office. In a speech that recalls Vondel's own vision of the nature of the stadhoudership and Willem II's actions, Raphael says:

'Borrowed authority cannot be claimed as a right. […]
Preserve your office: or have you forgotten its nature?
The Stadhoudership was trusted to your wisdom,
So that you might keep it in harmony and order.'[436]

Again, Vondel presents the duty of the stadhoudership as that of preserving order and *eendracht*, while emphasising that, in reality, the innate *staatszucht* of the office holders had caused conflict and discord. If Lucifer loses his power and is cast of of Heaven as a punishment for his actions, so too is Willem's sudden death from smallpox shortly after his attack on Amsterdam is likened to a 'divine punishment'.

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[435] *Ibid.*, pp. 50-51:
'Rei van Engelen:
Staatzucht zal alle Orden storen:
Henel, aarde, zee en strand
Zullen staan in lichten brand.
Staatzucht, eens door triomferen
als gewettigd, zal verwoed
God en alle magt braveren.
Staatzucht ken noch God, noch bloed.'
[436] *Ibid.*, p. 60:
'Geleende heerschappij staat los, en is geen erf. […]
Bewaar uw ambt: of is zijn oogmerk u vergeten?
De Stedehouderschap uw wijsheid werd betrouwd,
Op dat gij 't al in ruste en orden houden zoudt.'

Vondel's *Lucifer*, then, is far more than a religious play or a war piece: it represents the author's allegorical vision of the downfall of Willem II, and of the nature of the office of stadhouder. The hugely popular and widely read play should thus be seen as an important contribution to the contemporary debate on the stadhoudership and the position of the House of Orange in the United Provinces.

Peace between England and the United Provinces returned in April 1654 with the Peace of Westminster, as a result of which the Dutch had to make many concessions. One such concession was the Act of Seclusion, a secret appendix to the treaty made between Oliver Cromwell and Johan de Witt, which stipulated that Holland would never appoint the young Prince of Orange as Holland's stadhouder. But when soon afterwards the Act became public knowledge, outraged supporters of the House of Orange accused De Witt and his allies of 'jealousy' of the young Prince. The ensuing debate around the Act of Seclusion raged in pamphlets and publications, which have been analysed in some detail in the work of, among others, Jill Stern, Gert Onne van de Klashorst, and Guido de Bruin.[437] Yet it was not restricted to these media: a number of examples of the debate concerning this controversial development can be found in contemporary popular literature. Jan Zoet's poem 'Geboorte-feest van zijne Doorlugtige Hooghaid Wilhem Henrik' ('Birthday Celebration of his Highness Willem Henrik', 1656) offers a particularly good example of a pro-Orangist take on the event. Zoet had written and published the poem in anticipation of Willem III's sixth birthday, and had subsequently been invited to present it to Willem and his court in person. After this event, a second print run of the successful poem was published, which, judging by its many typos, was probably a rushed affair by the printer. The poem essentially provided an extensive argument for the reinstatement of the stadhoudership, and, in reaction to the Act of Seclusion, a fierce defence of Willem III's right to this office. The poem placed a strong emphasis on the

[437] Van de Klashorst, "Metten schijn van monarchie getemperd', pp. 93-136; Stern, *Orangism in the Dutch Republic* (2010); G. O. 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, 2011), pp. 63-96. See also: Geyl, 'Het stadhouderschap in de partij-literatuur onder De Witt' (1971).

dynasty of stadhouders hailing from the House of Orange, and presented Willem III as the logical and just successor to this line. If Willem was too young to have any relevant experience for the office, Zoet argued that he was entitled to the position simply by virtue of being of 'the seed of the Nation's Protector'.[438] The poem thus recounted how the Netherlands owed its freedom to 'the Iron Fist of Willem I, who never rested', to 'Maurits, with his bravery and diligence', and to 'the great Freederik [sic], his Highness's grandfather, who signed the peace'.[439] Willem III himself is presented as the 'reincarnation' of his father, and of all the stadhouders before him. Zoet argues that Willem had been 'robbed' of authority (i.e. the stadhoudership and captaincy-general) by the 'envy' and 'acrimonious jealousy' of the De Witt faction, which continued to hinder the Prince's 'rightful elevation' with deeds such as the Act of Seclusion:

> The Envy shall violently spew its bile
> On his cradle; and will create an acrimonious jealousy everywhere,
> In order to prune his authority. […]
> And so time passed: his Highness grew and flourished:
> Like a vine, even though some would at times prune his tendrils.[440]

Zoet also stressed the idea of the stadhouder as the defender of the Republic's internal *eendracht* and as the state's main remedy against political conflict. Rather than accusing Willem II of having sown discord in the Republic by his drastic actions in 1650, Zoet instead accuses the States' party of endangering the unity of the state by their controversial refusal to appoint a stadhouder and by emphasising the individualism of each town and province. This argument is particularly vividly reflected in a passage on the conflict between Willem II and the States of Holland in 1650, in which Zoet argues

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[438] Jan Zoet, 'Geboorte-feest van zijne Doorlugtige Hooghaid Wilhem Henrik' (1656), in: *Digt-kunstige Werkken* (1675), p. 108.
[439] *Ibid.*, p. 97.
[440] *Ibid.*, p. 100, 105:
'De Nijd zal, op zyn Wiege, en Baakkermat, heur gal
Uit braakken, met geweld, en wekken overall,
De bitze wangunst op, om zijn gezag te snoejen. […]
Dus liep de tyd vast voort: zijn Hooghaid groeide, en bloeide:
Als eene Wijstok, schoon men soms zyn rankken snoeide.'

that it was the States of Holland which had been the original cause of the conflict. The stadhouder, in contrast, had tried to remedy it:

> Discord, wearing a train of other hellish brood,
> Started to haunt the lethargic Court.
> Peace was surprised. And 'Eendracht' went into hiding.
> […] He [stadhouder Willem II] was much pained to purify and heal
> the wound that had been scratched open, and which had already begun to fester:
> and so new strength arose in that weakened body.
> And, among the Seven [provinces], courage began to grow once more,
> Because it witnessed again the bloom of ruling 'Eendracht'.[441]

The poem then predicts how Willem III's restoration to the stadhoudership would end the Republic's political unrest and restore the state's internal harmony:

> 'He shall, guided by wise council, put down the internal discord,
> that has arisen among the people, and solve it'.[442]

Throughout the late 1650s, Zoet established himself as the most prolific poet in support of the restoration of the stadhoudership, and of Willem III's elevation to the office. The representation of the stadhouder as the champion of national unity and fighter of internal discord remained prominent throughout Zoet's poetry. So, too, did the idea that Willem III's claim to the position was based on the gratitude owed to the House of

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[441] *Ibid.,* p. 97:
'De Twist, met eene sleep van ander helsch gebroed,
Begonnen ysselik, in 't kwijnend Hof, te spookken.
De Vrede stond verbaazt. En d' Eendragt zat gedookken, […]
Hy pijnde zic om 't zeerste, om d'opgekrabde wond,
Die reets aan 't stinkken was, te zuiv'ren, en te heelen:
Zoo dat'er nieuwe kragt in 't zwakke lighaam rees:
En, onder 't Zeevental, de moed begon te groeien,
Van wederom te zien de Heerschende Eendraft bloeien.'
[442] *Ibid.*, p. 100:
'Hy zal, door wijzen raad, het onderling geschil
Gereezen onder 't Volk, neerleggen, en beslegten'.

Orange for its service to the country. In 'Het Triomferende Leyden' ('Triumphant Leiden', 1659), for example, he uses the common metaphor of an Orange tree (representing the House of Orange) in order to encourage the citizens of Leiden to 'honour the old trunk by honouring the sprout'.[443] Zoet's poetry also continued to promote the idea that the absence of a stadhouder had led to an increase in internal discord, which had damaged the Republic's prosperity. For example, in the poem 'Prinsselijk Zinnebeeld' ('Princely Emblem', 1659) Zoet argues that since the dissolution of the stadhoudership:

> Prosperity suffers, at sea, ships are wrecked. Love and fidelity
> flee before Hate and Envy, Joy [flees] before Disaster and Mourning.[444]

On the other side of the debate, however, Joost van den Vondel developed into one of the most vocal literary opponents of the restoration of the stadhoudership. Much as contemporary pamphleteers engaged with one another in extensive print debates, so too did Zoet, Vondel, and other literary writers react to the political arguments made in their pear's poems and plays. Zoet, for example, directly criticised a number of Vondel's pro-States poems with his own poem 'Morgen-wecker aan Joost van den Vondel' ('Wake Up Call to Joost van den Vondel', 1658), in which he accused Vondel of 'being blind' to the deteriorated state of the Republic, and to the true causes of the current discord and strife (i.e. the absence of the stadhoudership).[445]

In 1659 several prominent members of the House of Orange, such as Amalia van Solms, paid an official visit to Amsterdam. The reason for their visit was the decision by the city's magistrates to throw an elaborate celebration for the recent marriage of Henriette Catharina, one of Amalia's daughters, to the Prince of Anhalt-Dessau. This

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[443] The poem was written to celebrate Willem III's arrival in Leiden to study at the city's university for a year. Zoet, 'Het Triomferende Leyden' (The Hague, 1659), in: *Digt-kunstige Werken,* p. 276:
'Eer, in 't Spruitje, d'Oude Stam.'

[444] Zoet, 'Prinsselijk Zinnebeeld' (1659) in: *Digt-kunstigge Werkken*, p. 120:
'De Welvaart lydt, in zee, voort schipbreuk. Liefde en Trouw,
Vlugt weg voor Haat en Nijd, de Vreugd voor ramp en rouw.'

[445] Zoet, 'Morgen-wekker aan Joost van den Vondel' (1658) in: *Digt-kunstige Werkken,* p. 188.

gesture of goodwill on behalf of Amsterdam's magistrates was the result of the increased likelihood of a Stuart restoration in England: for a city so heavily dependent on overseas trade, it was a prudent time to restore relations with a family so closely linked to the Stuarts.[446] Jan Vos had been commissioned by the town's councillors to organise a parade of sixteen elaborately decorated floats for the distinguished guests. Every wagon was accompanied by a verse in which Vos commented on the respective display. However, in order to please both the local magistrates and their guests Vos had to find a way to honour the House of Orange without referencing the sensitive issue of Holland's stadhoudership. He apparently found a solution by celebrating the previous stadhouders exclusively in terms of their military career as captain-generals, praising their bravery on the battlefield and their prominent role in giving the Republic its independence from Spanish rule. For example, in celebration of Maurits, Vos wrote:

> His military fame was a salvation for the Nation and its citizens.
> A courageous war hero does not fight any less than his soldiers'.[447]

The display in honour of Frederik Hendrik also portrayed the late stadhouder exclusively in his role as captain-general, with the accompanying verse proclaiming that 'the great Frederik is equal to Mars when it comes to the heroics of war.[448] One of the final displays of the parade was dedicated to the young Prince Willem III. The young Prince did not have any military feats on which Vos could draw, while the Prince's future role in the United Provinces was a delicate topic. Vos apparently found a solution in focusing on a general allegory in which figures representing Religion and the Arts helped the youngling grow into a wise prince.

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[446] Jonathan Israel, *The Dutch Republic,* pp. 825-828; Nina Geerdink, *De sociale verankering van het dichterschap van Jan Vos (1610-1667*) (Hilversum, 2012).
[447] Vos, *Alle de Gedichten* (Amsterdam 1662), p. 619:
'Zijn krijgsroem was tot heil van 't Land en d'onderzaaten.
Een moedigh krijgsheldt vecht niet min dan zijn soldaaten'.
[448] Vos, *Alle de Gedichten* (Amsterdam 1662), p. 620:
'De groote Freedrik wijkt geen Mars in oorlogsdaden'.

The whole parade, which Vos had so carefully designed and orchestrated, thus included barely any references to the prominent political positions that the House of Orange had traditionally held in the Dutch Republic. Instead it focused exclusively on its glorious past of military service to the nation. However, Vos conveyed an implicit extra message through his continued insistence that the late Princes of Orange had brought peace to the Republic; after all, in times of peace the position of a permanent captain-general was effectively redundant. Vos thus praised the triumphs of the Princes of Orange in the context of their past military leadership. Yet by emphasising that the Eighty Years' War had come to an end, he also subtly implied that this role was no longer needed.

When the anticipated Stuart Restoration took place a year later, the Amsterdam magistrates again ordered a magnificent display for a series of public festivities. This time, the celebrations were organised in the hope of pleasing Charles II, who was travelling through the Netherlands to return home to England to take up the throne. Although Charles himself did not visit Amsterdam prior to his departure, his sister Mary and her son Willem III accepted the invitation on his behalf. Jan Vos was again instructed to put on a parade of displays and *tableaux vivants* with accompanying poems. He reused most of those staged the previous year, but also added eleven new displays that related specifically to the Stuart dynasty. This time, however, Vos caused a scandal by displeasing the Princess Royal with a float that carried a re-enactment of the beheading of her father, Charles I. According to various sensationalist contemporary accounts, Mary burst into tears and turned her head away in disgust.[449]

Shortly after this visit, Willem III was orphaned when his mother died from smallpox, upon which Vos (possibly in an attempt to make up for his public blunder) published a lengthy mourning poem. In another example of literary engagement between poets on different sides of the political spectrum, Vos dedicated his poem to the fiercely pro-Orangist writer Constantijn Huygens, who had been working as Mary's secretary. In the work, entitled 'Tranen over de doodt van Haar Koninglyke Hoogheidt Mevrouw Maria Stuart, Princes Douariere van Oranje, &c'. ('Tears over the death of her Royal

[449] W. J. C. Buitendijk (ed.), *Jan Vos. Toneelwerken* (Assen, 1975), p. 18.

Highness Madam Mary Stuart, Princess Dowager of Orange, &c.', 1660), Vos dedicated several verses to the unhappy situation of Willem III, now orphaned at the age of ten. However, as in his earlier poetry, Vos made no reference whatsoever to the political positions that were being withheld from the prince. This omission is even more conspicuous in light of his emphasis of Willem's loss of the principality of Orange to Louis XIV of France, on which he and his forefathers had based their status as sovereign princes:

> My father has been taken away from me, before I could see him.
> Orange, my Father's land (who could tame such malice?)
> is being kept from me by Guile, the daughter of Violence.[450]

Considering the content of the poem itself, in tandem with the tone of Vos' previous poetry and the parade he organised in 1660, it is hardly surprising that Constantijn Huygens responded only with the following scathing epigram:

> Your work of tears, Jan Vos, I can only praise partly:
> This I must say to you:
> Take a blot from it, which is as large as me,
> All that remains is praiseworthy.[451]

4.4.3 Literary representation of the stadhoudership in the 1660s

The Stuart restoration to the British throne in 1660 profoundly impacted the dynamics of the political debate concerning the stadhoudership in the Dutch Republic. Once Willem III's royal uncle had reclaimed his crown, pro- and anti-Orangists alike concluded

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[450] Vos, 'Traanen over de doodt van Haar Koninglyke Hoogheidt Mevrouw Maria Stuart' (1661), in: *Alle de Gedichten*, p. 702:
'Myn Vaader is my, eer dat ik hem zag, ontnomen.
Oranje, Vaaders erf (wie kan dit boosheidt toomen?)
Onthoudt men my door List, de dochter van 't Geweldt.'

[451] Huygens, 'Antwoord op Jan Vos' (1661):
'Uw traanen-werk, Jan Vos, en is maar half te prijzen:
Dit heb ik u te wijzen:
Doet eene vlek daar uit, en die zoo groot als ik,
De rest is loffelik.'

that Willem's chances of being elevated to a position of political importance in the United Provinces had increased. Due to the growing tension surrounding the potential future of the young Prince of Orange, the debate concerning the office of stadhouder itself was renewed with even greater fierceness in pamphlet literature, as exemplified in the earlier mentioned works of Geyl, Stern, and Van de Klashorst. However, the debate over the future of the stadhoudership and the House of Orange in Dutch society was fought with equal intensity in popular literature. The literary arts of the 1660s in particular marked a renewed interest in the way in which the previous Princes of Orange had fulfilled the office, and how they had dealt with its constitutional limitations. The focus of this interest was Willem I, who was still publicly revered by many as the 'father of the fatherland' and the founding patriarch of the Dutch nation.[452] However, Willem I now also became a target for criticism, which concerned both the legitimacy of his 'self-appointed' leadership of the Dutch uprising against the Spanish, and his motivations for doing so. Willem the Silent's leadership during the Revolt against Spain was thus questioned by the works of Pieter de la Court (1618 – 1685), and even cynically portrayed as an opportunistic grab for power by Johan Uytenhage de Mist's pamphlet *De stadthouderlijcke regeeringe* (1662).[453] Such writings, then, called into question the legitimacy of the House of Orange's claim to any positions of political leadership in the Dutch Republic.

This debate was reflected in popular literature, and a number of authors who supported the stadhoudership and the House of Orange were quick to come to the defence of Willem I. The early 1660s accordingly witnessed the publication of several poems and theatrical plays that defended Willem I and, in a broader context, the stadhoudership itself. An early example of this is Joos Claerbout's play *Droef-bly-eindig vertoog op 't beleg en overgaen van Middelburgh* ('*Sorrowful remonstrance with happy ending on the siege and capitlation of Middelburgh'*, 1661). Little is known about this author from Zeeland, nor about the publication of his play, besides that Claerbout (1618 - ?) lived and worked in

[452] Jasper van der Steen, 'The trap of history. The States Party and the Revolt of the Netherlands, 1650-1660', in: *De Zeventiende Eeuw* (2013: Vol. 29, No. 2), pp. 189-205.
[453] Duits, *Van Bartholomeusnacht tot Bataafse Opstand*, pp. 118-19; Van der Steen, 'The trap of history', pp. 199-205.

Vlissingen, and was a member of its local chamber of rhetoric 'De Blaeu Acolye'. The first edition of the play was published in 1661 in Middleburg by local printer Hendrik Smidt, and a second edition was published by the same printer in 1662, this time with a dedication to Willem III. Claerbout had received official permission for this from Willem's representative in Vlissingen, Bonifacius Caauw. There are no records of where and when the play might have been performed, or whether the work was exclusively meant for print.

What is overly clear, however, is the political message that Claerbout wanted to convey with the play, which has been rightly described by H. Duits as a 'strong stance in the polemic between *staatsgezinde* and Orangist writers'.[454] Both the play's contents and its official dedication to Willem III mark it as an outspoken piece of literary support for the House of Orange in the context of a wider political debate on the desirability of the office of stadhouder. *Droef-bly-eindig vertoog* is a play in five acts, and tells the story of the successful siege in 1574 of the strategically important city of Middelburg by an army of *Geuzen* under the command of the Prince of Orange. Although the play is set in the recent past, its dialogues engage directly with the contemporary political debate of the 1660s on the legitimacy and motives of Willem I's leadership of the Revolt. The play opens with a monologue by Willem I, who defends both his leadership of the Revolt as well as the necessity of the stadhoudership itself, while emphasising that he did not claim authority out of self-interest but in order to free the Dutch nation from a foreign tyrant:

> I have never tried,
> to enhance myself, nor to increase my Princely power
> with further riches: o! No, I did not plan these wars
> in order to raise myself up;
> But in order to free the Netherlands
> From the relentless pressure of a tyrant, […]

[454] Duits, *Van Bartholomeusnacht tot Bataafse Opstand,* p. 120.

To resist him,
To [gain] the nation's freedom; for which I have forsaken all else.[455]

Throughout the play Claerbout places a strong emphasis on the traditionally established argument of presenting the stadhouder as the country's most important protector of its freedom from foreign oppression. The play also prominently features the theme of the stadhoudership as a champion for *eendracht* in the nation, and includes a monologue in which the Prince of Orange stated that, even after the abjuration of the King of Spain, a stadhouder would remain vital 'to forge a bond of Unity'.[456]

A year later, another play was produced which directly engaged with the public debate on the desirability of the stadhoudership and the legitimacy of the House of Orange, entitled *Wilhem of Gequetste Vryheyt* ('*Wilhem or Injured Freedom*', 1662). In the preface to the published version of the play, the author, Lambert van den Bosch, denied that he had any political intentions with his play: 'It may seem to some, since in the current day the interests of His Royal Highness are being hotly debated, that in this form I myself would engage in this'.[457] However, Van den Bosch' self-professed political neutrality must be taken with a pinch of salt, as immediately on the next page he states that the play's aim

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[455] Joos Claerbout, *Droef-bly-eyndig vertoog op 't Beleg en Overgaaen der Stad Middelburg* (Middelburg, 1661), p. 17:
'Ik kenn' myn zelven dry; ik hebben nooit getracht
Om man vergrooting', nog man Princelyke macht
Met rykdom te verzien: o! Neen, deez' Oorelogen
En heb ik niet bebost om man zelfs te verhogen;
Maar om het Nederland te rukken uit de handt
Van den gewissen drang van einen Dwingelandt, […]
Om die te wederstaan,
Tot 's Lands vryheid; waarom ik 't alles heb verlaten.'
[456] Claerbout, *'t Beleg en Overgaan der Stad Middelburg* (1661), p. 18:
'Zo hoop ik met'er tyd des Eendragts band te smeeden.'
[457] Lambert van den Bosch, *Wilhem of Gequetste Vryheyt* (1662), preface:
'Het sal misschien by sommige schijnen, nademael men heden ten dage, de belangen van sijn Hoogheyt wat driftelijck bekampt, alsof ick deselve onder dese gedaente hadt willen voorstaen, maer dese sullen my daer over gelieven te verschoonen, als die my selve aen de eene zijde daer niet mas genoegh toe oordeele te zijn, en aen de andere zijde acht sulck een verdedigingh beter een beset onrijm, als de dartelheyt der veersen te passen.'

is to remind the Dutch what they owe to the House of Orange by learning how 'Willem I sacrificed his possessions, blood, and life for the State'.[458] The play itself should be read as an extensive piece of propaganda for both the House of Orange and the restoration of the stadhoudership. However, whereas Claerbout's *'t Beleg en Overgaan der Stad Middelburg* focuses largely on creating a mythology around the persona of Willem I, *Wilhem of Gequetste Vryheyt* places greater emphasis on the office of stadhouder itself. Particularly noteworthy is the lengthy monologue of Willem I, in which he explains the responsibilities of the office to his wife, Louise de Coligny:

> I take care that the people shall not be wanting,
> That courage shall not be punished by weakness.
> That discord shall be prevented among citizens and soldiers,
> That harmony may bloom in the midst of the States.
> That in time there are defences against all tyranny. […]
> I take care for a solid bond, […]
> Banish all trace of 'staetsucht' and damaging pomp,
> Maintain the towns' honour, and suppress inflated power.
> I mostly take care to prevent the 'staetsucht',
> Ensure no malcontent by providing honest rewards, […]
> To conclude, Madam, I worry and am not without fear,
> But the least of my thoughts, are occupied by my own fate'.[459]

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[458] Van den Bosch, *Wilhem of Gequetste Vryheyt*, preface:
'Als Welhem tradt, vol moedt, dien gruwel in 't gezicht,
Maar komt, helaas! door een verwaat en loodt te sneeven,
En offerd dus den Staat zijn goedt, zijn bloedt, zijn leven.
Dat Hollandt hier uit leer aan wien het zy verplicht.'
[459] *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7:
'k Besorg, dat voorraet zy den onderdaen beschaft,
Dat geene moetwil blijft door slapheyt ongestraft.
Dat onlust zy geweert in Borgers en Soldaten,
Dat eendracht bloeyen magh in 't midde van de Staten.
Dat alle dwinglandy geschut zy metter tijdt. […]
'k Besorgh een vaste bant, al wort de haet ontsint, […]
Roey alle staetsucht uyt, en schadelijcke pracht,
Hou Steden in haer eer, in toom geswollen macht.
'k Besorgh voor alle dingh de staetsuch voor te komen,

This dialogue, then, promoted both the supposedly selfless nature of stadhoudership, and the self-sacrifice of the House of Orange in serving the Republic in this capacity. Moreover, it engaged with Joost van den Vondel's repeated accusation that the House of Orange was often dangerously drawn to 'staetszucht', or hunger for power, by presenting the stadhoudership as actively seeking to remove such tendencies.

A particularly significant part of Van den Bosch's *Wilhem of Gequetste Vryheyt* is the dialogue between two fictional *burgers* ('citizens'), which takes up most of the fourth act. This dialogue between the character 'Heereman', an Orangist, and 'Burgerhart', who represents the ideas of the 'True Freedom' regime, focuses on the question of the desirability and legitimacy of the stadhoudership in a republican government. The dialogue thereby both reflected and informed the arguments of the contemporaneous public debate on the office. However, the fact that most of the verses are dedicated to the arguments of the most eloquent of the two, Heereman, further emphasised Van den Bosch's own opinion on the matter. I have provided a translation of part of this dialogue below:

> Burgerhart:
> Such powerful authority regularly made me apprehensive;
> We tried, I often thought, to free ourselves from suppression,
> But then fed in our own laps new dynasties. […]
> People can call it however they want;
> we changed names, but never the suppression.
>
> Heereman:
> We changed our state, and are born free; […]
> Tell me then what you want, in what new way
> Would you like to be ruled, if you do not consider such a freedom a good thing?
> Do not dismiss a Commander who would fight for you in the field,
> A Stadhouder, to solve discord,
> Merely a distinguished Head, and representative for your state,

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Met eerlijck loon de drift van ongenoeght te toomen, […]
Kort om, Me-vrouw, ick sorgh en ben niet buyten vreese,
Maar 't minst van mijn gedacht, is maer mijn eynd sal wese.'

A watcher on the wall, a warrior on the Council?
This is how you serve your fate: yet are you still not satisfied,
While having the authority and liberties of your Cities,
And to see that your state is allied with such power,
Through such a [distinguished] head in times of war and peace?[460]

Reflecting the political ideas of the circles around Johan de Witt, Burgerhart thus argues that the republican state cannot be truly 'free' as long as it continues to preserve elements from its old governmental structure ('we changed names, but never the suppression'), and to allow for a dynastical claim to power (through the House of Orange). Heereman, however, points out that the Dutch cities and provinces are independent, and that having a stadhouder merely benefits the wellbeing of the state. The stadhouder is thereby framed not as a semi-monarchical relic, but 'merely a distinguished head, a representative for your state', whose main function is to 'solve discord'. This idea of the stadhouder as the main champion of the nation's *eendracht* recurs frequently throughout the remainder of the play. For example, upon Willem I's assassination a choir

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[460] *Ibid.*, pp. 37-39:
'Burgerhart:
Niet selden maeckte my sulck groot gesagh beducht,
Wy poogen, dacht ick vaeck, ons selfs van 't juck te vrye,
En voeden in ons schoot weer nieuwe heerschappyen, […]
Men duyde het soo men wil en soo men 't duyde magh,
Wy wisselde van naem en nimmer van gesagh.

Heereman:
Wy wisselden van staet, en wierden vry gebooren;
Een naem voor meenige eeuw van onder ons verlooren,
Ey segt wat wilt ghy dan, op welck een nieuwe voet
Beheerscht zijn, keurt ghy sulck een vrydom niet voor goet?
Verwerpt geen Veltheer om voor u in 't velt te vechten,
Een Stedehouder, om geschillen te beslechten,
Een slechts aensienlijck hooft, en aensicht voor u staet,
Een wachter op de wal, een krijghsman in den Raet?
Soo dient u van u lot: zijt ghy noch niet te vreden,
Te houden het gesagh en 't recht in uwe Steden,
En onder dies te sien u staet met macht bevrient,
In oorlogh en in vree can sulck een hooft gedient?'

of courtiers mourns how 'our unity, once the soul of prosperity, languishes away'. In the final act, too, Heereman hopes that the new stadhouder Maurits will 'will securely bind our seven arrows together'.[461] The play ends by drawing a direct link forward to the 1660s, as Willem I's ghost makes a case for the restoration of Willem III, 'the third of my namesakes', who would be 'the hope of great things'.[462] This emphasises the play's intention to engage with the contemporary political debate, in explicitly making the case for the reinstatement of the stadhoudership.[463]

The 1660s also witnessed the publication of plays that promoted the other side of the debate, arguing against the restoration of the office of stadhouder. On 11 June 1663 the Amsterdam Schouwburg premiered a new play by Joost van den Vondel, entitled *Batavische Gebroeders of Onderdruckte Vryheit* ('*Batavian Brothers or Suppressed Freedom',* 1663). The intention of this play has left literary scholars divided: W.A.P. Smit claims that the play was non-political in nature, whilst Cornelissen, Poelhekke and Duits have all argued that the *Batavische Gebroeders* should be read as a reflection of the contemporaneous political debate about the stadhoudership, after it was rekindled by the Stuart restoration of 1660.[464] However, it is also important to emphasise that Vondel's *Batavische Gebroeders* did not exist in a political vacuum, but was instead part of a wider theatrical debate on the stadhoudership, and engaged with other contemporary publications, such as Van den Bosch's *Wilhem of Gequetste Vryheyt* and Claerbout's *Droef-bly-eindig vertoog.*

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461 *Ibid.*, p. 34, 'Onse eendracht, oyt de ziel van welvaert, staet aen 't quijnen'; p. 49:
[spoken to Maurits] 'Beschaffen ons de rust, verhoopt soo lange wijlen, / en streng'len vast de knoop van onse seven pijlen.'

462 *Ibid.*, p. 53:
'En laet de derde na, van mijne namelingen,
In d'armen van de staet, de hoop van groote dingen.'

463 Duits, *Van Bartholomeusnacht tot Bataafse Opstand,* pp. 151-153.

464 W. A. P. Smit, *Van Pascha tot Noah. Een verkenning van Vondels drama's naar continuïteit en ontwikkeling in hun grondmotief en structuur* (Zwolle, 1956-1962); J. D. M. Cornelissen, *De eendracht van het land. Cultuurhistorische studies over Nederland in de zestiende en zeventiende eeuw* (Amsterdam, 1987); Poelhekke, *Vondel en Oranje*, p. 16; Duits, *Van Bartholomeusnacht Tot Bataafse Opstand*, p. 154.

Set in the time of Emperor Nero's reign over the Roman Empire, the *Batavische Gebroeders* is a tragedy in which the arbitrariness and cruelty of a power-hungry Roman magistrate, who rules the area on behalf of the Emperor, and who is (anachronistically) referred to as a 'stadhouder', leads to the destruction of the free Batavian people. The principal theme of the play is the freedom of the Batavians, who represent the legendary ancestors of the Dutch nation. In the opening act, Vondel describes the concept of freedom as the 'true nature' of the Batavian state, and its individual liberties as innate to its people: 'Liberty has always been the German's heritage, and its most cherished treasure'.[465] However, stadhouder Fonteius Kapito (in whom the reader is supposed to recognise Willem II) declares himself above the laws of the German tribe, and states that 'no stadhouder is bound to the law'.[466] He subsequently punishes the two Batavian leaders, Burgerhart and Julius, for the false accusation that they are reluctant to provide soldiers for the Roman army. Burgerhart then comments that a stadhouder cannot be trusted to act within the set prerogatives of his office, or to obey a higher authority, but instead is prone to act like a dictator: 'A stadhouder will audaciously surpass its master, / and establish, in its master's name, a new tyranny'.[467] Despite lack of evidence for their presumed crimes, stadhouder Fonteius ultimately sentences one of the brothers to death and the other to be imprisoned in Rome. The commentary on the development of the events is given by a chorus of Batavian women, but can easily be read as Vondel's own commentary on the events of 1650:

> A Blood Council, that rules with force,
> and follows stadhouder's orders, to first
> strike off Freedom's heads,
> and then place a law on to the people,

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[465] Joost van den Vondel, *Batavische Gebroeders of Onderdruckte vryheit* (1663), p. 25:
'De vryheit was van outs der Duitschen eigen erf,
En allerwaerste schat.'
[466] Vondel, *Batavische Gebroeders of Onderdruckte vryheit* (1663), p. 50:
'Geen stedehouder staet aen stijl van recht gebonden'.
[467] Ibid., p. 61:
'Een stedehouder streeft den meester stout voorby,
En sterckt, op 's meesters naem, een nieuwe dwinglandy.'

to be printed in its heart, kneaded like wax.
The tyranny seizes the most noble blood.
Objections no longer help.
The authority of the States,
must bow to a cruel Roman,
an illegal guardian of the state.
He holds the freedom in his claws.[468]

The *Batavische Gebroeders*, then, is Vondel's contribution to the intense debate of the early 1660s on the desirability of a stadhouder and on the future of Willem III. The story's focus on an escalated conflict over the providing of soldiers, moreover, echoes the conflict between Willem II and the States of Holland, and thereby emphasises a narrative of untrustworthiness and *staatszucht* concerning the stadhoudership. Thus the message of the play is clear: a stadhouder, driven by *staatszucht*, cannot be trusted to rule within the limitations of his office's prerogatives, and will therefore pose a constant threat to the liberties of the state and its people. This message is most explicitly conveyed in the scene in which a lamenting Batavian woman says to the river Rhine, which symbolises the Batavian's strength and lust for freedom: 'thou stream cannot endure a stadhouder'.[469]

Although little is known about the popular reception of the *Batavische Gebroeders,* there is reason to believe it was not received well, in spite of its performance in the pro-'True Freedom' city of Amsterdam. Archival sources on contemporary stage performances at the Amsterdam Schouwburg tells us that the play only ran for three nights, with the theatre's revenue varying between 150 and 190 guilders per night (the average revenue for a play at the Amsterdam Schouwburg in 1663 was roughly 200 guilders per night).[470]

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468 *Ibid.*, p. 65.
469 *Ibid.*, p. 69:
'Uw stroom kan geen stadthouders draegen.'
470 These figures, including performance dates and revenue, have been found in the ONSTAGE database: http://www.vondel.humanities.uva.nl/onstage; accessed: 21-05-2018.

Contributions in popular literature to the general debate on the stadhoudership diminished towards the second half of the 1660s, but certain political events would inspire brief new bursts of output. Relations between England and the United Provinces quickly soured again after Charles II's restoration due to rival trade interests, and from 1665 to 1667 the United Provinces were once again at war with England. Following the outbreak of this second Anglo-Dutch war, Jacob Westerbaen published his poem 'De Morgen-wecker' ('The Morning Alarm', 1665) in which he called upon the Dutch to join forces in resistance against the English might. In the poem, he summoned his readers to:

> Behold, such a unity among the government:
> [behold] how our Lords protect the commonwealth,
> how they labour for the preservation of the land:
> God give that they may overcome these difficulties![471]

In a contrast to traditional tropes, Westerbaen thus described not the stadhouder but the provincial magistrates as those who were preserving the state's unity, framing them instead as the stalwart champions of the Republic's freedom from a foreign enemy.

Another significant political event was the announcement of Willem III as a 'Child of State' in 1666, which meant that the States-General formed an education committee for the Prince, including Johan de Witt himself. Many pro-Orange contemporaries interpreted the move as a way to control and oppress the then-sixteen year old Prince; sentiments which were particularly well demonstrated in Jan Zoet's poem 'Op 't Kindschap van Staat, van zijn Hooghaid Wilhem Henrik, Ten tijde van 't verbranden der Neederlandze Koopvaardy-scheepen in 't Vlie' ('On Willem Hendrik being made a Child of State, at the time of the burning of the Dutch merchant ships at Vlieland', 1666). In the poem, Zoet accuses De Witt of humiliating and oppressing Willem III by denying him his 'rightful' office of the stadhoudership, to the detriment of the prosperity of the state. Moreover, Zoet compares the care for Willem by Amalia van Solms, the matriarch of the House of Orange, as well as the House's general 'care' for the nation as its main

[471] J. Westerbaen, 'De Morgen-wecker' (1665), in: *Gedichten,* p. 245.

protectors, to the alleged indifference to both by Johan de Witt. Zoet therefore accused De Witt of being careless about the fate of both Willem III and the Republic:

> For a long time, Amelie has carefully guarded her grandson,
> with wisdom and advice:
> [But] the Prince, almost a man, has been made a child again:
> and into a child of State.
> The State is the toy of my Lord the Pensionary,
> *(note: the Dutch word used for 'toy' also translates as 'bastard child')*
> so that long Jan has now become the Prince's grandfather.
> She [Amalia] has loved her grandson, and he [Willem] has loved the Fatherland.
> And thus people have laughingly set fire to the nation's prosperity.[472]

The poem also makes reference to a recent Dutch naval defeat near the island of Vlieland, which had led to the destruction of a large fleet of merchant ships and of many of the island's homes. Zoet blamed the military disaster on De Witt and his alleged disregard for the nation's wellbeing and safety, and thus used these two unrelated events to convey a clear, single message: a stadhouder brings prosperity and peace, whereas the reverse brought nothing but adversity and negligence of the country's safety.

4.4.4 Conclusion

This section has explored the development of the image of the stadhouder in response to the political events of the Stadhouderless Period. It has argued that one of the most important shifts in the literary representation of the office was a focus on the nature and

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[472] Jan Zoet, 'Op 't Kindschap van Staat, van zijn Hooghaid Wilhem Henrik, Ten tijde van 't verbranden der Neederlandze Koopvaardy-scheepen in 't Vlie' (1666), in: *Digt-kunstige Werkken*, p. 300:
'Lang heeft Amelia, vol zorg, heur Neef bewaakt,
Met wijshaid, raadt en daad:
De Prins, schoer manbaar, weird weer tot een kind gemaakt;
Maar tot een kind van Staat.
De Staat is 't Speelkind van mijn Heer de Penzionaris:
Zoo dat nu lange Jan, de Prins zijn Groote-Vaar is,
Zy heeft heur Neef geliefd, en hy het Vaaderland.
Dus steekt men lagghende de welvaard in brand.'

desirability of the office itself. Writers supporting the reinstatement of the stadhoudership argued their case by presenting the stadhouder as the remedy for all current political evils. Thus, as political discord was created by the emergence of the States' party and supporters of the House of Orange, an image developed of the stadhouder as the preserver of the Republic's unity, and the natural facilitator of its internal unity. In response to the economic instability created by two Anglo-Dutch wars, the stadhouder came to be depicted as the guarantor of the country's prosperity.

On the other side of the debate, however, authors supporting the 'True Freedom' regime of Johan de Witt sought ways to legitimise the deliberate absence of the stadhouder. In order to do so, the respective concepts of 'individual freedom' and 'liberties' became the main focus of their narratives. The stadhouder was presented as an innate threat to the liberties of the various local government institutions within the Republic, while poems and theatrical plays, such as Vondel's *Lucifer,* were to remind their audiences of the events of 1650, which were framed as the attack of a 'power hungry' stadhouder on provincial and local liberties. The concept of '*staatszucht*' was a crucial component of this discourse, and was used as a core argument by the popular anti-stadhouder literate throughout the period.

4.5 Part III: The Restoration of the stadhoudership (1672 – 78)

The turbulent 'Rampjaar' of 1672 witnessed the invasion of the United Provinces by an alliance of foreign states, as well as the restoration of the stadhoudership and captaincy-general. The appointment of Willem III as captain-general and stadhouder of Holland and Zeeland (and, subsequently, of Utrecht, Gelderland, and Overijssel) in 1672 dealt the final blow to the 'True Freedom' government led by Johan de Witt, or the 'Loevesteyn party' as it was often referred to by contemporaries. The general dislike of the ruling regents' class among the common people, with whom the Prince of Orange had always remained popular, was strengthened by the general panic that had followed the declarations of war from France, England, Münster, and Cologne. The resulting episodes

of violent popular unrest in towns across the United Provinces not only led to the reinstatement of the stadhoudership, but also to the public murder of Johan de Witt and his brother Cornelis by a mob in The Hague on 20 August 1672.

The present section analyses the ways in which the contemporary literary arts engaged with these events. It will show that popular literature in support of the newly appointed stadhouder immediately returned to the well-established literary tropes and metaphors associated with the office prior to 1650. This included a continued emphasis on the idea that the Stadhouderless Period had caused political and societal discord in the United Provinces. The return of the stadhouder, in contrast, would restore harmony and *eendracht* among the towns and provinces. There was also a resurgence in the literary discourse in which the Prince of Orange, in his double capacity as stadhouder and captain-general, was presented as the 'father' of the nation, a biblical redeemer of his people, and the champion of the freedom of the Republic from foreign oppression. Unsurprisingly, these themes were accompanied by a rhetoric in which those who had opposed the restoration of these offices, notably the leaders of the Loevesteyn party, were denounced as 'traitors' to the prosperity and safety of the country, and responsible for the Republic's current misfortunes.

4.5.1 The reinstatement of the stadhoudership (1672)

Among the first wave of literary commentary on Willem III's appointment to the stadhoudership was a poem by Constantijn Huygens, entitled *Gulielmo Henrico principe Auriaco exercituum foederati Belgij designato imperatore (*1672), in which Huygens deployed most of the tropes mentioned above. The poem opens with a description of how the citizens of the Republic had been left 'orphaned' once the stadhoudership became left vacant. But now, rejoices the poem, 'the boy whom we scarcely saw' has become a man. The poem goes on to present Willem III as a unifying force for a scattered nation under threat ('this leader […] this unifying sign'), and ends by stating that there was now 'one voice for a father, for the people, and for God'.[473]

[473] Huygens, *Gulielmo Henrico principe Auriaco exercituum foederati Belgij designato imperatore* (1672).

If Huygens' Latin poem was aimed at educated members of the middle and upper classes of Dutch society, the stadhoudership's restoration also sparked an outburst of cheap popular print material accessible to all levels of the population. Dozens of songs and broadsheets were published in the summer of 1672, and most of these survived through their addition to songbooks, such as *Het Prince Liet-Boeck, of Trompet des Oorlogs* (*'The Prince's Song Book, or Trumpet of War'*, 1675) and *Het nieuwe Nassouse trompetje ('The New Trumpet of Nassau',* 1675). The song 'Aen de Beminders van Orangien' ('To the Admirers of Orange', 1672), for example, expressed the expectation that with Willem's accession to the office of stadhouder, the Republic would soon be freed and restored from 'the French violence'.[474] It blamed Johan de Witt and his supporters for having 'raped' the Prince's 'Stadhouderly powers', and suggested that their failing policies were to blame for the French invasion.[475] Similar sentiments were echoed in other songs, such as 'Oranjens Lof' ('Orange's Praise', 1672), which hailed 'our young Prince, that Hero / who has now been made Stadhouder […] and who shall march to battle for us', and stated its expectation that Willem would risk 'his body and life' for the nation.[476]

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[474] [Anon.], 'Aen de Beminders van Orangien' (1672), in: *Het Prince Liet-boeck:*
'Dat wy ons Landt sien Weer herstelt,
Gelijck het was voor 't Frans gewelt:'

[475] [Anon.], 'Aen de Beminders van Orangien' (1672) in: *Het Prince Liet-boeck*:
'Ghy die Oranjens Heerschappy,
Hebt af sien leggen aen een zy:
En sijn Stadthouderlijcke macht,
Gesien door 't Wit Edict verkracht,
Doch had 't gebleven noch in 't Wit,
Maer neen! de afgunst maelden dit,
Vervloeckte werckje uyt in 't swart.'

[476] [Anon.], 'Oranjens Lof' (1672), in: *Het Prince Liet-boeck* (1675):
'Onsen Jongen Prins dien Heldt,
Die nu Stadt-houder is gestelt […]'
'Laet ons nu loven den Heldt,
Die voor ons trecken sal te veldt,
Ons Prins d'Oranjen nu verheven,
Die voor ons waeght sijn lijf en leven.'

Other songs emphasised the idea of the stadhouder as a biblical redeemer who would save the nation from ruin. For example, 'Geluckwenschingh aen sijn Doorluchtige Hoogheyt de Heere Prince van Oranjen' ('Felicitation to His Highness the Prince of Orange', 1672) stated how 'many hearts had longed' for Willem's elevation, because the House of Orange 'had brought our Freedom to this Land'.[477] The song continues by stating that: 'God has given the nation / another young Hero, / a sublime Joshua', and begs God to protect 'this David's militant hand'.[478] Similarly, the song 't 'Samen-spraeck tusschen de Hollandtsche Maeght en den Prins van Oranjen' ('Dialogue between the Virgin of Holland and the Prince of Orange', 1672) depicted an allegorical female figure, representing the Province of Holland, begging the young stadhouder to prevent her from being 'raped' by the foreign invaders. To this Willem replies by emphasising his devotion as the Republic's main protector against foreign oppression and tyranny:

> Flower of the Netherlands,
> I will not let you be dishonoured,
> But will, with all my strength,
> Break the Enemies' might,
> and forces.

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[477] [Anon.]. 'Geluckwenschingh aen sijn Doorluchtige Hoogheyt de Heere Prince van Oranjen, over 't Gouvernementschap der Vereenighde Nederlanden' (1672), in: *Het Prince Liet-boeck*:
'Na u O grooten Veldt-Heer,
Heeft meenigh hert gedorst, […]
Wilt Juychen, Triompheren,
Soldaten, Burgers, Heeren,
Ter eeren van Oranjen,
En singht gelijcker handt
Dat door haer onse Vryheydt,
Gekomen is in 't Landt.'

[478] [Anon.], 'Geluckwenschingh aen sijn Doorluchtige Hoogheyt de Heere Prince van Oranjen, over 't Gouvernementschap der Vereenighde Nederlanden' (1672), in: *Het Prince Liet-boeck*:
'Godt heeft het Landt gegeven,
Nu weer een Jonger Heldt,
Een Josua verheven,
In Nederlandt gestelt:
Den Hemel wil hem sparen, […]
En Davids strijtb're handt.'

Like a loyal shepherd,
I shall guard you. […]
Await that day,
At which I, full of courage,
Shall restore thou Freedom,
And spill your Enemies' blood;
Thence they will no longer torture us,
With Tyranny.[479]

The theme of *eendracht* and the restoration of harmony to a politically divided nation particularly dominated the popular literature commemorating the restoration of the stadhoudership. The poem 'Zeegenwenschen' ('Blessings', 1672) by Jan Zoet is an early example of this re-emergent discourse. Zoet wrote the poem in August 1672 to mark the occasion of the new stadhouder's visit to Amsterdam. The poem praised the reinstatement of the stadhouder, and described how the regents (symbolised by an allegorical character named 'Selfishness') now had to bow to Willem in shame:

Long live Orange, the honour, and crown of the Fatherland,
for whom jealous Selfishness, now shamefaced, must bow.[480]

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[479] [Anon.], 't 'Samen-spraeck tusschen de Hollandtsche Maeght en den Prins van Oranjen' (1672), in: *Het Prince Liet-boeck*:
'Bloem der Nederlanden,
Ick sal u laten niet in schanden,
Maer met al mijn kracht,
Breken 's Vyandt macht,
En banden.
Als een Herder trouw,
Sal ick u behoede, […]
En verwacht alleen de dagh,
Om met een volle moedt,
U Vryheydt te herstellen,
En u Vyandts bloedt,
Ter neer te vellen;
Dan soo sullen sy
Ons met Tyranny,
Niet quellen.'
[480] Zoet, 'Zeegenwenschen' (1672) in: *Digt-kunstige Werkken*, p. 127:

The final verse ends with the expectation that the stadhouder would return unity to the nation by removing the 'selfish' elements that had caused discord in the past. The stadhouder would once again be able:

> [to] carefully remove the weeds from the Garden,
> So that Unity may plant the gold Freedom here again.[481]

4.5.2 Literary representation of the fall of Johan de Witt

On 20 August 1672, Johan de Witt and his brother Cornelis were brutally murdered by an angry, Orangist mob in The Hague. In order to legitimise his death, popular Orangist literature regularly accused De Witt's of 'treason' of the Republic's interests. Accusations of this perceived betrayal varied from blaming De Witt with neglecting the country's military defences to accusations of having 'sold out' the United Provinces to Louis XIV of France. The song 'De Witten soet e[n su]ur, En hare laetste uur' ('De Witts sweet and sour, and their final hour', 1672) for example accused Johan de Witt and his supporters of having taken bribes from Louis XIV to promote French interests in the Low Countries and suppress the House of Orange:

> It seemed that Louis with his Louises (*livres)*
> blinded their ['the Loevesteyn party'] soul and hearts,
> in order to promote his Government
> of being worthy of adoration:
> They say that they loved
> Louis more than Nassou.[482]

'Lang leeve Oranje, d'eer, en kroon van 't Vaaderland,
Daar nydige Eigenbaat nu schaamrood moet voor buigen.'

481 *Ibid.*, p. 128:
'Om 't Onkruid in den Tuin, voorzigtig, uit te trekken,
Op dat hier d'Eendragt weer de Gouwde Vryhaid plant.'

482 [Anon.], 'Der Witten soet e[n su]ur, En hare laetste uur: Ofte Schrickelijck spectakel vertoont in 's Gravenhaegh, op den 20. Augusti, 1672' (1672), in: *Het Prince Liet-boeck*:
't Scheen dat Louys door sijn Louysen
Haer Ziel en Herten hadt verblindt,
Om sijn Regeeringh aen te prijsen,

The song continues in cursing De Witt's 'vervloeckte facksy' ('damned party') and blames his unhappy end on his own alleged crimes: 'It is right that your foul deeds / are punished with the greatest evils'.[483]

A different song accused De Witt of neglecting the Republic's safety. Its verses states that the invading foreign nations had 'cradled' the leaders of the United Provinces to sleep so they would leave the country vulnerable to attack. It then introduces the Prince of Orange as the true guardian of the needs of the country:

> No matter how they rock the cradle to and fro,
> The eyes of His Highness are never closed,
> By French or English lullabies,
> [By God], he is strengthened as Joshua: […]
> His Highness becomes Stadhouder,
> Who awakens for the Lion of Nassou,
> With a sword in his paws.[484]

Accusing De Witt and his supporters of betraying the interests of the Dutch Republic was not only a powerful rhetorical tool that was used to disgrace his policies and to justify the manner of his death. It also offered the opportunity to secure the

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Dat 's waerdigh was te zijn bemint:
Ja durfden seggen meer te houwe
Van Lodewijck als van Nassouwe.'

483 [Anon.], 'Der Witten soet e[n su]ur':
"t Js recht u voor u boose daden
Te straffen met de grootste quaden.'

484 [Anon.], 'Een Liedt gemaeckt van een Nieuwe Modesse Wiegh, waer aen den Paus van Romen, de Koningen van Vranckrijck en Engelant, Bisschoppen van Munster en Keulen, Prins Robbert, en verscheyde andere grote aentrecken, om den Prins en Staten in slaep te wiegen, dat haer van Sijn Hoogheydt belet wordt' (1672), in: *Het Prince Liet-boeck*:
Doch hoe men Wieght of hoe me treckt,
Sijn Hoogheydts oogen noyt bevleckt,
Door Frans of Engels singen,
Godt hem, als Josua versterckt: […]
Syn Hoogheydt tot Stadthouder raeckt,
Die voor 't Nassouwen Leeuw ontwaeckt,
Een degen in sijn pooten'.

stadhouder's position by emphasising his commitment to the Republic's independence and *eendracht*. This narrative was therefore frequently exploited by pro-Orangist authors, such as the poet Jan Zoet, in their commemoration of the events of the summer of 1672. Zoet's poem *'d' Ydele Vlugt'* (*'The Futile Flight'*, 1672) likened De Witt to various ancient despots, such as the Persian king Darius and the Roman commander Julius Caesar, whose lust for power had ultimately caused their downfall. Zoet accused him of having 'sold' the United Provinces to France:

> He made, together with his Brother, and other damned supporters,
> A secret pact, to rather be French than [for the] Prince, […]
> Louis filled their pockets with thousands of 'Louijzen' ['*livres*'];
> The beloved Fatherland became France's property.[485]

Zoet further accused De Witt of destroying the harmony of the Dutch state through his continuous efforts to abolish the stadhoudership and 'suppress' the House of Orange, thereby creating discord in the Republic's provinces and towns:

> How the *eendragt* has been trampled, by Godless dogs:
> […] They tried to smother Orange in his cradle.
> […] The civil liberties were gone, one could no longer find Eendragt.[486]

However, the Dutch literary landscape also produced a number of works that voiced a different representation of the events concerning the stadhouder and the

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[485] Jan Zoet, 'd'Ydele Vlugt. Vertoont in de schielikke Dood van Kornelis en Jan de Wit' [1672] in: *Digt-kunstige Werkken*, p. 262-263:
'Men kon van Vryhaid, nog heur waarde, niet meer roemen:
Want Meester Jan was voogd, en Hollands Opper Heer:
De Staaten, Kinderen; en hy hun aller Baader. […]
Hy maakte, met zijn Broer, en and're vloekverwanten,
een haimelik verbond, van liever Frans dan Prins, […]
Louys vuld hunne beurs, met duizenden Louijzen.
Het lieve Vaaderland, wierd Vrankrijks aigendom.'
[486] *Ibid.*, p. 262:
'Hoe d'eendragt word vertreen, door Goddelooze vonden:
[…] Men poogde Oranje, in de Wieg, en Baakermat te smooren.
[…] Het Burgerregt was weg, men vond geen Eendragt meer.'

Loevesteyn party, in which the members of the latter were hailed as martyrs to the liberties of the Republic. For example, Joost van den Vondel published several short poems following the murder of Johan and Cornelis de Witt, in which he praised them both for their service to the Republic.[487] In his *Ter Eeuwige Gedachtenis van den Heer Joan de Wit* ('*To the Eternal Memory of the Gentleman Johan de Wit*', 1672), Vondel explicitly defended the late Grand Pensionary against the accusation of treason. The verse argued that De Witt had tried to curb French aggression by making pacts with Louis XIV, and ended with the rhetorical question 'Do they [Johan and Cornelis de Witt] deserve the name of traitor for their loyalty and virtue?'.[488] Vondel's commemoration of De Witt echoed the exact same themes he used to honour Johan van Oldebarnevelt after his execution in 1619. Like Oldebarnevelt, Vondel consistently presented De Witt as 'the Mouthpiece of the States, who spoke for the liberties of Holland', and who was 'the States' most loyal councillor'.[489] And, like Oldebarnevelt, De Witt is presented as a 'father' and 'martyr' of the State, as exemplified by lines in Vondel's subsequent poem *Op den zelven Heer* ('On that same Gentleman', 1672) such as 'Patricides offered and crucified him', and 'he died for the Fatherland as a martyr for the State'.[490] The patriarchal trope of the 'father of the state' was commonly used for the stadhouder, so Vondel's choice to apply it to the Grand Pensionary was a political decision. However, there was one important difference

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[487] The poems are: 'Ter eeuwige gedachtenis van den Heer Joan de Wit, Raetpensionaris van Hollant, &c' (1672); 'Op den zelven Heer' (1672); 'Op d' afbeeldinge van den Heere Meester Joan de Wit, Raetpensionaris van Hollant, Vader des Vaderlants' (1672).

[488] Vondel, 'Ter eeuwige gedachtenis van den Heer Joan de Wit, Raetpensionaris van Hollant': in: *De Werken,* p. 425:
'Of door het vreeverbont 't gewelt van Vrankrijk stuit.
[…] Verdient hun [Johan en Cornelis] trou en deught den name van lantverraders?'

[489] *Ibid.*, p. 425:
Den mont der Staeten, die voor 't recht van Hollant sprak;
The trope is also found in: Vondel, 'Op d' afbeeldinge van den Heere Meester Joan de Wit, Raetpensionaris van Hollant, Vader des Vaderlants' (1672):
'De mont der Vryheit, en der Staeten trouste raet'.

[490] Vondel, 'Op d' afbeeldinge van den Heere Meester Joan de Wit, Raetpensionaris van Hollant, Vader des Vaderlants' [1672], in: *De Werken,* p. 436:
'En vadermoordernaers hem leverden en kruisten
Hy storf voor 't Vaderlant een martelaer van Staat.'

between Vondel's literary reaction to the murder of the De Witt brothers and his poems about the execution of Oldebarnevelt, which was the notion of responsibility. Whereas Vondel had been openly critical of Maurits' role in the solution of the Truce Period Conflicts, he did not locate any blame or responsibility for the events of 1672 with the stadhouder, despite the persistent rumours that the Prince (or close associates) had been involved with the orchestration of De Witt's murder. Perhaps Vondel did not give much credence to the rumours, but it is at least as likely that the literary climate prevented the old Amsterdam poet from expressing any outright criticism of the new stadhouder. As early as September 1672 Willem banned the publication of some anti-Orangist pamphlets, and both authors and publishers risked considerable fines and a lawsuit for the publication of such literature.[491]

The real danger that this ban posed to writers and publishers is further evidenced by another piece of outspoken contemporary criticism of the stadhouder's role in the murder of Johan and Cornelis de Witt. The play *Haegsche Broeder-moord, of dolle blydschap* ('*Fratricide in The Hague, or Mad Merriment',* 1712) by the playwright Joachim Oudaen (1628 – 1692) contained such a fierce attack on Willem III that it was never published or performed during the Prince's lifetime. Oudaen wrote the play in 1673 but kept it private, and told his daughter on his deathbed in 1692 to burn it.[492] However, the play was not destroyed but published in 1712, during the second Stadhouderless Period. Even then, it was published anonymously and with a fictional printer's address ('In Frederik-Stad, Bij Johan Ernst Smith').

The first act of the play stages a conversation between Frederik of Nassau, Lord of Zuylestein, and Willem of Nassau, Lord of Odyk. Both were prominent noblemen associated with the House of Orange, and vocal supporters of the restoration of the stadhoudership and captaincy-general for Willem III. In the play, Odyk and Zuylestein discuss their scheme to have the brothers De Witt murdered, for which they've been

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491 Lia van Gemert, 'De Haagsche Broeder-Moord: Oranje ontmaskerd' in: *Literatuur* (1984: 1), pp. 268-76; p. 275.
492 Gemert, 'De Haagsche Broeder-Moord, p. 268.

given the consent of Willem III. Odyk feels confident in its success as the common people were sufficiently stirred up in their hatred against the government:

> His Highness is carried in the hearts of the populace; […]
> [They have] a strong desire, and irreconcilable hatred,
> and zeal to raise the Prince to the top of the state;
> and wish that all types of disasters may hit the De Witts.[493]

Thus, in the first act Oudaen not only emphasises that Willem III was complicit in the murder, he also accused the local clergymen Simonis and Landman from The Hague, who were both outspoken enemies of Johan de Witt, of having deliberately stirred up the people against the statesmen. Throughout the play, Oudaen uses the commonplace theatrical practice of a *rei* or chorus to provide his own political commentary on the developments on stage. In the second act, Oudaen's *rei* of 'Observers of Matters of Nature and State' draws the comparison between 'Barnevelt' and 'Jan de Witt'; both having been loyal defenders of the liberties of the States of Holland and its towns, and both having been martyred in name of the stadhouder. The only difference is, according to the 'Observers', that the one (Maurits) was directly responsible for the execution, while the other (Willem III) remained behind the scenes and had the work done by others. In the fifth and final Act, the *rei* draws on the allegory of presenting the stadhouders as the 'fathers of the nation' and turns the metaphor around: it argues that those who are called traitors were the real 'fathers'. The stadhouder and his supporters are, in contrast, the ones who actually committed treason by murdering them:

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[493] Joachim Oudaen, *Haegsche Broeder-moord, of dolle blydschap* (1712), p. 3:
'Zyn Hoogheid word in 't hert gedragen van 't Gemeen; […]
[Nadien hier uit by 't Volk, te wederzyde, ontstaat]
Een blakende begeerte, en onverzoenb'ren haat;
Een yver om den Prins in top van staat te heffen;
En wensch dat alle ramp de Witten koom te treffen.'

> 'This is the main distinction; that you scold your most loyal Fathers
> for Traitors; while thinking of the Traitors
> as Fathers of the State.'[494]

The *Haegsche Broeder-moord* was never performed on stage, but it is likely that Oudaen never meant for the play to be acted out. The play's unusual length and rather static dialogue do not make it particularly suitable for a live performance.[495] Instead, it should be interpreted as a purely political statement and an attempt to exonerate Johan and Cornelis de Witt, while blaming their deaths on the stadhouder and his supporters.

4.6 Conclusion

The first three chapters of this thesis have examined how the stadhoudership had been tasked by the Union of Utrecht with the maintenance of *eendracht* among the provinces of the Dutch Republic. This was one of the most significant reasons for which the office was preserved after the Dutch state had become a republic. Throughout the late sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth century, this task became the office's most distinctive aspect, bearing particularly on the stadhouders' active role as mediators in moments of inter- and intra-provincial conflict. This chapter has drawn on these arguments to demonstrate the centrality of the concept of *eendracht* to the contemporary perception of the stadhoudership in Dutch popular literature. In doing so, it has illustrated the consistency of certain themes in the depiction of the office and highlighted the emergence of new sets of imagery in response to the political events of the period.

It has notably shown that, throughout the first half of the seventeenth century, there was a certain uniformity in the literary depiction of the stadhoudership, centred around the symbolism of *eendracht*. The relationship between the stadhouder and the

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494 Oudaen, *Haegsche Broeder-moord*, p. 107:
'Maar dit is 't onderscheid, dat g'uwe trouwste Vaders
Voor Landverraders scheld; en keurt de Landverraders
Voor Vaders van den Staat.'
495 Gemert, 'De Haagsche Broeder-Moord', p. 274.

States' governments was regularly depicted as a political partnership, in which both entities shared the responsibility for the safety and welfare of the young Dutch nation. However, following the resolution of the Truce Period conflicts, there began to emerge a strain of popular literature which criticised the role Maurits had played as stadhouder, accusing him of *staatszucht*. However, such criticism was directed at Maurits and not at the existence of the office itself. Yet the decision to leave the office vacant following the Great Assembly of 1651 shifted the narrative towards a discussion of the very nature and desirability of a stadhouder. Authors supporting the political transition used poetry and theatre to legitimise the abolishment of the office, with the idea of *staatszucht* deployed as an argument against the office itself. This position was now based on the notion that a stadhouder could not be trusted to act within the established boundaries of the office's powers, potentially abusing his position to suppress the liberties of local governmental institutions. In contrast, those authors that supported the reinstatement of the stadhoudership depicted it as a remedy for the Republic's political and economic turmoil. They continued to rely heavily on the image of the office holder as a guardian of the nation's *eendracht,* which was deemed to be threatened by the internal political discord caused by the controversial decision to leave the stadhoudership vacant in a majority of the provinces. When the stadhoudership was fully restored in 1672, sympathetic popular literature immediately returned to the tropes and metaphors established and associated with the office prior to 1650. Moreover, it emphasised the idea that those responsible for the abolishment of the stadhouder had effectively 'betrayed' their country.

Finally, this chapter has demonstrated that the work of authors traditionally categorised as 'anti-Orangist' or 'anti-stadhouder', such as Joost van den Vondel, should not be thought of in these polarising terms prior to the beginning of the Stadhouderless Period. Before then, authorial criticism of the stadhouders was aimed at the ways in which the Princes of Orange were considered to have abused their position. As was the case for the properly political debate, popular literature did not, in fact, engage with the question of the desirability of the stadhoudership itself until after 1650.

Chapter 5

THE REPRESENTATION OF THE STADHOUDERSHIP IN CONTEMPORARY ICONOGRAPHY

5.1 Introduction

The function in the early modern period of visual depictions of authority as a vital tool to strengthen and legitimise a prince's rule has found common acceptance in modern scholarship.[496] However, the importance of visual culture in a Dutch context for the stadhouders has not been subject to the same degree of critical attention. Indeed, to this date the only contribution of note on the subject has been a 2007 collection of Dutch studies on the contemporaneous visual representation of the Princes of Orange-Nassau, entitled *Stadhouders in Beeld*. Despite its title, however, this study focused mostly on the Princes' capacity as captain-generals of the United Provinces, and their depiction as military icons.[497] Yet members of the House of Orange, keen on emphasising their power

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[496] Kevin Sharpe, *Remapping Early Modern England: The Culture of Seventeenth-Century Politics* (Cambridge, 2000); *Ibid.*, *Selling the Tudor Monarchy: Authority and Image in Sixteenth-Century England* (New Haven, 2009); *Ibid.*, *Image Wars: Promoting Kings and Commonwealths in England, 1603-1660* (New Haven, 2010); *Ibid.*, *Rebranding Rule: The Restoration and Revolution Monarchy, 1660-1714* (New Haven, 2013); P. Burke, *The Fabrication of Louis XIV* (Bath, 1994); T. Claydon and Ch. Levillain (eds.), *Louis XIV Outside In. Images of the Sun King Beyond France, 1661-1715* (London, 2015); A. Ellenius (ed.), *Iconography, Propaganda, and Legitimation* (Oxford, 1998); P. Erickson and Clark Huls (eds.), *Early Modern Visual Culture. Representation, Race, and Empire in Renaissance England* (Philadelphia, 2000).

[497] See Sabine Craft-Giepmans et al (eds.), *Stadhouders in beeld. Beeldvorming van de stadhouders van Oranje-Nassau in contemporaine grafiek 1570-1700* (Rotterdam and Gronsveld, 2007), which contained individual studies of the iconography of Willem I of Orange, Maurits, Frederik Hendrik, Willem II, and Willem III.

and status, often commissioned paintings of themselves and their family by renowned artists, such as Gerard van Honthorst (1592 - 1656) and Anthony van Dyck (1599 - 1641). Frederik Hendrik's widow, Amalia van Solms, even had an entire hall decorated in commemoration of her late husband, resulting in the imposing *Oranjezaal* that still exists today. However, all these art forms, though an important part of Orange propaganda, were accessible only to a small elite audience. Yet alongside the art produced exclusively for the elite, a much more accessible market existed of printed visual culture, in which images such as printed engravings and etchings, were produced and distributed quickly and cheaply. This type of printed iconography had a wide cross-class appeal, as many were affordable even for members of the lower classes. Moreover, a certain level of education or literacy was often not a prerequisite for engagement with these prints. Elmer Kolfin has therefore rightly stated that the visual representation of the stadhouders of Orange-Nassau in print reached a much wider audience than the images that the Orange's had created themselves.[498]

This chapter, then, looks at the contemporary representation of the stadhoudership in such popular iconography in the time of Maurits, Frederik Hendrik, Willem II, the Stadhouderless period of 1650-1672, and the ensuing restoration of the office in 1672. By popular iconography I understand items of visual culture, notably printed images, that were widely available. Due to the Dutch print market's mass production and its large audience, print iconography gives an important insight into the contemporaneous understanding and perception of the role of the stadhoudership in the United Provinces among a wide part of its population. Claartje Rasterhoff has emphasised the accessibility of the fast-growing commercial markets for print and art to all levels of society, and has demonstrated how in the large-scale Dutch production and consumption of art 'thousands of artists and craftsmen, by means of imitation and emulation, churned out

[498] Elmer Kolfin, 'Voor eenheid, victorie, vrede en welvaart. Beeldvorming van Frederik Hendrik in contemporaine Noord-Nederlandse grafiek ca. 1600-1650', in: Craft-Giepmans et al. (eds.), *Stadhouders in beeld,* pp. 68-107; p. 69.

many slightly different variations in every conceivable genre, style, and price range'.[499] If this study principally concerns itself on popular printed iconography, it will also adopt a trans-medial approach in examining paintings, and commemorative coins.

The production of print iconography, or 'art prints', formed an important part of the thriving print market of the United Provinces. Some artists, such as Rembrandt, did their own printing and publishing, but most prints were mass-produced. The heart of the print industry was Amsterdam, where a few large print firms, such as that owned by the family Danckertsz, controlled most of the market in printed etchings and engravings.[500] The costs of these art prints was often dictated by its size, the skill of the artist, and the topic depicted; images with a longer longevity such as portraits, landscapes, or maps were often more expensive than prints of current events. Significant current events, such as the death of a stadhouder, the beheading of Charles I, or the outbreak of the Anglo-Dutch wars, all gave rise to an outpouring of printed visual culture. In these cases, art prints served not only a decorative purpose, but also had an important informative function. The *Rampjaar* of 1672 sparked a particular increase in output of popular iconographical material: Van Stolk's *Catalogus* tells us that 102 'spot- en zinneprenten' (satirical and allegorical prints) were printed for the year 1672, fifty-six for 1673, and fifty-four for 1674.[501] This was a considerable increase from the years before, as Annette Munt has shown: in the period 1654-71 on average 8 such prints appeared annually.[502]

Popular genres of art prints were landscapes, religious scenes, portraits of well-known figures, satirical images, and 'sinne-prenten'. Allegorical images, which depicted ideas and events through symbolic representation, gained particular popularity as a genre

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499 Claartje Rasterhoff, 'The Markets for Arts, Books, and Luxury Goods', in: *The Cambridge Companion to the Dutch Golden Age,* pp. 249-267; pp. 249-50, 259. Cf. Claartje Rasterhoff, *Painting and Publishing as Cultural Industries: The Fabric of Creativity in the Dutch Republic, 1580-1800* (Amsterdam, 2016).

500 Frijhoff and Spies, *1650: Hard-won unity,* p. 521.

501 G. van Rijn, *Katalogus der Historie, Spot- en Zinneprenten Betrekkelijk De Geschiedenis van Nederland verz. door A. van Stolk Cz.,* 10 vols. (Amsterdam, 1895-1931).

502 Annette Munt, 'The Impact of the *Rampjaar* on Dutch Golden Age Culture' in: *Dutch Crossings* (1997: Vol. 21, No. 1), pp. 3-51; p. 22.

in seventeenth-century visual art.[503] So-called 'rhyme prints' were especially successful. These were loose sheets featuring an allegorical image which was explained or commented upon by an accompanying text or poem. Rhyme prints served a wide range of functions, being educational, informative, and entertaining, and often had a strong propagandistic nature. They were commonly used to comment on contemporary events, and both their relatively low price as well as their wide appeal meant that they reached large audiences, which has led Willem Frijhoff and Marijke Spies to state that 'for large groups in the population rhyme prints were undoubtedly the main source of information about such happenings'.[504] Frijhoff and Spies continue by arguing that:

> To judge from the immense production, prints of all kinds must have been in great demand, for wall decorations, collections, or simply as something to have […]. Often printed in large editions, they served a recreational function but also conveyed information, shaped opinion, and spread propaganda.[505]

Moreover, Helmer Helmers has likewise argued how cheap print images, such as engravings, had 'a great appeal, both at home and abroad, and many satirical engravings were discussed both on the streets and in the highest levels of government'.[506]

The images discussed in the present study all lend weight to this suggestion that art prints were not merely informative or entertaining, but also had a political agenda. However, this leads us to question the extent to which these prints were produced as part of an orchestrated propaganda campaign on behalf of a certain individual or faction. I follow Jowett and O'Donnell's definition of 'propaganda' as 'the deliberate, systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions, and direct behaviour to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent of the propagandist'.[507] The collection *Stadhouders*

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503 Elmer Kolfin, 'Slotbeschouwing: over nieuwsprenten, propaganda en prentgebruik', in: Craft-Giepmans et al. (eds.), *Stadhouders in beeld*, pp. 193-212; p. 194.
504 Frijhoff and Spies, *1650: Hard-won unity*, pp. 469-471.
505 *Ibid.*, pp. 521-522.
506 Helmer Helmers, 'Popular participation and Public Debate', in: *The Cambridge Companion to the Dutch Golden Age*, pp. 124-46; p. 132.
507 G.S. Jowett and V. O'Donnell, *Propaganda and Persuasion* (Thousand Oaks CA, 2012), p. 7.

in Beeld stated that the House of Orange took a 'surprisingly hands-off approach' towards the way it was presented in popular iconographic print material.[508] Instead, it concluded that the main instigators behind the Orange prints were mostly the publishers, and their motives were as likely to be financial as idealistic. Moreover, Kolfin has argued that if it is certain that the Orange court had a direct influence on their depiction in, for example, the making of the *Oranjezaal*, it is much more difficult to find evidence of a coordinated propaganda campaign when it comes to visual culture in print.[509] He asserts that the creation of the printed iconography of the Princes of Orange was far more *ad hoc* and created in response to certain political events, calling it an example of 'spontaneous propaganda'.[510]

Indeed, there is little to no archival evidence for commissions or instructions coming from the circles around the House of Orange for the production of certain prints or etchings. A notable exception to this concerns the work of the exceptionally skilled engraver Romeyn de Hooghe, whose work also features in this study, but both Meredith Hale and Henk van Nierop have convincingly demonstrated that a professional relationship between De Hooghe and the House of Orange was not established until 1689.[511] This chapter will demonstrate that, much like the representation of the stadhoudership in popular literature, the visual depiction of the stadhouders of Orange-Nassau often featured a coherent and consistent symbolism and message. I align with Kolfin in the suggestion that there is no evidence to suggest that this was due to an

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508 The quote is from: Kolfin, 'Slotbeschouwing', p. 193. Kolfin based his argument on the fact that none of the studies presented in *Stadhouders in Beeld* had managed to find any evidence of a coordinated propaganda campaign for Orangist art prints on behalf of the House of Orange. In conclusion, it was thus suggested instead that the large-scale production of these prints was mostly motivated by market demand.

509 Kolfin, 'Voor eenheid, victorie, vrede en welvaart', p. 69.

510 Kolfin, 'Slotbeschouwing', p. 194.

511 Meredith Hale, 'Willem III op papier. Politieke prentkunst van Romeyn de Hooghe in dienst van de stadhouder', in: Craft-Giepmans et al (eds.), *Stadhouders in beeld*, pp. 174-92; p. 175. See also: Henk van Nierop et al (eds.), *Romeyn de Hooghe: de verbeelding van de late Gouden Eeuw* (Amsterdam, 2008); Henk van Nierop, *The Life of Romeyn de Hooghe 1645 – 1708: prints, pamphlets, and politics in the Dutch Golden Age* (Amsterdam, 2018).

organised, carefully orchestrated propaganda effort. Yet I also contend that this uniformity in symbolism in the contemporaneous iconography of the stadhouder can be explained by what Fredric Jameson, in reference to literary texts, has called the 'political unconscious'.[512] When analysing the origins of cultural material, we should distinguish between active forms of propaganda, versus a more unthinking process in which certain ideological messages are unconsciously internalised and reproduced. This does not imply that the political messages made by the images featured in this study were made 'unthinkingly'. Rather, the artists creating these images were part of a shared political and cultural discourse that worked across literature, art, and politics, in which certain dominant themes, such as the stadhouder's duty to preserve the state's *eendracht*, were consistantly repeated and replicated.

The images featured in this study are selected from a large database of iconographic material which I have built following multiple research trips to various archives, art institutes, and museums in The Netherlands. The bulk of these images were found in the vast collections of the Rijksprentenkabinet in the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, and the Rijksbureau voor Kusthistorische Documentatie (*Netherlands Institute for Art History*) in The Hague. References to some of the images featured here can also be found in the historical prints and etchings catalogues by Frederik Muller or in the Atlas Van Stolk.

5.2 Iconography of the stadhoudership in the time of Maurits (1585 – 1625)

Maurits of Orange-Nassau was two weeks shy of his eighteenth birthday when he was named stadhouder of Holland and Zeeland in November 1585. Two years later the relatively inexperienced young man was appointed captain-general of the army, which was followed in 1590 by an appointment to the stadhoudership of Utrecht, Gelderland, and Overijssel. Aside from several print portraits, the popular visual representation of the

[512] Fredric Jameson, *The Political Unconscious* (London and New York, 1981).

young stadhouder in the late 1580s and during the 1590s mostly took form as news prints featuring the recent developments in the Dutch military campaign against Spain. Due to the nature of these prints, which often depicted battles and sieges through the means of bird's-eye view images, Maurits mostly featured as a small figure amidst the military action around him.[513] However, Maurits's star rose quickly after winning the Battle at Nieuwpoort in 1600, which, as stated by his biographer Arie van Deursen, launched him to European-wide fame.[514] The victory initiated a flood of celebratory print, such as pamphlets, broadsheets, and art prints, which also signalled the start of a greater prominence of Maurits in popular iconography.[515] The historical studies of the print iconography of Maurits from this period by both Klinkert and Veldman have mostly focused on images' recurring emphasis of Maurits' military prowess and his position as a triumphant commander.[516] Veldman for example used **Image 1** (discussed below) in a brief study on Jan Saenredam's portrayal of Maurits, but her study's exclusive focus on Maurits's depiction as military commander meant that visual aspects hinting at other aspects of his popular image remained overlooked. Therefore, these studies have neglected to consider the frequent use of iconographical references and symbolism that pointed towards his perceived position in the United Provinces beyond a purely military role.

A particularly poignant example of this can be found in a contemporary art print dating 1600 commemorating Maurits' victory at Nieuwpoort, which was made by the skilled engraver Jan Saenredam (1565 - 1607) [**Image 1**]. The print shows at first glance a purely military display: it depicts both the battle preparations as well as the battle itself, while its main focus is the domineering figure of Maurits in full harness in the foreground

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513 Christi Klinkert, 'Nassau in het nieuws. Nieuwsprenten van de militaire ondernemingen van Maurits van Nassau(1585-1600)', in: Craft-Giepmans et al. (eds.), *Stadhouders in beeld*, pp. 35-50; pp. 44-45.

514 Van Deursen, *Maurits van Nassau* (2000).

515 Ilja Veldman, 'Maurice as the Nimrod of his Age. Political propaganda prints by Jan Saenredam', in: *The Rijksmuseum Bulletin* (2010: Vol. 58, No. 2), pp. 128-137; p. 129; Klinkert, 'Nassau in het nieuws', pp. 41-46.

516 Veldman, 'Maurice as the Nimrod of his Age', pp. 129-131.

of the image. Maurits is holding a baton signalling his military commandership in one hand, while the other leans on a shield with a depiction of his personal coat of arms. Just behind the stadhouder is a depiction of Maurits' heraldry; a tree stump with a blooming twig, accompanied by the Latin motto *Tandem fit surculus arbor* ('With time, the shoot becomes a tree'). The imagery and accompanying motto, which is recurrent in popular depictions of Maurits, symbolised his ambition to follow in his father's footsteps, as the cut-down tree trunk represented the murdered Willem the Silent, and the blooming twig symbolised Maurits himself.[517] Other symbolism in the print presents Maurits not only as the protector of the Republic against foreign enemies, but also of the state's internal unity. On the right side of the print is a pedestal which displays a roaring lion holding a sword and seven tightly bound arrows, standing in a fenced off garden. This was the heraldry of the United Provinces, with the lion in the fenced off garden (the '*Hollandse Tuin*', or 'Dutch Garden') symbolising the Dutch Republic, and the seven bound arrows in his claw representing the seven provinces as bound together by the Union of Utrecht in 1579. The seven tightly bound arrows themselves referenced to the moral of 'strength through unity', derived from Aesop's classical fable. Resting on top of the pedestal are Maurits' gauntlet and feathered helmet, thereby suggesting his commitment to the protection of the Republic and the unity of the seven provinces. Moreover, the top of the print depicts the respective coat of arms of each of the seven provinces, bound together by the blooming branches of an orange tree. The print thus not only depicts Maurits as the hero of Nieuwpoort; it also presents him as committed to the preservation of the union among the provinces as decreed by the Union of Utrecht.

Similar symbolism can be found in a print which depicted both Maurits and his brother and anticipated heir, a young Frederik Hendrik, in full military costume with a

[517] For further reading on the use of Maurits' personal heraldry and motto in contemporary cultural material, see: F. Deisel, ' "Onder den Oranje boom": politieke zinnebeelden van de Republiek en het Huis Oranje-Nassau', in: M. Schacht et al. (eds.), *Onder den Oranje boom: Niederländische Kunst und Kultur im 17. Und 18. Jahrhundert an deutchen Fürstenhöfen* (München, 1999), pp. 47-75; S. Broomhall and J. van Gent, *Dynastic Colonialism: Gender, Materiality and the Early Modern House of Orange-Nassau* (New York, 2016), pp. 29-30; J. van der Steen, *Memory Wars in the Low Countries, 1566 – 1700* (Leiden, 2015), pp. 135-37.

land and naval battle taking place in the background [**Image 2**]. What again looks like a purely military image in fact features a more diverse variety of symbolism. Next to Maurits' foot is his heraldry of the tree stump, but this time it features two blooming twigs. The two twigs represent Maurits and Frederik Hendrik, and indicate the commitment of both brothers to Willem of Orange's legacy as a leader of the fight for the Republic's independence and freedom. By deliberately emphasising Frederik Hendrik's equal commitment to this ideal, the artist thus presented Maurits' younger brother as a potential heir to his position. At the top of the print are the coat of arms of the seven provinces, with in the middle the Dutch lion holding the seven tightly bound arrows, representing the official symbolism of the United Provinces and its motto of 'strength through unity'. The fact that the Dutch lion and the seven provinces are bound by blooming orange branches emphasises the stadhouder's important role of binding them all together in the bond of *eendracht*.

Similar visual references to the stadhouder's position as the champion of the state's internal unity is found in a print by Nicolaes van Geelkercken (ca. 1585 - 1656), which was published in 1612 in Leiden [**Image 3**]. This print shows a bust of Maurits, accompanied by a summary of all his virtues. Below this is an image of a shield which unites all seven of the provincial coats of arms into one large coat of arms. Notably, this shield, representing the unity among the provinces, is decorated by blooming orange twigs, linking once again the House of Orange directly to the state's *eendracht* and harmony. Moreover, surrounding the shield is the Latin motto '*Concordia res parva crescunt*' ('small things flourish through unity'). As we will see in the images below, this quote often recurred in reference to the United Provinces in contemporaneous Dutch culture, and indicated once again the importance of internal harmony for securing a strong state.

On 9 April 1609 a temporary peace treaty was concluded between the United Provinces and Spain, signalling the beginning of the Twelve Years Truce Period (1609 – 1621). Despite Maurits' vehement objections to the treaty (Rowen has noted that Maurits was 'furious' at the truce[518]), contemporary popular print often depicted him as the main

[518] Rowen, *The Princes of Orange,* p. 45.

instigator and champion of the temporary peace. An example of this is **Image 4**, which depicts Maurits giving thanks for the truce treaty. In the centre of the print is the treaty, hanging from a lance with the Peace Hat on top. On the right are Maurits and his generals, and on the left a group of female personifications of the seven provinces. All kneel in thanks to the peace treaty, while sunlight with the tetragrammaton blesses the scene. Prints like these demonstrate that the popular image of the stadhouder could thus be a far cry from their actual politics.

5.2.1 Iconography of the stadhoudership in relation to the Truce Period Conflicts (1618-1619)

Chapter II of this study demonstrated how Maurits's actions to resolve the growing dispute between the Arminian and Gomarian factions in 1618-19 was justified by his political allies in the States' governments and in the States General as having been done in the interest of preserving the Union from falling apart through internal conflict. The conflict, which had originated with a theological dispute and ultimately culminated with the beheading of Land's Advocate Johan van Oldenbarnevelt in 1619, was thus framed as a dispute which endangered the *eendracht* among the provinces, and thereby the stability of the Dutch Republic as a whole. In this narrative, Maurits' actions to disband the *waardgelders* in Utrecht and imprison several prominent politicians and thinkers were not so much perceived as having ended a religious conflict, but as the preservation of the union of the seven provinces over the prerogatives of the individual towns. The religious, political, and social unrest during the truce years caused by the increasingly heated debate between remonstrants and contra-remonstrants sparked a flood of printed commentary, such as broadsheets, pamphlets, and art prints.[519] Many of these which supported Maurits depicted the stadhouder as the saviour of the state by expelling discord and 'removing' negative elements. Contemporary iconography played an important role in the public debate on the stadhouder's actions during the Truce Conflicts, as it both reflected and

[519] A. de Snoo, 'Maurits bespot of geprezen? Beeldvorming van Maurits in de spot- en zinnenprenten van het Bestand (1609 – 1621)', in: Craft-Giepmans et al (eds.), *Stadhouders in beeld*, pp. 51-67; p. 51.

further promoted these various discursive themes, while the widely disseminated printed images that will be discussed below would have shaped and influenced the general debate in return.

The art print '*Den Nieuwen BarneValschen Handel*' ('The New BarneFalse Trade'; a pun combining the word 'false' with 'Van Oldenbarnevelt'), for example, depicted Maurits literally sifting out the state's enemies through a giant sieve [**Image 5**]. The sieve, named 'Hooch Nodich' (Most Necessary) is being held up by God's hand, signalling divine approval, and is wielded by Maurits on the right and on the left by a hand decorated with seven arrows and the familiar motto *Concordia res per crescunt* (an allegory for the *eendracht* of the United Provinces). In the middle of the print personifications of *Twist* (Discord), *Bedrog* (Betrayal), and *Gewelt* (Violence) are banished from the Dutch Garden by the personification of Time. All the way on the left a figure called *Eendrachtig Gewelt* (united force) is riding the Dutch Lion, prepared to attack the group of conspirators in the foreground (among whom are Van Oldenbarnevelt and a Jesuit) who are scheming to undermine the unity and safety of the state by allying themselves with Spain. In the background of the print the town of Utrecht can be discerned; a nod to the affair of the *waardgelders* which were disbanded by Maurits.

A very similar allegorical representation of the truce conflicts can be seen in the '*Rechtveerdige Sifte*' (ca. 1618), which also depicts a giant sieve as a tool to free the state from its internal threats [**Image 6**]. Maurits and his coat of arms are depicted on the right of the sieve, whereas on the left the sieve is handled by the 'Moghende Macht'; seven men representing the States-General. Above them hangs a shield uniting all the provincial coats of arms, as an extra nod to their representing a unified group. Those marked as enemies to the unity of the provinces and the safety of the state are depicted tumbling through the sieve (such as Johan van Oldenbarnevelt), while Justitia, accompanied by the words '*Eendracht maect Macht*' (Strength through Unity) oversees it all.

The extent to which the conflict, and in particular the raising of *waardgelders,* was portrayed as a threat to the state's internal harmony and the union between the Dutch provinces is further exemplified by an art print dating from 1618, entitled *'Vertonighe der*

tegenwoordghe stant in vrye-Nederlandt' ('Depiction of the current state of the free Netherlands') [**Image 7**]. The allegorical print depicts the Dutch Virgin being attacked by a soldier who represents a *waardgelders* from Utrecht. Attached to the soldier's waist is a list of the remonstrant towns in Holland who supported Utrecht and Van Oldenbarnevelt. The Virgin is further assaulted from behind, by figures representing Discord, Rage, and Death. However, God's hand holds on to the *waardgelder*'s sword, thereby preventing him from striking.

The anonymously published print '*t' Arminiaens Testament'* (1618) combines many of the symbolism and iconographical themes described above [**Image 8**]. The allegorical print depicts a 'tomb' for the Arminian cause, which is built on Deceit, Jealousy, and Discord. *Waardgelders* are depicted on either side of the tomb. However, the tomb is attacked from both sides under command of Maurits, who can be seen on the right wielding the giant sieve of justice, and who is represented on the left side of the print by a blooming orange tree and his personal motto *Tandem fit surculus arbor*. At the bottom of the print stretches a long streamer with depictions of the coats of arms of each province, which, according to the inventory on the side of the print, are united together through the orange banner on which they hang.

After Van Oldenbarnevelt's execution on 13 May 1619, the print '*'t Recht ondersoec der Staten'* was published [**Image 9**]. The print is based on an older engraving by Pieter Bruegel the Elder (c. 1525 – 1569) but altered to reflect the new political climate. It shows an allegorical representation of the phrase 'the large fish eat the smaller ones', depicting a monstrously large fish (the 'Barnevelsche Monster') lying dead on the shore. Its mouth is pouring out the smaller fishes it had previously swallowed, which all bear the names of known political supporters of the late Land's Advocate. Meanwhile, the large fish representing Van Oldenbarnevelt is being gutted with a huge knife entitled the 'Mes van Gerechtigheit' (Knife of Justice'), which is handled by both Maurits and a hand with seven arrows and the *concordia res parva crescent* motto. Both the towns of Utrecht and The Hague are depicted in the background; the former as the place where the conflict almost escalated to violence with the raising of the *waardgelders,* and the latter as both the

residence of the States General (on whose behalf Maurits is carrying out his 'just investigation') and as the place where Van Oldenbarnevelt was convicted and executed.

After Van Oldenbarnevelt's execution and the Synod of Dordt in 1619, many art prints were published that celebrated the ending of the conflict as the restoration of peace and harmony to the United Provinces, often with a particular focus on Maurits. A good example of this can be found in an allegorical print filled with symbolism by artist and publisher Hendrick Hondius (1573 - 1650) [**Image 10**]. This *sinne-print* depicts the return of prosperity in the Dutch Republic, with Maurits and his brother and heir Frederik Hendrik prominently set in the centre of the foreground. They are accompanied by members of the States-General, emphasising the unity among the provinces, and a group of soldiers in service of the Republic. In the background sits the Dutch Virgin, between three columns representing Justitia, Politica, and Religio. Behind the Virgin the beheading of Van Oldenbarnevelt can be discerned, amid scenes of agricultural and trading activities, signifying the prosperity of the country. On the Virgin's left side stands an orange tree with two blooming branches (one for each Orange brother), with Maurits' coat of arms prominently hanging between the leaves. On the right side is palm tree (representing peace) in which hangs a shield depicting two entwined hands holding seven arrows, with the motto *concordia res parva crescent* displayed above it. As a whole, the print thus emphasises a message that the military and political leadership of the House of Orange has brought prosperity and harmony to the state.

As the images presented in this study have shown so far, most contemporary prints on the conflict between the remonstrants and contra-remonstrants gave a favourable depiction of Maurits, even though his actions had not been without popular criticism (which was reflected in the popular literature discussed in Chapter 4). A decree by the States General in late 1618 against the publication of certain 'fameuse boucxkens' (well-known books) and prints will have certainly played a role in this rather one-sided visual reflection on the stadhouder.[520] Although there is no evidence that either the stadhouder's

[520] J. G. Smit (ed.), *Resolutiën der Staten-Generaal* (The Hague, 1975) Vol. III, nos. 1527, 4093; De Snoo, 'Maurits bespot of geprezen?', p. 62.

own circles or the States-General gave direct commissions for any positive art depictions of Maurits during and after the time of the Truce Period, the ban on subversive literature and prints was bound to favour the distribution of contra-remonstrant prints.[521] Yet some artists managed to circumvent this ban, as evidenced by the 1618 print *Op de Waag-schaal* (or '*Op de Jonghste Hollantsche Transformatie*'), which has been attributed to the engraver Salomon Savery [**Image 11**]. This allegorical print features a large set of scales which 'weighs' the remonstrant arguments against those of the contra-remonstrants. Maurits can be seen on the left adding his sword to the scales on the side of the contra-remonstrants, thereby weighing the scales in their favour. The print thus argues that the Gomarists only emerged victorious due to the stadhouder's forceful ending of the dispute, which is emphasised in the background of the scene in which Maurits oversees the disbandment of Utrechts' *waardgelders*.

Although a theological dispute had been at the heart of the domestic conflicts during the Truce Period, the contemporary iconography is largely politically focused. Religious symbolism thereby was deployed to further political ends, which often emphasised that the stadhouder had acted for the preservation of the unity and *eendracht* of the state. As seen earlier in Chapter II, a popular narrative concerning the stadhouder's role in the Truce Period conflicts was thus that the office had been used to preserve the unity among the provinces and thereby the survival of the state.

5.3 Iconography of the stadhoudership in the time of Frederik Hendrik (1625 – 1647)

The war with Spain was rekindled in 1621, but shortly afterwards Maurits had become too old and sickly to lead any more war campaigns. Frederik Hendrik's succession to the stadhoudership and the post of captain-general, however, signalled a return of military prowess in the depiction of the Prince of Orange. Like his brother, the new stadhouder

[521] De Snoo, 'Maurits bespot of geprezen?', p. 65.

was often depicted in full military costume, reflecting both his position as captain-general as well as his commitment to the safe-keeping of the United Provinces from foreign armies. However, the present study will demonstrate that many contemporary images of Frederik Hendrik, like Maurits before him, also included references to his role as the guardian of the internal harmony and *eendracht* of the state.

A good example of this is an art print of Frederik Hendrik dating 1628, which was designed by Adriaen Pieterszoon van de Venne and executed by Willem Outgertszoon Akersloot [**Image 12**]. The image depicts Frederik Willem standing with a sword in one hand, and in his other hand the bundle of seven arrows (symbolising the unity among the provinces) and a rope that strings all the respective provinces' coats of arms together. The background of the setting is also important: Frederik Hendrik is placed here in the Binnenhof, with the Stadhouder's quarters behind him on his left, and the Ridderzaal (the main hall of the Binnenhof in which important meetings took place) behind him on his right. He is thereby placed at the very heart of Dutch politics and power. The print thus emphasised Frederik Hendrik's position as stadhouder (through the setting), his role as captain-general (through his outfit and sword), and his commitment to the preservation of the state's *eendracht* by means of the symbols held up in his outstretched left hand.

The popularity of this particular print, with its strong emphasis on the stadhouder as the guardian of provincial *eendracht*, is evident in the many variations on the design that appeared in later years. For example, Crispijn van den Queborn (1604 – 1652) created an almost identical print, but this time the stadhouder is holding a shield with the symbol of the Republic's unity (the seven arrows held by two entwined hands) and the word 'UNIO' beneath it [**Image 13**]. The print served as the title page for Pieter Bor's history of Den Bosch, which had been recaptured by Frederik Hendrik in 1629.[522] Though the symbolism used is somewhat different, the overall message remains unaltered and clear: Frederik Hendrik is again set against the backdrop of the stadhouder's seat of power in The Hague, and while holding objects that refer to both his military leadership (the baton) and his

[522] See P. C. Bor, *Oorspronck, Gelegentheijt, Fundatie ende Vergrootinge Stadt van 's Hertogen Bosch* (The Hague, 1630).

commitment to the unity and *eendracht* among the seven provinces of the Republic (the shield).

Influences of both Akersloot's and Van den Queborn's prints are also evident in the print '*Uniti Belgii Hieroglyphicum, oft Vereenicht Nederlandts Zinne-beeld*' (1636) by Willem van de Lande (ca. 1610 - 1650) [**Image 14**]. The etching depicts Frederik Hendrik ready to defend the Dutch Garden, while his pose is very similar to the way he was portrayed in the previous two prints discussed here. The objects Frederik Hendrik is holding are equally reminiscent of **Image 12** and **13**: again the stadhouder holds a symbol of military leadership in one hand (this time a drawn sword instead of a baton), and a shield with the symbolism of the provincial *eendracht* in the other. Moreover, beneath his foot the stadhouder restrains the allegorical figures 'Discord' and his allies, which served to further emphasise his role to preserving the United Provinces from conflict and strife.

A similar celebration of Frederik Hendrik as both a military leader and as the champion of unity among the seven provinces can be seen in Daniël van den Bremden's (1587 - 1649) print '*Victori-Waeghen vanden Doorluchtigen Prince van Orangien, Grave van Nassou*' (1630) [**Image 15**]. This engraving depicts an allegorical scene in which the stadhouder is seated in triumph on a chariot, while holding a shield depicting similar unity symbolism as seen previously in **Image 13**, and the word 'UNIO' depicted above it. Underneath the chariot the figures representing War and Discord are crushed by its wheels. The print was inspired by an original print by Jan Saenredam, dating from 1600, which the latter had produced to commemorate the victory at Nieuwpoort. However, in the original print it had been a roaring Dutch Lion in the chariot, where now Frederik Hendrik took pride of place, and the symbolic references to unity had been added. Like Akersloot's design, Saenredam's original print had clearly been such a success that several retouched reprints were published, with reworkings of the print surfacing throughout the century.[523]

[523] Veldman, 'Maurice as the Nimrod of his Age', p. 134.

The similarities between the art works discussed above can be explained by the nature of the print industry in the United Provinces. Many publishers specialised themselves in certain genres, such as maps or news prints. These detailed allegorical prints of the Orange stadhouders were mostly produced by a select number of specialised printers such as Claes Janszoon Visscher and Crispijn de Passe II in Amsterdam, Jan Pieterszoon van de Benne in Middelburg, and Hendrick Hondius in The Hague. In the pressure to publish prints that commented on recent events as quickly as possible, parts of previously made engravings were often used in a new print. Moreover, the fiercely competitive market for art prints also ensured that artists and publishers kept a constant eye on each other's work.[524] Elmer Kolfin has suggested that this also implied that the uniformity between prints indicated a desire among the general audience in the United Provinces for a certain familiar style of portraying well-known subjects (such as the stadhouder), which was met by the publishers mainly out of commercial motivation.[525]

5.4 Iconography of the stadhoudership in the time of Willem II (1647 – 1650)

A study of the visual depiction of Willem II's stadhoudership is naturally limited by the short period of his time in office. The vast majority of the images that have survived of Willem II are from his childhood and early adolescence, and a detailed study of these has already been carried out by Simon Groenveld.[526] As Groenveld has demonstrated, images of the young Willem II were mostly based in the familial sphere, where he was portrayed as the heir of the Orange-Nassau dynasty and successor to his father's title and positions. A strong sense of a dynastic claim to the stadhoudership and captaincy-general became a regular element in the visual depictions of the young Orange, both in art commissioned

[524] Kolfin, 'Voor eenheid, victorie, vrede en welvaart.', p. 95.
[525] *Ibid.*, 'Voor eenheid, victorie, vrede en welvaart', p. 96. For more information about the workings of the commercial market of an art print publisher, see also: N. Orenstein, 'Prints and politics of the publisher. The case of Hendrick Hondius', in: *Simiolus* (1995: Vol. 23), pp. 240-250.
[526] Groenveld, 'Van opklimmende vorstenzoon tot neerstortende Faëtoon', pp. 108-73.

by the House of Orange itself as well as in popular print. As Willem II grew older, more individual print portraits of the stadhouder's son became available on the market, many of which were based on commissioned paintings of Willem by court painters such as Gerard van Honthorst (1592 - 1656) and Anthony van Dyck (1599 - 1641). After his marriage in 1641, Willem was often depicted with his royal bride, the English princess Mary Stuart.

This study, however, will extend on Groenveld's study by instead looking at the iconography of Willem II in his capacity as stadhouder. The parameters of this analysis are necessarily restricted, due to Willem II's brief stadhoudership. Moreover, the signing of the Peace of Münster in the early months of Willem's stadhoudership meant that there was little to no opportunity to portray the Prince in the established tradition of a great military commander, as had been widely done for his successors. Only several portraits and some hunting scenes of the Prince have survived from his time as stadhouder, which has led Groenveld to conclude that the iconography of Willem's stadhoudership was 'neither spectacular nor varied'.[527] But this conclusion ignores the fact that Willem's stadhoudership coincided with two major political events in Dutch history, both of which sparked a body of visual artistry.

The first significant political event of Willem II's time as stadhouder was the signing of the Peace of Münster in 1648, which ended the Eighty Years War with Spain. Contemporary iconography of the event heavily featured the stadhouder, and presented him as one of the main instigators of bringing the war to a final conclusion. The most prominent example of this is an allegorical painting by Adriaen van Nieulandt I (1587 - 1658), which was finished around the time of Willem's death [**Image 16**]. The painting depicts both the young stadhouder as well as his late father Frederik Hendrik as the heroes of the recent peace with Spain. Willem II, accompanied by a female figure representing the Dutch Republic (holding the seven arrows of *eendracht* in her hand) is seen to receive a palm leaf from the hands of Peace. A triumphant Frederik Hendrik is standing on a chariot, accompanied by the Dutch lion and a female personification of the province of

[527] *Ibid.*, p. 153.

Holland. Much like the iconography surrounding the signing of the Twelve Year Truce in 1609, which presented stadhouder Maurits as its instigator despite his strong protestations against the peace, Frederik Hendrik and Willem II are similarly depicted as the main champions of the Peace of Münster, despite the fact both spent most of the 1640s lobbying against it. This demonstrates again how the visual representation of the Orange stadhouders at times widely diverged from the political reality.

The second political turning point during Willem's time in office was the conflict between Holland and the other provinces in the summer of 1650, which culminated in Willem's march on Amsterdam. Compared to the large amount of popular print which was produced in response to the political crisis during the Truce Period in 1619-1618 and Maurits' role therein, a surprisingly small amount of contemporary visual material has survived which depicted the political crisis of the summer of 1650.[528] However, other objects that were made as a reaction to the event have survived in larger numbers, including a large number of commemorative coins and medals. The collections of the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam alone hold sixteen coins and medals that were made directly in the years 1650-51 to commemorate the stadhouder's attack on Amsterdam. Medals were often commissioned by local or provincial authorities, and were used both to be distributed as a reward, and to commemorate victories.[529] One of coins made in remembrance of the summer of 1650 was a silver medal made by Sebastian Dadler (1586 - 1657) [**Image 17**]. This medal has earlier featured in this study in relation to the poem that Joost van den Vondel wrote about it (see Chapter IV), but the depictions themselves also merit close inspection. The front of the medal depicts the city of Amsterdam in the background, and in the foreground a large war horse, similar to the those the princes of Orange were often portrayed with. The horse is clothed in a saddle blanket embroidered with oranges and the words 'Unio' and 'Religio'. However, at the bottom is the word

[528] The Frederik Muller catalogue reports of only 7 prints, and most of these are maps of Amsterdam giving a birds' eyes view of the Prince's siege. See: *FM*, Vol. 1, no. 1992-99; pp. 284-285.

[529] Judith Pollmann, 'The Cult of Memory of War and Violence', in: *The Cambridge Companion to the Dutch Golden Age*, pp. 87-104; p. 96.

'simulant' ('pretending'), as the blanket reveals hidden troops of armed soldiers. The horse thus personifies stadhouder Willem II, who is accused of bringing warfare to the city under the disguise of acting for the preservation of the state. This message is enforced by the motto on the side of the medal, reading '*Crimine ab uno disce omneis'* [sic] ('From one, know all'), a phrase originating in Virgil's Aeneid. Moreover, both the horse and the reference to the Aeneid evoke the idea of Willem II as a Trojan horse, who attempted to take the city of Amsterdam by stealth. The Latin motto makes the medal not just a condemnation of Willem II's actions, but a warning against the stadhoudership in general. The other side of the medal references the classical author Ovid by depicting the mythological figure of Phaeton falling to his death from the chariot of his father, the sun god, after he was not strong enough to hold the reigns. The falling man, however, is Willem II, and the scene is fittingly set above the stadhouder's quarters at the Binnenhof in The Hague. Below the funeral procession for Willem II is depicted, with on the side of the coin the phrase 'magnis excidit ausis'. The phrase is part of a longer quote from Ovid ('Hic situs est Phaeton, currus auriga paterni / Quem si non tenuit, magnis tamen excidit ausis'), meaning: 'Here lies Phaeton, the driver of his father's chariot / and though he failed to manage [it], he fell in a great undertaking'.[530] Dadler's medal, mostly known for Vondel's poem, is thus a powerful piece of visual anti-stadhouder propaganda in its own right. However, very little is known about the production or ownership of the medal, but the high quality and value of the silver medal, as well as its many classical references, mean that its intended audience was likely to have belonged to a small elite.

5.5 Iconography of the outcome of the Great Assembly of 1651

Chapter 3 of this thesis demonstrated that the key theme of the discussion concerning the future of the stadhoudership at the Great Assembly of 1651 was that of whether or not the office was crucial to preserve unity among the towns and provinces of the Dutch Republic. The eventual decision to leave the stadhoudership vacant thus relied on the

[530] Ovid, *Metamorphoses,* 2.326 – 327; tr. by F. J. Miller (Loeb Classical Library, 2nd edition).

argument that the provinces themselves would be able to ensure future harmony or *eendracht* both on an intra- and interprovincial level. The following section will show that this focus on provincial self-regulation, without the presence of a stadhouder, was emphasised in the contemporary images that positively commemorated the Assembly and its outcome.

Up until 1650, the majority of popular art prints featured references to the seven provinces as part of a larger allegorical image celebrating the state, in which they were often represented by their coat of arms. However, a shift signalling a reassertion of provincial sovereignty is clearly visible in the prints that commemorated the Great Assembly, with the provinces themselves now taking centre stage. The images thereby not only emphasised the individual sovereignty of the provinces (who are pointedly depicted as functioning without a stadhouder), but the constant focus on the theme of *eendracht* also underlined the idea that the harmony of the state was secured by the new States regime.

The print '*Allegorie op de Eerste Grote Vergadering, 1651*' ['Allegory on the First Great Assembly, 1651'], which was published in Amsterdam shortly after the end of the Great Assembly, is a good example of such an allegorical representation of the seven provinces with a strong emphasis on the notion of the state's internal *eendracht* without any references to the House of Orange [**Image 18**]. The image portrays seven female figures, each representing one of the seven provinces, gathered around an altar on which a bundle of seven tightly bound arrows lies. Behind the altar stand two similar looking figures dressed in classical military outfits, referencing Romulus and Remus, the mythological founders of Rome. Above the scene small *putti* float among the clouds, holding symbols of peace and prosperity. At the bottom of the print is a small image in which Discord is caged. In case the symbolism was not clear enough, the print is accompanied by the phrase 'De grootste macht, Is de Eendracht / Daer Tweedracht heerst, 't Rijck haest verkeert' [The greatest power is Eendracht / Where Discord rules, the State will fall]. A very similar message is represented in a print entitled '*Blyschap over d'Eenigheid der Zeven Vrye Nederlanden*' ['Happiness about the Unity among the Seven Free Netherlands']

[**Image 19**]. In this art print allegorical figures representing Unity and Prosperity are led by Freedom to seven female figures, personifying the seven provinces, who are gathered together in the centre of the print. In the background personifications of Discord and 'Staatszucht' flee from the scene, the latter being a likely reference to Willem II.

Visual representations of the Great Assembly not only appeared in print, but also on coins and medals. An example of such a coin can be seen in **Image 20,** which was made by Sebastian Dadler in 1651. The front of the coin shows a female personification of the United Provinces, who, surrounded by the seven provincial coats of arms, is sitting on a set of boulders in the middle of a rough sea. In her right hand she is holding a lance with the *vredeshoed* [hat of peace] on top, while in her left hand she holds a decapitated head (an allegorical representation of Discord). The scene is explained at the edge of the coin by the Latin phrase 'Ut Rupes Immota Mari Stant Foedere Iuncti' [As the rocks are unmoved by the sea so shall our treaty be]. The 'treaty' indicated here refers to the Union of Utrecht treaty of 1579, in which the seven provinces formally allied themselves together into a union. The image thus conveys a message of strength and unity among the seven provinces in a time of political upheaval.

Another poignant example of a medal celebrating the Great Assembly can be seen in **Image 21**, which shows a design for a commemorative medal made in 1651 by an anonymous artist. The front side of the medal shows the gathering of the provincial representatives at the Great Assembly with the motto 'stant foedere iuncti' [the allies stand united], thus resorting to the same apparatus of symbolic imagery used on Dadler's medal. The other side shows a man representing the late stadhouder Willem II lying on the ground, while trying to keep seven birds (representing the seven provinces) caged in a large net. Not only does this medal use a similar symbolism of unity as we have just seen in Dadler's medal, but it also emphasised the stadhouder as having suppressed the power and sovereignty of the provinces. It is worth noting that this medal was commissioned by Jakob de la Court on the birth of his grandson Jacobus de la Court in 1651. This thus also proves a very early but strong support from the De la Court family,

of which Pieter de la Court rose to fame in the 1660s for his theoretical tracts on republican exclusivism, for the States' party and its anti-stadhoudership politics.

All the visual representations of the Great Assembly discussed above thus represented the seven provinces themselves as the new source of harmony and *eendracht* within the state. Willem II and, in the wake of the political implications of the General Assembly, the stadhoudership in general, are on the contrary staged as the cause of internal strife and political conflict. However, these images were produced by publishers who either personally supported the new political regime, or who intended to sell to a new market in which these prints were sought after. This is especially likely considering that most art prints were produced in Holland, where support for Johan de Witt and the 'True Freedom' regime was strongest.

5.6 Iconography of the stadhoudership in relation to Willem III and the Stadhouderless Period (1650 – 1671)

While some artists commemorated the outcome of the Great Assembly by emphasising the sovereignty of the individual provinces, other images celebrated the birth of the new Prince of Orange, Willem III. The visual depiction of the childhood of Willem III is particularly significant because it coincided with the Stadhouderless Period, during which the position of the House of Orange had been reduced to a 'mere' noble house without any formally acknowledged political or military role in the United Provinces. Willem III, having inherited the title of Prince of Orange at birth, was at the heart of a debate on the desirability of the stadhoudership that raged through a wide range of media sources, including cultural material such as art prints, medals, and ceramics. Willem II had also been frequently featured in contemporary images and prints throughout his childhood, but had mostly been depicted as a young nobleman from a princely House, dressed in fine court clothes. Due to the political circumstances of Willem III's younger years, however, the imagery of his childhood was far more politicised than that of any young Orange before him. Many pro-Orangist contemporary images of Willem III were not just

a depiction of the young Prince, but a case of support for the reinstatement of the stadhoudership and captaincy-general.

From a very young age, Willem was almost constantly depicted in a military style, as can be seen in **Images 22 and 23**. In these images the young Prince is depicted holding the baton of military leadership, as if he were already in possession of the offices his ancestors had held before him. Like many prominent statesmen and military leaders of the time the young Willem is regularly portrayed on horseback, which was a common trope in early modern portraiture for the ability to rule.[531] Moreover, when Willem was installed as a Knight in the Order of the Garter in 1653, he was consistently portrayed with the heraldry of this European order of chivalry. The overall emphasis on military prowess and male chivalry in the iconography of Willem's early childhood is especially significant when compared to the contemporary portrayal of that of his father, in which such military symbolism was unusual.

The consistent depictions of Willem in military style appealed to a market of buyers who envisioned a glorious military future for the Prince through the restoration of the stadhoudership and the captaincy-general, while simultaneously remembering the celebrated military achievements of Willem's ancestors (and thereby both emphasising the need for these offices as well as strengthening Willem's claim to them). It is noteworthy, however, that very few images featured Willem III as the successor to his controversial father. Instead, the imagery of Willem III's childhood frequently featured prominent references to his great-uncle, Maurits of Orange, and to his grandfather Frederik Hendrik, who were both well remembered for their military victories against the Spanish armies. Revoking the imagery of Maurits was also particularly relevant because, like Willem III, Maurits had come of age after the unexpected early loss of his father.

[531] I am grateful to Professor Benjamin Kaplan at University College London for pointing out the similarity between these early depictions of Willem III and various contemporary portrayals of European sovereigns on horseback, such as Titian's painting of Charles V, Velázquez's equestrian portrait of the Count-Duke of Olivares, and the series of portraits of Charles I on horseback by Van Dyck.

Maurits' personal motto ('tandem fit surculus arbor') and emblem (a tree trunk with a blooming twig), as well as the symbolism of a phoenix rising from the ashes, therefore found new popularity among Orangist artwork during the Stadhouderless Period. This is evident, for example, in **Image 24**, which shows a young Prince Willem III carrying the baton of military leadership, with the Dutch lion by his side, while in the background the light from Heaven shines on a prominently displayed blooming orange twig surrounded by Maurits' motto.

The representation in contemporary iconography of Willem II's childhood was not limited to military symbols, indicating the prospect of a restoration to the captaincy-general. Many prints also featured direct expressions of hope for a political future for Willem at the heart of Dutch politics, in the role of stadhouder. A common method for doing so was portraying Willem in front of the Binnenhof at The Hague, which has been the formal seat of both Holland's stadhouder, as well as of its States assembly and the States-General [see **Image 23** and **Image 25**]. Another good example is the elaborate art print published in honour of the Prince's birth by Cornelis van Dalen the Older (1602 - 1665) [**Image 26**]. The image shows the infant Willem III in his cot, surrounded by Juno, Flora, Athena, and Cupid. Willem's coat of arms is carried down from heaven by a group of *putti,* one of whom holds the image of a phoenix rising from the ashes, while Fama announces the child's birth while holding a blooming orange branch. The hope for the young child's future is referenced in the scene's background, which depicts the Binnenhof and its Hofvijver. Thus, much like the military symbolism in the childhood images of Willem III, these frequent references to the stadhouder's seat of power served to evoke the position held by Willem's ancestors, and to express hope and support for the restoration of the office to the Prince of Orange.

A particularly noteworthy set of prints reflecting the contemporaneous debate on the stadhoudership during the 1660s are **Image 27** and **Image 28,** which were both made by the skilled engraver Crispijn van de Passe II (ca. 1594 - 1670). The prints depict the Dutch state personified as a woman succumbed by illness, while a surrounding group of people present Willem III as a 'medicine' to heal her. This depiction of the Dutch state

as a sick woman falls into well-established tradition in early modern political philosophy to conceive the political state as a corporeal body, better known as the 'body politic'.[532] David Onnekink has argued how conceptual metaphors, such as the 'body politic', were instrumental in representing a sense of Dutch identity, and thereby 'shaped modes of thinking and political discourse'.[533] Central to the discourse of pathology created around the metaphor of the 'body politic' was the idea that the body could become diseased, but also could be cured again by applying the right 'medicine' through good statecraft. The thought of the body politic, though pliable to be used in different ways, was often to emphasise the benefits of one-headed rule, whereas causes of 'disease' to the body were often presented to be either domestic (in the form of discord, or a lack of unity), or external (in the form of threats by foreign states), with the sovereign being presented as the doctor whose just rule could 'heal' the body of state. However, Helmers has emphasised the peculiar nature in which Dutch Orangism used the trope, as the Prince of Orange was never presented as the doctor, but instead as the cure itself, thereby transforming into a passive object administered by a third-party doctor.[534] This, of course, fitted with the status of the Prince of Orange in the United Provinces, where he was not a sovereign, but a stadhouder, and thus a servant to the provincial authority.

This Dutch particular use of the trope of the 'body politic' is confirmed by the two images discussed here. Recent archival research by the Rijksmuseum has revealed that the two prints, which had originally been dated to 1672, were in fact created by Van de Passe

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[532] Helmer Helmers has argued that the idea of the 'body politic' is 'possibly the oldest, and certainly one of the most tenacious metaphors in political thought', which 'pervaded the literary tradition in Europe' throughout the Middle Ages and the early modern period. See: H. Helmers, 'Illness as Metaphor: The Sick Body Politic and its Cures', in: J. Grave and B. Noak (eds.), *Illness and Literature in the Early Modern Low Countries* (Göttingen, 2015), pp. 97-120; p. 97. For a general overview of the use of the metaphor of the 'body politic' in an early modern context, see: D. Hale, *The Body Politic: a Political metaphor in Renaissance English Literature* (The Hague, 1971); J. G. Harris, *Foreign Bodies and the Body Politic Discourses of Social Pathology in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2006).

[533] David Onnekink, 'The Body Politic', in: *The Cambridge Companion to the Dutch Golden Age,* pp. 107-23; p. 119.

[534] Helmers, 'Illness as Metaphor', pp. 114-115. See also: Stern, *Orangism in the Duth Republic in Word and Image, 1650-1675* (2010).

in 1665.[535] This, then, makes them a reaction to the outbreak of the second Anglo-Dutch war, instead of a commentary on the *Rampjaar*. The first print, entitled '*Sinne-beeld. Ter eeren van Sijn Doorluchtighste Hoogheyt Wilhem de III. Prins van Oranjen*' ['Allegorie in honour of his Highness Willem III Prince of Orange'] depicts the Dutch Virgin, representing the United Provinces, ailing in bed. The bed carries the emblem of the Republic, surrounded by the phrase 'Eendracht maeckt macht' ('Eendracht makes might'), while rays of sunlight shine down upon the scene with the phrase 'Jehova's strael geneest mijn quael' ('God's rays heals my sickness'). The Virgin is surrounded by the seven female figures (representing the seven provinces), while a personification of Religion prays at her bedside for the Virgin's recovery. Next to the bed stands a 'Haegsche doctor' (a 'doctor from The Hague', very likely meant to be Constantijn Huygens) who points at a painting of Willem III. While the Dutch lion affectionately licks the painted hand of the young Prince, a blooming orange branch can be seen lying underneath the portrait. At the top left of the print a painting is depicted of God's punishment of the proud people of Nineveh, who are portrayed worshipping a false idol while the chair of their true leader is empty. The message of the print is clear: the only 'medication' to the political crisis brought on by the outbreak of war was the restoration of the Prince of Orange to a position of political and military leadership. Moreover, the reference to the people of Nineveh served as a reminder of what would happen to a people who defied the will of God.

Image 28, entitled '*Sinne-beeld, tot 's Vaderlands Welvaert'* [Allegory on the prosperity of the nation', 1665], depicts an almost completely identical scene, but with one major difference: the subject of the painting presented to the Dutch Virgin is not Willem III, but an allegory of the *eendracht* between the United Provinces. The presented portrait now depicts the seven arrows symbolising the provinces, and a snake representing Prudentia, together with the words 'Macht kan niet overwonnen worden' ['Strength cannot be overcome']. Instead of a political statement in support of the restoration of the

[535] Report on the prints by the Rijksprentenkabinet of the Rijksmuseum: http://hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.COLLECT.351980 and http://hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.COLLECT.351981. Last accessed on 29/05/2019.

stadhoudership and captaincy-general, the print thus presents the message that unity among the provinces themselves is what would make the Republic prevail in the war ahead. Research by the Rijksmuseum has revealed that the remarkable difference between the two prints was likely to have occurred after the first version, **Image 27**, was banned by the States of Holland.[536] It is possible that Van de Passe altered the print voluntarily, or was instructed by his publisher to do so, in order to still be able to sell his print. What is noticeable however is that all the other symbolism in the print, including the blooming orange twig, has remained unaltered. This either suggests haste on the side of the artist and printer to produce the changes to the offending original print, or alternatively indicates a reluctance on behalf of Van de Passe's to make the alterations.

Helmers has also offered a brief analysis of this print, but explained the symbolism of the prints in the context of the *Rampjaar* 1672. He thus argued that the 'dominant wholesome quality of the prince' was 'his protection of the common good in the spirit of the father of the fatherland', thus as a leader to preserve the state against the foreign invasion. When seen in the context of 1672, the print, then, becomes a statement about the body politic being 'diseased' by external forces, with the 'medicine' being Willem III in his capacity as captain-general. However, when analysed in 1665 context, the print should be interpreted as a commentary on the domestic state of the nation, in which the Republic is 'diseased' by internal discord, to which Willem III, if restored the stadhoudership, is presented as the cure.

Throughout the Stadhouderless Period, visual expressions of Orangism were a common way to show one's support for the House of Orange. This could range from depictions of Willem III on items such as ceramics or glassware [**Image 29** and **30**]**,** to paintings, such as Jan Steen's *'Prince's Day'* ('Prinsjesdag') [**Image 31**]. This well-known painting depicts a boisterous gathering in a tavern on the occasion of the birthday of the young Prince of Orange, while in the shadowy background a barely visible portrait of

[536] Report on the prints by the Rijksprentenkabinet of the Rijksmuseum: http://hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.COLLECT.351980 and http://hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.COLLECT.351981. Last accessed on 29/05/2019.

Willem III can be discerned. In the foreground lies a piece of paper with a short verse: 'To the health of the Orange lad; in one hand a rapier, in the other hand a glass'. Above the feasting crowd hangs a bell crown, which is decorated with orange branches, and inscribed with the words 'salus patriae suprema lex esto' ('let the welfare of the fatherland be the supreme law'). This is a nod to Cicero's well-known quote 'salus populi suprema lex esto' ('let the welfare of the people be the supreme law'), which originates in Book III of *De Legibus,* in which Cicero outlines his ideal structure for the republican government of Rome.

The painting is among Steen's more famous works, and is commonly interpreted as a rather ironic look at Orangism, in which the assembled crowd cares more for drinking than for the portrait of Willem III.[537] Art critic Eddy de Jongh has emphasised the 'explicit political motifs' in this painting, though without offering further analysis.[538] The painting is not dated, besides the wide range given by the Rijksmuseum as 1650 – 1678 (the latter being the year of Steen's death), which adds to the mystery of the meaning behind its political symbolism. Art historian Wouter Kloek has emphasised that the year it was painted would be 'of great importance to its political interpretation', and offers the tentative suggestion that it may have been in or shortly after 1666, as a reaction to Willem III being named a 'child of state'.[539] I argue that a better understanding of the painting can be achieved by placing it in the wider context of the contemporaneous iconography of Willem III, which will also provide answers for the enigma surrounding its political message. The key to this understanding lies with the collection of still-life elements in the foreground of the picture. A short gothic-style bench stands in the very centre of the painting, with on top of it a hat decorated with white and orange feathers. Leaning against the bench is a prominent wooden stick, with the rhyme about the Prince lying next to it. Kloek has stated that the significance of this central objects is 'to some extent a mystery:

537 Wouter Kloek, *Jan Steen, 1626-1679* (Zwolle, 2005).
538 Eddy de Jongh, 'Jan Steen, so near and yet so far', in: G. Jansen (ed.), *Jan Steen. Painter and Storyteller* (New Haven & London, 1997), pp. 39-52; p. 42.
539 Kloek, *Jan Steen*, p. 8.

their function in the aesthetic of the painting is to reinforce the effect of depth'.[540] But when we study the hat in the context of the popular iconographical images of Willem III that have been analysed thus far, it is evident that it bears a strong resemblance to the ornate feathered hats with which a young Willem III was often depicted in contemporary art prints and etchings when portrayed as a future military commander. Similarly, the wooden stick which leans against the stool is identical to the batons symbolising the military leadership which symbolised the office of the captain-general of the Republic, and with which Willem was often depicted with in Orangist images. Together, the stool with the feathered hat and the baton thus evoke the popular imagery of the captaincy-general, and the fact that they lie abandoned on a stool symbolise the post's vacancy. This gives the painting a stronger Orangist message than has previously thought, as its central symbolism referred to the ongoing absence in the United Provinces of a stadhouder and captain-general.

Considering how widely used these symbols were in contemporaneous popular images of military leadership, the political message behind the collection of still-life elements in the foreground of the paintings would have been much more accessible for the people of the mid-seventeenth century. Moreover, this particular element of the painting's political symbolism suggests that the painting was produced during the Stadhouderless Period, thus at least before Willem III's appointment to the captaincy-general in February 1672.

5.7 Iconography of the Restoration of the Stadhoudership in 1672

The domestic tensions during the *Rampjaar* of 1672 led to the downfall of Johan de Witt and the States' party in favour of a restoration of the Prince of Orange to the respective (and formally abolished) positions of stadhouder and captain-general. Public pressure, sometimes resulting in urban unrest and violence, led to the declaration on 25 February

[540] Kloek, *Jan Steen*, p. 9.

1672 by the States-General that Willem III, although inexperienced in military matters, was appointed captain-general of the United Provinces. At this time there had not been an active Orange captain-general defending the state in wartime for almost twenty-five years, and it cannot be doubted that consistent portrayal in Dutch visual culture of Willem III as a (future) military commander throughout the Stadhouderless period had facilitated both the survival of the office itself and the Orangist claim to it.

The foreign military invasion had a significant impact on domestic politics in the United Provinces, and in response a large number of cultural material (such as etchings, engravings, and other art prints) was produced in reaction to the political events of the *Rampjaar* 1672. However, I have only found one image that gave a direct commentary on the early days of the actual invasion.[541] This is a painting is by Johannes van Wijckersloot (ca. 1626-1700), an artist from Utrecht, and depicts an allegorical scene which both references the invasion of the United Provinces by France, as well as the (desired) restoration of the stadhoudership [**Image 32**]. The painting shows a concerned man looking at a print of the *Hollandse Tuin* (symbolising the Dutch Republic), with part of the fence broken down. In the garden lies the Dutch lion, either sleeping or dead, which is surrounded by a scattering of broken arrows (referencing the broken *eendracht* of the Union and the Dutch state). Next to the sitting man stands another man with a large orange plume in his hat, smiling confidently at the viewer. The orange plume identifies him as an Orangist, and his assured posture alludes to an expectation of better things to come (as a result of a restoration of the stadhoudership).

This restoration, and Willem's appointment as captain-general of the Republic's armed forces, is famously depicted in an art print by Romeyn de Hooghe [**Image 33**]. The print shows the Prince of Orange swearing an oath to preserve and uphold all the requirements of his office, surrounded by members of the States-General. In the background of the scene is a large banner displaying the respective coats of arms of the

[541] The painting and its Orangist message have also been described in Munt's 'The Impact of the *Rampjaar*', p. 24. Johannes van Wijckersloot was a staunch Catholic, and Munt has suggested the painting might also suggest the hope that an Orangist restoration might accept a Catholic revival.

provinces and the phrase 'Vis Unita Obsta Fortior' ('United strength resists more strongly'). Below this is a depiction of an allegorical scene, with a female figure representing *eendracht* is positioned directly behind the Prince. Next to Eendracht stand personifications of War and Peace, while the Republic's motto *Concordia res parvae crescent* is displayed above the trio of figures. On either side of the banner are busts of Willem's ancestors displayed on top of large pillars, decorated with laurels. The presence of the previous stadhouders and captain-generals of the House of Orange-Nassau thereby places the bestowal of the offices onto Willem in a dynastic context, and strengthens the case for his appointment.

The visual representation in contemporary iconography of the restoration of the stadhoudership in 1672 was accompanied by an immediate return of a symbolism of the preservation of domestic *eendracht* in the depictions of Willem III. This can, for example, be seen in the art print '*Oranje, Nederlands Veldt en Zee-Heer'* by Romeyn de Hooghe, which was published shortly after Willem III's appointment to both the captaincy-general and the stadhoudership [**Image 34**]. The print, which was accompanied by a short poem, depicts Willem III in Roman costume in a chariot. The poem informs the reader that the chariot is steered by *eendracht,* personified as the Dutch lion holding a lance with the Freedom Hat in one paw, and seven tightly bound arrows in the other.

Contemporaneous artists of the 1670s often found their inspiration in older prints, which resulted in a level of consistency in the depiction of the stadhouders before and after the Stadhouderless Period. Willem Outgertszoon Akersloot, for example, celebrated Willem's elevation by reworking his engraving of Frederik Hendrik from 1628 [compare **Image 12** with **Image 35**]. The original print had depicted Frederik Hendrik as both stadhouder and captain-general, and had emphasised his role as a champion of *eendracht* among the provinces. Akersloot's new version of 1672 is almost identical to the original, with the notable difference that it presents Willem III in the role of his grandfather, shown holding the seven bound arrows and the string binding together the provincial coats of arms.

Similarly, Romeyn de Hooghe's '*Sinne-Beeld deses Tydts'* ('Allegory on these Times') was clearly inspired by the prints made by Crispijn de Passe [compare **Images 27** and **28** with **Image 36**]. Although De Hooghe's print is much darker in style, it similarly depicts the ailing Dutch Virgin in bed, with a group of counsellors around her. In De Hooghe's version, however, scattered and broken arrows lie at the end of the bed, signalling the broken unity among the provinces. Again Constantijn Huygens, holding a blooming orange twig, is seen at the Virgin's side, pointing towards a painting of Willem III. On the Virgin's other side stand the figures of Religion, Mercury, and Freedom, who plead for Willem III's appointment to the stadhoudership with the words 'Wijs 'em Staets bestier' ('appoint him to the governance of the state'). Like in De Passe's prints, this image leans on the idea of the United Provinces as a 'body politic', with Willem III is presented as its 'medicine' that will heal the Republic and restore its unity. The accompanying poem by the print's publisher Justus Danckerts (1635 - 1701) further emphasises the important role the House of Orange had historically played in the preservation of the Union, stating: 'The first foundations of your freedom were found by that Willem, who, as its leader, founded your *eendracht*, secured it, and thus prosperously built the State' ('d'eerste gronden van uwe Vryheit door dien WEL-HEM zijn gevonden / Door wien, als Opperhooft, uw Eendracht weird gesticht, bevestigt, en den Staet soo heilsaem opgericht').

A particularly fine example of how art prints and poetry often went hand in hand can be seen with the print '*Theatrum, of Tragedie, Gespeelt in 't Jaer 1672 op het Hollandt's Treur-Tonneel'* by Jacob de l'Ambre (ca. 1662) [**Image 37**]. The print shows a painstakingly detailed allegorical landscape in which the United Provinces (represented by a walled garden surrounding a large tree and the Reformed Church) is attacked from all sides by French troops and other enemies of the Dutch state and the 'true Religion'. Besides the fighting on land, a naval battle between the Republic and England is taking place in the background of the print. The print was accompanied by a poem which was appeared on the same page underneath the image, which pointed out the many details in the drawing and explained its allegorical references. Without this poem, it would have been difficult to decipher the tiny figure of Willem III standing in the very top of Holland's tree, where he 'shows his virtue and magnificence in the Stadhoudership' ('wiens deugt en

heerlijckheyt vertoont in 't Stadhouderschap'). At the bottom of the tree 'Jan and Keesje' (the De Witt brothers) are trying to bring it down with an axe, but an approaching angel is about to prevent them. The final stanzas of the poem call upon the reader to celebrate the elevation of Willem III as stadhouder, whose restoration has 'brought the whole nation together, and filled it with *eendracht*'. Similar messages could be seen in anti-De Witt prints, such as **Image 38**, in which the accompanying poem stated: 'This print depicts the Man / who bolsters discord among the citizens' ['Dees' print verbeeld den Man, die Burgers Tweedracht sterckt'].

5.8 Iconography of the stadhoudership in the aftermath of its restoration (1672 – 1678)

Symbolism that associated Willem III with the promotion of *eendracht* and freedom remained prominent in print iconography throughout the remainder of the 1670s. The art print '*De Staende Maagd Bereyd tot Vrede*' ('The standing Virgin prepared for Peace'), for example, featured a poem in which the Dutch Virgin rejoices over the return of the stadhouder with the words 'my old Lord, my Guardian, my Beloved, who will now once again tighten the chord of *eendracht* as tightly as possible, so that it will not break again' [**Image 39**]. In the allegorical print Willem offers the Virgin his flaming heart, symbolising his loyalty, while the Dutch lion holds a sword and the bundle of seven bound arrows. Both Willem and the Virgin are crushing a snake below their feet, which represents the subjection of Discord, while in the background Flora and a couple of *putti* pour out orange fruits and blooming orange twigs from a Horn of Plenty, symbolising prosperity (brought by the House of Orange). On the left, a swarm of locusts stream out of an orange tree, driving away a group of rats who flee the Dutch Garden together with a host of enemy soldiers. Just as God had sent a plague of locusts to torment the Egyptians in the Old Testament, the print thus implies that the God is not only on the side of the Dutch, but that he works through the Prince of Orange.

Visual symbols alluding to peace and *eendracht* were commonplace in the iconography of Willem III after his appointment as stadhouder and captain-general. His recapture of the town of Grave in 1674, for example, was commemorated by Gerard de Lairesse (1641 - 1711) with an elaborate allegorical art print which drew heavily on symbolism of unity, thereby using classical themes alluding to the Roman Republic [**Image 40**]. The print portrays Willem III, dressed as a Roman commander, on the left side of the image, fighting alongside Hercules and the Dutch Lion. They chase allegorical personifications of War and Discord, who are fleeing the scene on the right side of the print, out of Holland's Garden. In the background of this scene sits a gathering of seven women, representing the seven provinces. They are seated around an allegorical representation of Peace, while a small portrait of Willem III hangs above them, which is celebrated by personifications of Fame and Victory.

The stadhouder's recapture in the same year of the province of Utrecht, which had been taken by French troops in June 1672, was celebrated in a similar fashion in an elaborate print by Romeyn de Hooghe [**Image 41**]. The centre of this similarly classically inspired allegorical scene focuses on a group of three figures: the personification of Utrecht (on the left) is welcomed back by personifications of the Generality (holding a lance with the Hat of Freedom, and wearing a skirt with the coat of arms of the other provinces) and Eendracht (the central female figure), who thereby adds a fifth arrow to her bundle (referencing the provinces that had been lost to the French). Smiling down on the scene is Willem III, who, standing triumphantly in a chariot led by Hercules, is praised by the text at the bottom of the print as having been responsible for this 'happy reunification' of the provinces.

The custom of reusing older prints can be seen again in Daniël van den Bremden's 'Victori-Waeghen van den Doorluchtigen Prince van Orangien en Nassou' from 1675 [compare **Image 42** with **Image 15**]. This new version is an obvious reworking of Van den Bremden's own earlier work from 1630, with Willem III being celebrated as a triumphant military commander rather than Frederik Hendrik. Like the latter, Willem III is depicted in a similar pose in the chariot, and presenting a coat of arms symbolising

'UNIO'. The print thus emphases the consistent message of the stadhouder as the preserver of *eendracht* among the Dutch provinces, as it had done at the time of Frederik Hendrik's stadhoudership.

In January and February 1674, the stadhoudership of Holland and Zeeland was declared hereditary in the direct male line of Willem III, which was followed by the decision of the States-General to make the captaincy-general hereditary to Willem and his future heirs too. Contemporary popular iconography demonstrates how this unprecedented development in both the nature of the stadhoudership and the House of Orange's claim on the office was met by a varying range of reactions. Some art prints, celebrating the decision, depicted the occasion as the formal end to the political thought of the States' party (often referred to as the 'Loevestijn party') and of its Eternal Edict of 1667. This is particularly well demonstrated in Romeyn de Hooghe's allegorical etching '*De Doodt van het eeuwigh Edict, veroorsaeckt door 't Erf-Stadhouderschap van sijn Hoogheyt en sijn Mannelijcke Successeurs*' ('The death of the Eternal Edict, caused by the hereditary stadhoudership of His Highness and his male heirs') [**Image 43**]. The print, which states that for the past 24 years the Dutch Republic had drowned in foreign wars and 'burgerlijke tweedrachten' ('civil discord'), depicts an old crumbling tomb, in which lies a dying figure named Anticurius of Loevesteyn. Anticurius, the physical embodiment of the Eternal Edict, is surrounded by allegorical figures representing the ideas and politics of the States' party, such as the Act of Seclusion. Next to his bed stands Machiavelli, who can be seen holding the writings of Pieter de la Court (the accompanying text states that Machiavelli 'had brought as a medicine the *Interest* by De la Court, [that book] against a government with a stadhouder'). Two similar looking men (representing Johan and Cornelis de Wit; no. 12 on the print), one of whom has 'staet sucht' written over his heart, are reassuring the patient that he shall live for eternity. However, next to them stands the 'Arising Patriot' (no. 13 on the print) who tells them that 'nothing under the sun lasts forever'. On the left of the tomb a female figure representing Good Advice tries to enter the room, carrying an orange in one hand and the stadhouder's staff in the other, showing that a restoration of the stadhoudership and the House of Orange are the only true remedies to the situation. However, she is forcefully denied entry by a figure carrying the

phrase 'rather French than the Prince'. Johan and Cornelis de Wit are also depicted in relief on top of the tomb, surrounded by the words 'They fell like tyrants. The lived like Gods', emphasising the artist's message that the brothers had thought themselves superior to any others in the state. Surrounding the tomb are further allegories relating to the prosperity brought by the reinstating of the stadhoudership and the downfall of the 'Loevestijn' party: on the right Prudentia and Hercules (representing 'Bravery') are holding a portrait of Willem III, who is hailed as 'erf Stadhouder Willem de III, Pr. van Orange' ('hereditary Stadhouder Willem III, Prince of Orange'). Next to them a female personification of the Dutch Republic holds two batons, one for the stadhoudership and one for the captaincy-general, with the words 'voor Wilhem en de syne' ('For Willem and his [heirs]'). In the top corner the imagery of a phoenix rising from the ashes is depicted, alluding both to the restoration of the stadhoudership and captaincy-general itself, and to Willem III being appointed to these offices.

The allegorical figure of Anticurius van Loevesteyn can also be seen in another art print, this time by an anonymous artist [**Image 44**]. This print depicted Anticurius seated in the 'stolen' stadhouder's chair, surrounded by the titles of well-known anti-stadhouder pamphlets (such as in De la Court's *Interest van Hollant* and *Polityke Weegschael*). On the ground next to the chair lies the stadhouder's staff, which, according to the accompanying poem, 'had been kept under foot' when the States' party had been in power. Behind Anticurius stands Louis XIV, pointing at a map of the Republic and suggesting that Anticurius, who is listening intently, should betray the Republic to the French in order to stay in power. However, in the background of the scene an angel advances, carrying the coat of arms of Willem III, ready to get rid of Anticurius for good. The restoration of the stadhoudership and the House of Orange is thus presented as not only a matter of national security (preventing the country from being 'sold' to the French) but also of divine intervention.

Holland's decision to make its stadhoudership hereditary to the male offspring of Willem III was also met by criticism. Although little anti-Orange iconography from the period of Willem's stadhoudership has survived (in February 1674 the States of Holland

had banned the publication of defamations or insults against the Prince[542]), one such print dating from 1674 is available. **Image 45** shows the print used on the title page of an anti-Orangist pamphlet by the preacher Johannes Rothé (1628 – 1702). In the pamphlet Rothé warned the Prince: 'I must make you see your sins and horrors. You let yourself be worshipped as an Idol by people and you seek the highest [power]; see how this will bring the vengeance and judgment of God, who will strike you down'.[543] The image depicts a large statue of Willem III in front of the Binnenhof at The Hague, surrounded by adoring citizens. The image, entitled 'De Groote Afgodt van Hollant' ('The Great Idol of Holland') criticised both the increasing powers of the stadhouder, as well as his social standing. It not only accused the Prince's supports of idolatry, but the threatening lightning bolts depicted next to the statue also conveyed the warning that such sinfulness as the stadhouder's *heerszucht* was bound to result in divine punishment. The pamphlet, along with later political tracts by Rothé, led to his imprisonment in 1676 by order of the States of Holland.[544]

On 4 November 1677 Willem III married his cousin, princess Mary Stuart, in a private ceremony at St. James's Palace in London. A detailed allegorical print by Romeyn de Hooghe celebrating the occasion [**Image 46**] emphasised both Willem's commitment to the *eendracht* of the state, as well as the benefits of the marriage itself for the continued harmony and prosperity between the Dutch provinces. Centre stage in the print are Mary and Willem, who is dressed in classical Roman outfit. Willem gazes adoringly at a female personification of the *eendracht* among the United Provinces, who holds the bundle of

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542 Res. Holl., 6 February 1674. See also: I. Weekhout, *Boekencensuur in de Noordelijke Nederlanden. De vrijheid van de drukpers in de zeventiende eeuw* (The Hague, 1998), p. 58.

543 F. van Lamoen, 'Chiliast contra stadhouder: Johannes Rothé (1628 – 1702)', in: *Mededelingen van de Stichting Jacob Campo Weyerman* (1999: Vol. 22), pp. 145-61; p. 156.

544 In 1676 Rothé also published *Eenige sware beschuldinge rechtmatigh tegen de Prins van Oranje ingebracht,* which was the direct reason for his imprisonment. It has been suggested that Rothé had only been left in relative peace until then, due to the influence of his wealthy family, and because he was widely regarded as insane. See: the entry for Johannes Rothé in: P.C. Molhuysen and P. J. Blok (eds.), *Nieuw Nederlandsch biografisch woordenboek. Deel 1* (Leiden, 1911), pp. 1443-46; M. G. de Boer, 'Een onrustige geest (Johannes Rothé)', in: *Tijdschrift voor geschiedenis, land en volkenkunde* (1900: Vol. 15), pp. 1-19.

seven bound arrows between the Prince and his bride. Both Willem and Mary point towards an image of a group of seven cows, representing the seven provinces, that defend themselves against two wolves, which symbolises the importance of being unified against outside enemies. Beneath the couple are figures representing Discord and Envy, who perish because of this newly formed alliance between the Houses of Orange and Stuart.

The Peace of Nijmegen of 10 August 1678 ended the war between France and the United Provinces. The hostilities with England, Munich, and Cologne had already been brought to an end through separate peace treaties. The outbreak of the war in the *Rampjaar* 1672 had been crucial to the reinstatement of the stadhoudership, and by the time the peace with France was signed, Willem III had strengthened his hold on the office to such an extent that he had become the most powerful stadhouder the Dutch Republic had ever known. This chapter has demonstrated that one of the most prominent themes in the popular visualisation of the both the stadhoudership's function and its public perception was the preservation of *eendracht* within the Dutch state. In commemoration of the Peace of Nijmegen, this relationship between the Republic and its stadhouders was thus perfectly captured by a silver medal by Pieter van Abeele which displayed all the Princes of Orange, from Willem I to his great-grandson Willem III, around the seven bound arrows overlapped by two locked hands, the familiar visual symbol of *eendracht* among the Dutch provinces, preserved and upheld by its stadhouders [**Image 47**].

5.9 Conclusion

This chapter has analysed the representation of the stadhoudership in popular iconography in the time of Maurits, Frederik Hendrik, Willem II, the Stadhouderless period of 1650-1672, and the ensuing restoration of the office in 1672. Until now, studies of the iconography of the Princes of Orange have primarily concerned themselves with representations of the Princes in a military capacity.[545] This focus has been justified with

[545] Craft-Giepmans et al (eds.), *Stadhouders in beeld* (2007).

reference to the dominance of this theme in contemporary visual material, which drew on an established tradition surrounding the iconography of military heroes. The stadhoudership, in contrast, was thought to be 'te ongrijpbaar' ('too enigmatic') to have a consistent iconographical representation and set of symbolism associated with it.[546] This chapter has challenged this notion by showing that the representation of the Dutch stadhouders in fact relied on a coherent set of themes and imagery concerning the concept of *eendracht*. In addition to their capacity as military commanders, the stadhouders were consistently presented as the guardians of *eendracht* within the United Provinces, with contemporary images showing an almost unfailing repetition of symbolism relating to unity and the fight against discord.

The accessibility of mass-produced print iconography to all levels of society reiterated and reinforced this message to a widespread audience. Analysing these sources thus provides us with unprecedented insight into the broad understanding and perception of the role of the stadhoudership in the United Provinces. Moreover, this study's identification of a coherent tradition of symbolism and themes related to the office has provided fresh interpretations of the images themselves.

[546] Kolfin, 'Slotbeschouwing: over nieuwsprenten, propaganda en prentgebruik', p. 197.

CONCLUSION

In 1937 Nicolaas Japikse stated, with reference to the Princes of Orange, that 'much more important than the stadhoudership itself was the person who held it'.[547] It is remarkable that this off-hand statement has since come to reflect the broader attitude towards the office in historical scholarship on the Dutch Republic. Indeed, the major biographical studies of the lives and ambitions of the Princes of Orange predominantly emphasise their position of military leadership and their dynastical ambitions for the House of Orange. *Pace* Japikse, this thesis has sought to show that neglecting the stadhoudership itself is to bracket out a key element of early modern Dutch statecraft. The introduction to this study identified two strands of thought in existing scholarship on the stadhoudership. The first, working from the perspectives of intellectual history, concerns itself with the office in the framework of republican thought, thereby emphasising the attitudes of Dutch contemporaries to what they understood as a semi-monarchical element in the political composition of the state. The second focusses on the question of sovereignty in the United Provinces, examining how the stadhoudership enabled the Princes of Orange to challenge the position of the provincial States. Both lines of scholarship use the stadhoudership as a means of explaining the occurrence of political tension and conflict in the early modern Dutch Republic. The resulting conclusions state that, at the very least, the Princes of Orange used the office to expand their own authority, or, at most, to move towards a position of (semi-)monarchical sovereignty.

This thesis, then, has sought to contest these well-established assumptions by providing a new contextual framework focused on the constitutional role of the stadhoudership as prescribed by the Union of Utrecht of 1579. It has set out the ways in which the office embodied the divergent objectives of the Union treaty. The treaty had

[547] Japikse, *Geschiedenis van het Huis van Orange-Nassau,* p. 132.

tasked the office with the prerogatives of inter- and intra-provincial mediation and conflict resolution in order to protect the *eendracht* of the northern provinces. The passing of the Act of Abjuration, however, which devolved monarchical sovereignty to the provincial States, had resulted in the stadhoudership becoming subservient to the provinces. This meant that, with the occurrence of a major intra-provincial conflict such as those in 1617-18 and 1650, the stadhoudership was bound to serve the two opposing interests of provincial liberty and federal unity. In both cases, the stadhouders choose to act on behalf of the latter, thereby exposing themselves to criticism from those supporting provincial particularism, among contemporaries and, later, historians.

The first part of this thesis traced the constitutional development of the stadhoudership to better challenge received ideas held by scholarship since the early twentieth century. Chapter 1 explored the origins of the stadhoudership under the Habsburgs and pursued it all through the early years of the Dutch Revolt. In doing so, it illustrated the radical changes the nature of the office underwent, from monarchical beginnings to a place in a republican constitution. Chapter 2 continued this exploration throughout the stadhouderships of Maurits, Frederik Hendrik, and Willem II, demonstrating the ways in which the office became a nodal point for conflict resolution and mediation. Together with Chapter 3, it situates the conflicts of the Truce Period and the summer of 1650 within the stadhoudership's constitutional task of upholding the divergent interests of federal unity and provincial liberty. Chapter 3 also sought to reject the notion that little actual debate on the stadhoudership took place at the Great Assembly of 1651. Instead, it shows, the stadhouder's role of mediation and conflict resolution had come to be perceived as a vital part of the Republic's constitution. Part II of this thesis demonstrated that key insights into the intellectual and popular debate surrounding the stadhoudership can be found in sources other than contemporary pamphlets and broadsheets. A significant contribution to this debate played out in forms of mass-produced popular media, many of which were accessible to a widespread audience spanning all levels of Dutch society. Literature such as poetry, theatre, and songs, as well as print iconography offers fresh contributions to the debate on the

stadhoudership. Literary and visual culture reflected and shaped the popular concept of the stadhouders as the guardians of harmony and *eendracht*.

This thesis not only provides fresh insight into the office of the stadhoudership, but also proposes a new framework through which to study the office's position vis-à-vis the provincial States. Rather than viewing the office as an extension of the Princes of Orange's aims at expanding their authority or realising their dynastic ambitions, it has sought to shift the focus back to the stadhoudership itself while concentrating on the office-holders' constitutional obligations to serve opposing interests. I do not intend, however, to absolve the Princes of Orange from the criticisms of contemporaries or later historians: the choices the stadhouders made were as much informed by their own interests as that of the institutional bodies they served and the notion of *eendracht* they had pledged to uphold. I have, however, aimed to challenge the rhetoric of coups d'état and aspirational semi-monarchical ambitions. This study has demonstrated that throughout a series of major conflicts the stadhouders did not, in fact, act in contravention of the constitutional prerogatives of their office, nor expand those of the stadhoudership.

The inherent restrictions imposed on the scope and ambitions of a PhD thesis, however, mean that this research has raised as many new questions as it has answered. As this analysis focused predominantly on the relationship between the stadhoudership and the States of Holland, further research is needed to its contentions with regard to the remaining provinces of the Dutch Republic. A comparative study of the experience of the stadhoudership in both the northern provinces, traditionally held by the Counts of Nassau-Dietz, and the remaining provinces is also still lacking in current scholarship. Furthermore, this thesis has covered the constitutional development of the stadhoudership up until the end of the Stadhouderless Period, and further research is needed to analyse the extent to which the office changed in reaction to the restoration of the stadhoudership following the events of the *Rampjaar* of 1672. The chapters on popular arts and literature have sought to gesture tentatively in such a direction, but further research could focus on the constitutional history of the office, especially with regard to it being officially declared hereditary in 1674. Moreover, a study is long overdue on the

extent to which the stadhoudership in the Dutch Republic was shaped by Willem III's constitutional status as a monarch in the period 1689-1702. Some final thoughts are also in order for Part II of this thesis, which provided an analysis of the representation of the stadhoudership in contemporary popular art and literature. Studies have frequently emphasised the unique features of the thriving arts and literary market of the United Provinces in comparison to the rest of Europe, but its products themselves have often only been studied within an exclusively Dutch context. For the most part, this thesis has been no exception to this. However, Chapter 5 has hinted at how the prints in this study could be studied in a larger continental tradition of representation of rule by pointing at the similarity between the prints of a young Willem III on horseback and the trend in contemporary European portraiture to portray rulers in this fashion. A study that places the iconographic representation of the stadhoudership in a wider European context and analyses how it compares to the portrayal of other contemporary statesmen is therefore the logical next step, as it is certain to offer further insights into the contemporary understanding of the stadhoudership and its place in the power dynamics of early modern Europe.

With this thesis, then, I have sought to reinvigorate scholarship on the stadhoudership, and spark renewed debate around and interest in the constitutional foundations of the United Provinces of the Netherlands.

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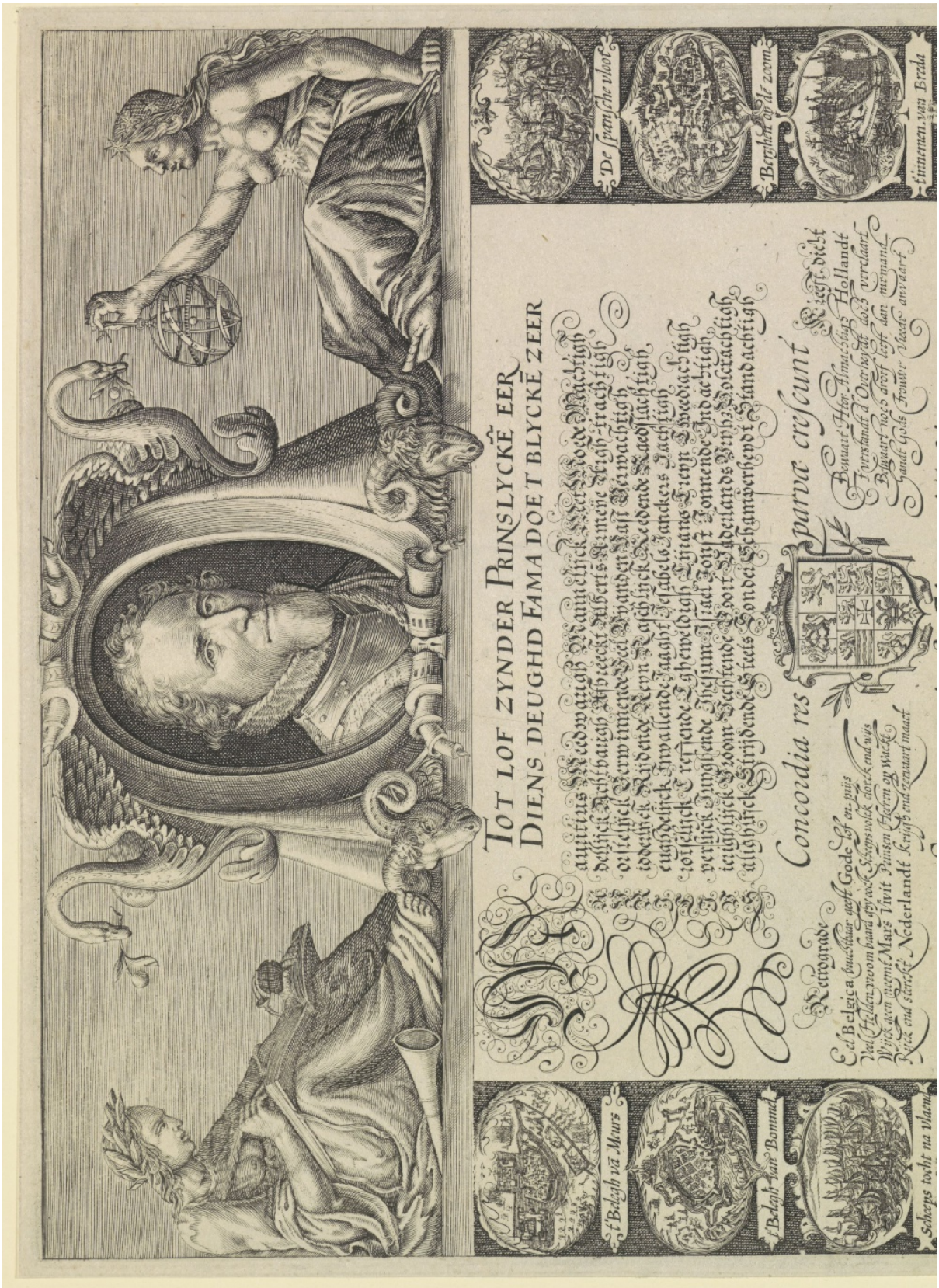
APPENDIX

1. Jan Saenredam, *Portrait of Maurits of Orange-Nassau at the battle of Nieuwpoort, 1600*, 1600, engraving, 35 x 46 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet, RP-P-OB-77.354; Hollstein Dutch 128-2.

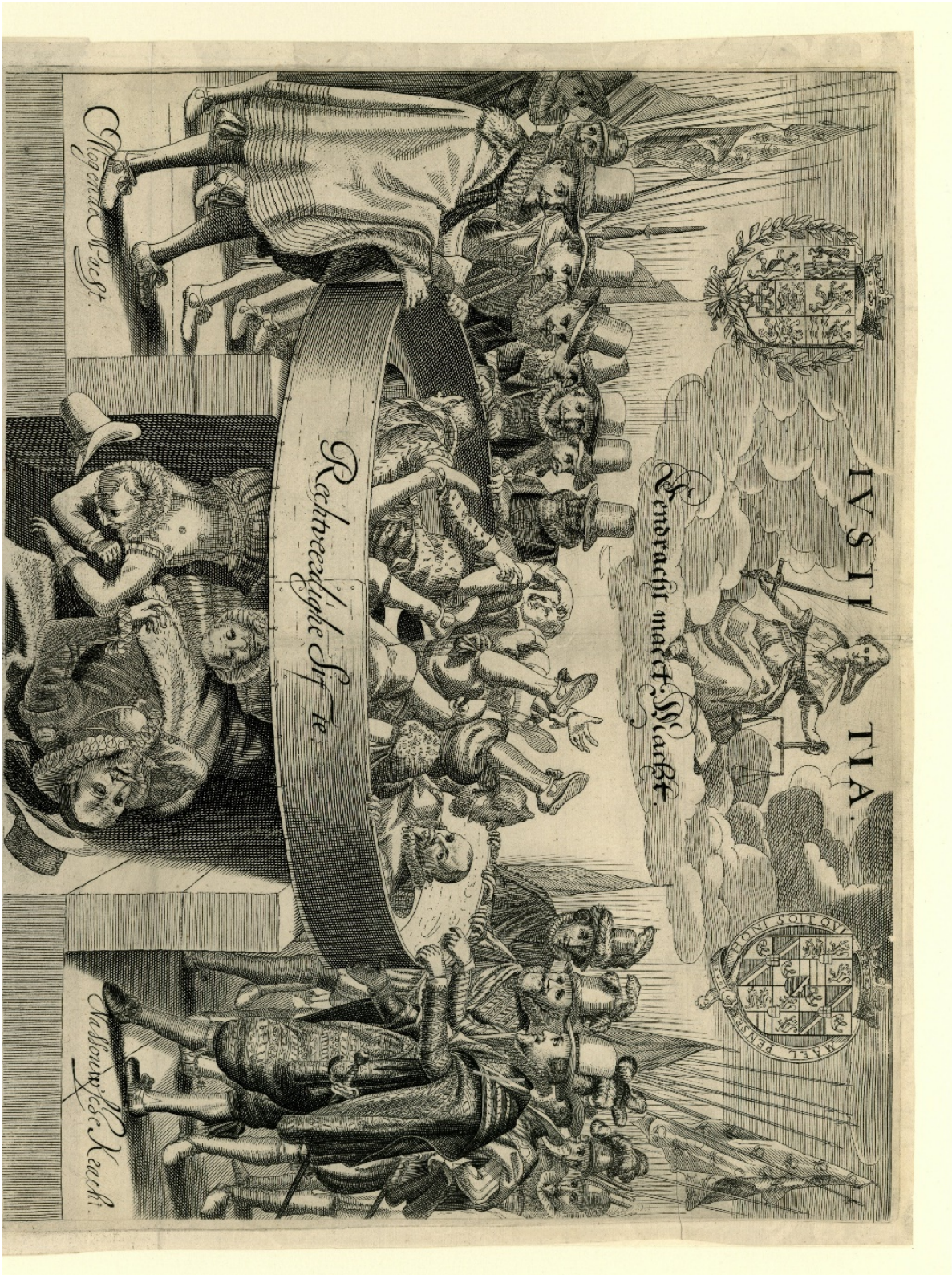
2. Anon., *Portrait of Maurits and Frederik Hendrik, princes of Orange,* ca. 1600-1609, engraving, 36 x 26 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet RP-P-OB-104.160.



3. Nicolaes van Geelkercken, *Portrait of Maurits, Prince of Orange* (detail), 1612, engraving/etching, 48 x 32 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet RP-P-OB-104.193; Hollstein Dutch 7.

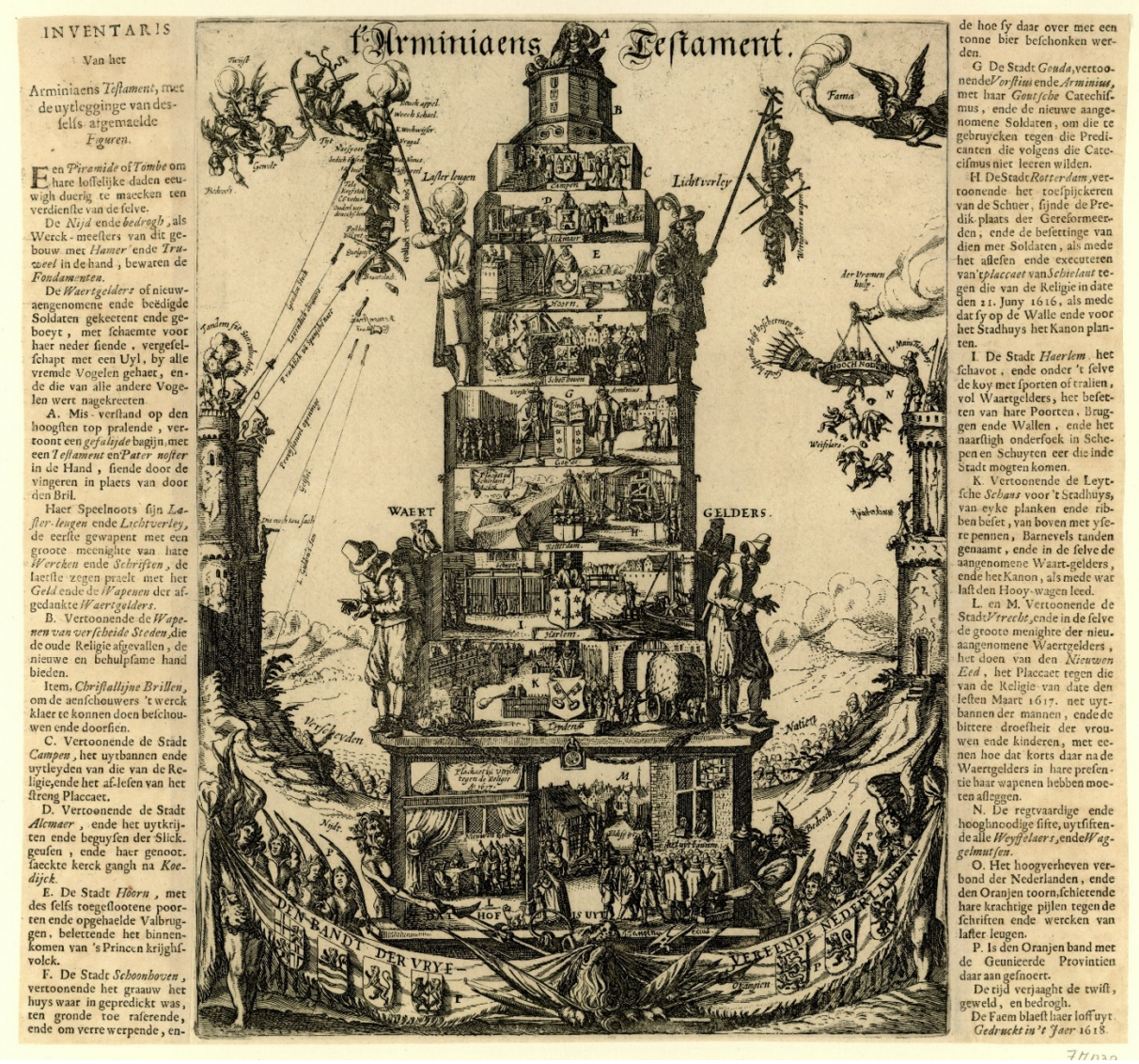
4. Anon., *Dank voor het Bestand, 1609*, ca. 1609, etching/letterpress printing, 14 x 20 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet RP-P-OB-80.751; Hollstein Dutch 430.

5. Anon., '*Den Nieuwen BarneValschen Handel',* ca. 1618-1619, engraving/etching, 15 x 29 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet RP-P-OB-77.304.



6. Anon., '*Rechtveerdighe Sifte, 1618',* 1618, etching/engraving/letterpress printing, 51 x 37 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet RP-P-OB-77.299; Hollstein Dutch 2.

7. Anon., *'Vertonighe der tegenwoordige stant int vrye-Nederlandt',* 1618, engraving, 22 x 29 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet RP-P-OB-80.820; Atlas van Stolk 1320.



8. Anon., *'t' Arminiaens Testament',* 1618, etching / letterpress printing, 35 x 38 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet RP-P-OB-77. 271; Hollstein Dutch 28-copy; Atlas van Stolk 1348.

9. Anon., *'t Recht ondersoec der Staten'*, 1619, engraving, 24 x 31 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet RP-P-OB-77.302; Hollstein Dutch 46; FMH 1364.

10. Hendrick Hondius, *Allegorie op de welstand van de Republiek in 1619,* 1619, engraving, 45 x 56 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet RP-P-OB-77.331; New Hollstein Dutch 41-4(4); Atlas van Stolk 1448.

11. Salomon Savery (attributed to), *'Op de Jonghste Hollantsche Transformatie',* 1618, engraving/ letterpress printing, 43 x 33 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet RP-P-OB-77.274; Hollstein Dutch 201.

12. Willem Outgertszoon Akersloot (design by Adriaen Pieterszoon van de Venne), *Portrait of Frederik Hendrik, prince of Orange,* ca. 1628, engraving, 20 x 16 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet RP-P-1883-A-7383; Hollstein Dutch 3-3(5).

13. Crispijn van den Queborn, *Portrait of Frederik Hendrik, prince of Orange,* 1639, engraving/etching, 15 x 12 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet RP-P-1898-A-20712; Hollstein Dutch 37.

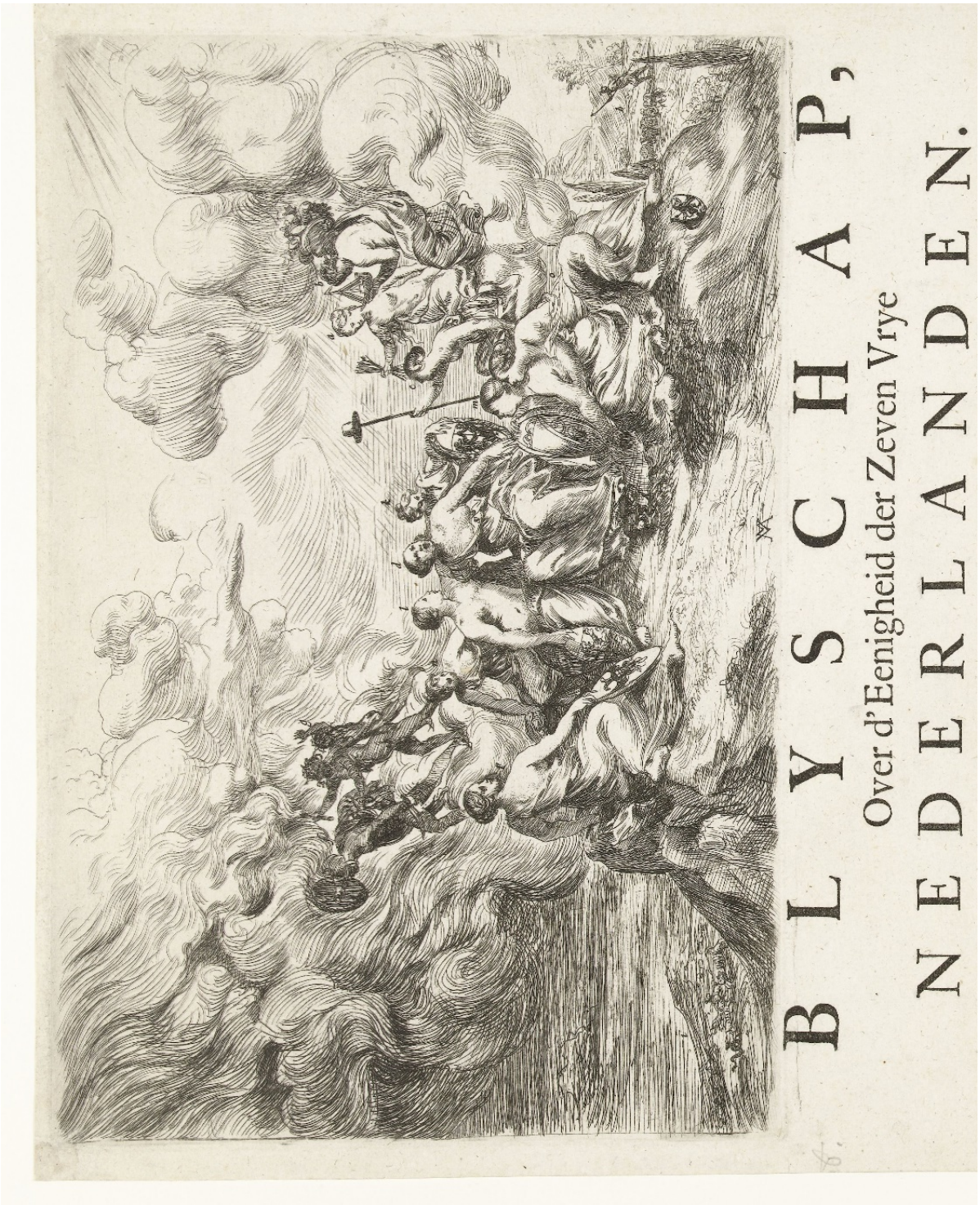
14. Willem van de Lande, *'Uniti Belgii Hieroglyphicum, oft Vereenicht-Neder-landts Zinne-beeld …'*, 1636, etching/letterpress printing, 26 x 38 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet RP-P-OB-78.787; Hollstein Dutch 23.

15. Daniël van den Bremden, *'Victori-Waeghen vanden Doorluchtigen Prince van Orangien, Grave van Nassou',* 1630, engraving, 46 x 55 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet RP-P-OB-67.570; Hollstein Dutch 1-1(2).

16. Adriaen van Nieulandt, *Allegory of the Peace under Stadholder Willem II,* 1650, oil on canvas, 136 x 105 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum SK-A-1995.

17. Sebastian Dadler, *Twee zijden van een penning met de val van Faëtoon/Willem II op 6 November 1650,* 1651, silver, d. 7 cm. x w. 87.80 gr., Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum NG-VG-1-835.

18. Anon., *Allegorie op de Eerste Grote Vergadering, 1651,* 1651, etching/engraving/letterpress printing, 46 x 36 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet RP-P-OB-81.730; Atlas van Stolk 2168.



19. Aert Maes (attributed to), *'Blyschap, Over d'Eenigheid der Zeven Vrye Nederlanden',* 1651, etching/ letterpress printing, 57 x 35 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet RP-P-OB-81.731.

20. Sebastian Dadler, *Keerzijde van een penning met de Grote vergadering der Staten-Generaal na de dood van Willem II in Den Haag gehouden,* 1651, silver, d. 6.9 cm x w. 85.30 gr., Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum NG-VG-1-884.

21. Anon., *Gedenkpenning voor Jacobus de la Court, geboren 1651*, 1651, etching, 7 x 9 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet RP-P-OB-81.698.

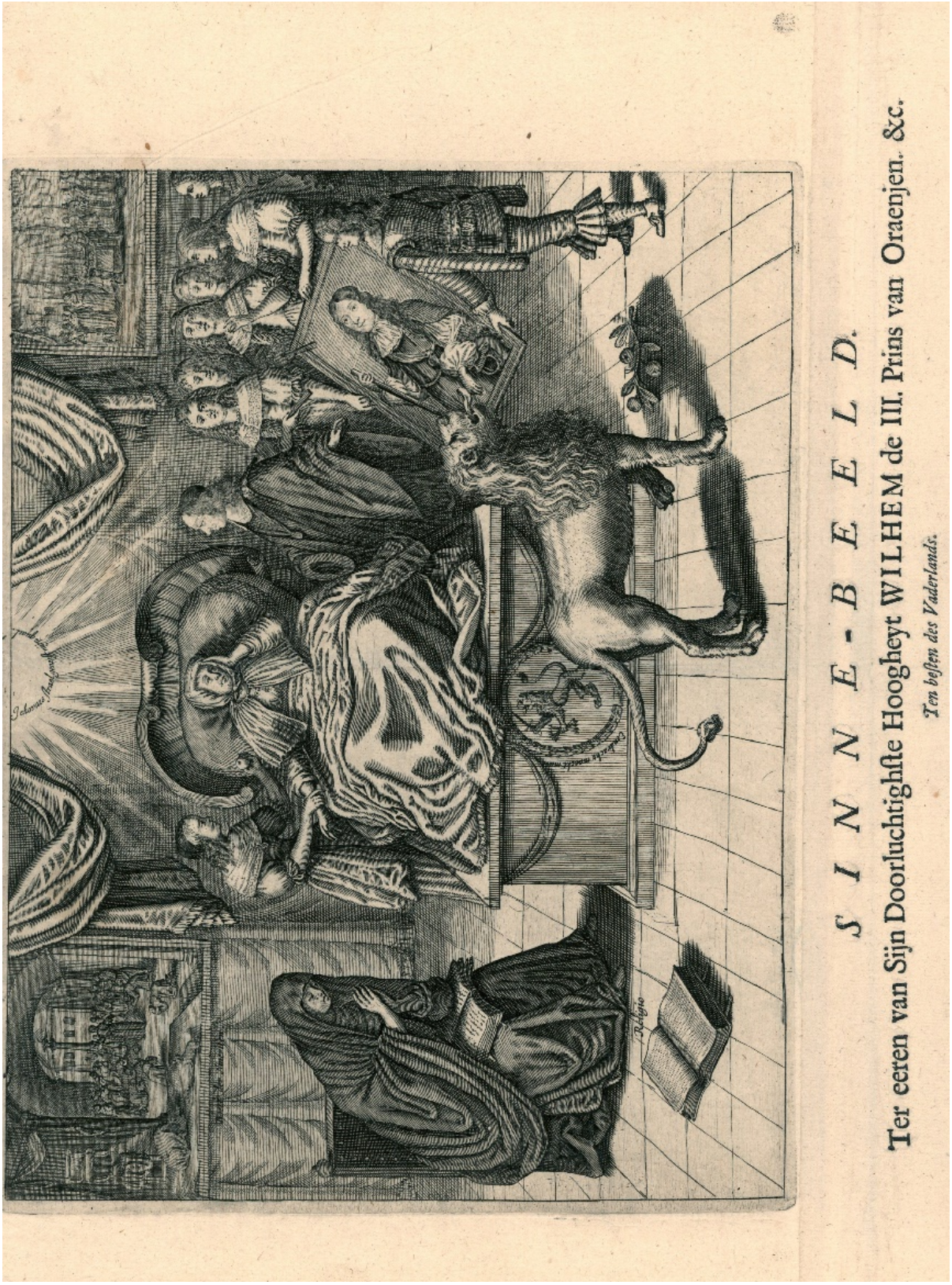
22. Hendrik Rokeszoon van Dagen, *Ruiterportret van Willem III, prins van Oranje,* 1655, engraving/ etching, 30 x 20 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet RP-P-1893-A-18127; Hollstein Dutch 15.

23. Anon., *Portret van Willem III, prins van Oranje,* ca. 1654, engraving/etching, 33 x 24 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet RP-P-OB-104.460.

24. Anthonie Heeres Siverdtsma, *Portret van Willem III, prins van Oranje,* ca. 1652-1654, engraving/ letterpress printing, 40 x 19 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet RP-P-OB-104.456; Hollstein Dutch 4.

25. Anon., *Ruiterportret van Willem III, prins van Oranje,* ca. 1660, engraving/etching, 20 x 16 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet RP-P-OB-104.464.

26. Cornelis van Dalen, *Allegorie op geboorte van prins Willem III, 1650,* 1650, 67 x 45 cm., engraving, Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet RP-P-1884-A-7780; Hollstein Dutch 171.



27. Crispijn van de Passe II, *'Sinne-Beeld. Ter eeren van Sijn Doorluchtighste Hoogheyt Wilhem de III. Prins van Oraenjen. &c.',* 1665, engraving/letterpress printing, Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet RP-P-OB-68.282.

28. Crispijn de Passe II, *'Sinne-beeld, tot 's Vaderlands Welvaert'*, 1665, engraving/letterpress printing, Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet RP-P-OB-68.283.

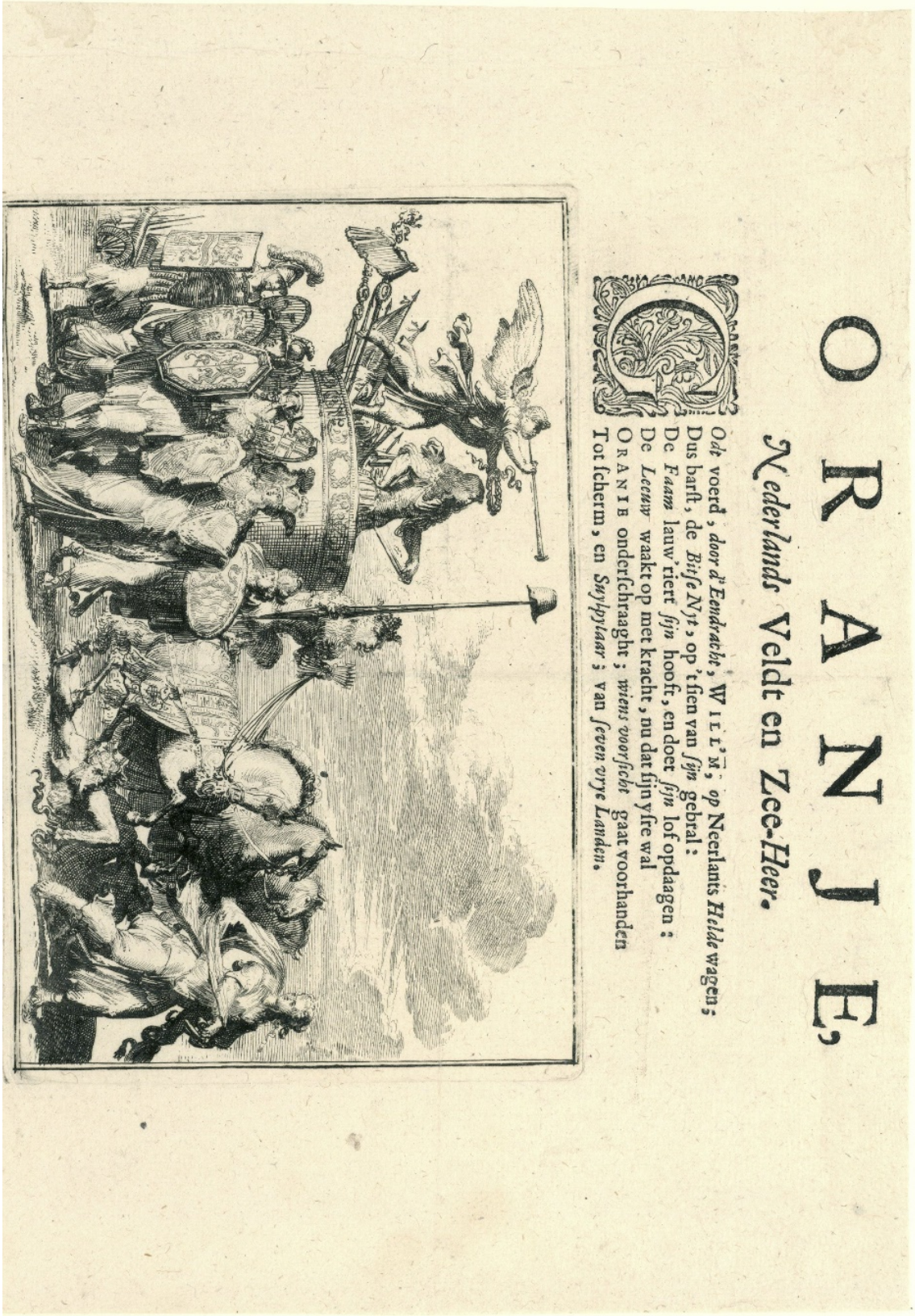
29. Anon., *Bord met portret Prins Willem III als kind,* ca. 1650-1660, d. 20.5 cm., earthenware, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum BK-NM-3133.

30. Anon., *Fluitglas met een portret en het wapen van Willem III*, ca. 1655, glass, h. 34 cm., d. 11.4 cm., w. 142 gr., Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum BK-NM-8040.

31. Jan Havickszoon Steen, *Prinsjesdag*, ca. 1660 – 1679 (dating by Rijksmuseum), oil on panel, 46 cm. x 62.5 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum SK-A-384.

32. Johannes van Wijckersloot, *Allegorie op de Franse invasive in de Nederlanden in 1672,* 1672, oil on canvas, h 43 cm., w 37.5 cm, d 8.5 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum SK-A-4910.

33. Romeyn de Hooghe, *'Eeuwigh Gedenckteeken, Hoedanigh sijn Hoogheyt, den Heere Prince van Oranjen, door hare Hoog. Mog. De Heeren Staten Generael, tot Capiteyn Generael Gemaeckt is over de Krijghsmacht der Vereenighde Nederlanden'*, 1672, etching/engraving/letterpress printing, 27 x 32 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet RP-P-OB-77.040; Hollstein Dutch 84.



ORANJE,

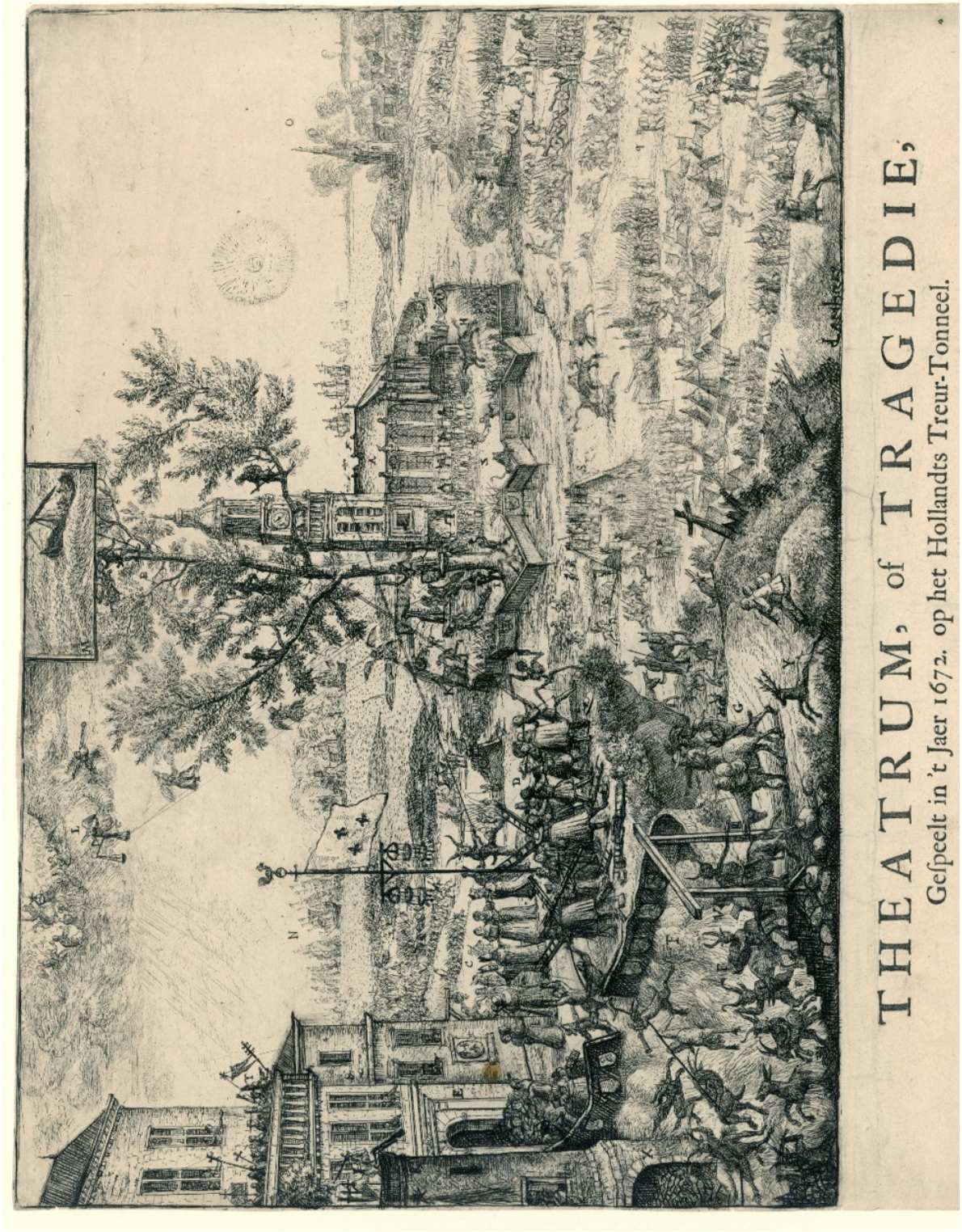
Nederlands Veldt en Zee-*Heer.*

Odt voerd, *door d'Eendracht*, WILL'M, *op* Neerlants *Helde* wagen;
Dus barst, de *Bitse Nyt*, op 't sien van *sijn* gebral:
De *Faam* lauw'riert *sijn* hoofr, en doet *sijn* lof opdaagen:
De *Leeuw* waakt op met kracht, nu dat sijn yfre wal
ORANIE onderschraaght; *wiens voorsicht* gaat voorhanden
Tot scherm, en *Swypstaar*; van *seven vrye Landen.*

34. Romeyn de Hooghe, *'Oranje, Nederlands Veldt en Zee-Heer',* 1672, etching/letterpress printing, 38 x 24 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet RP-P-OB-77.044.

35. Willem Outgertszoon Akersloot, *Portret van Willem III, prins van Oranje,* ca. 1672, engraving, 20 x 16 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet RP-P-1890-A-15731; Hollstein Dutch 3-5(5).

36. Romeyn de Hooghe (attributed to), '*Sinne-beeld deses tydts',* 1672, etching/letterpress printing, 20 x 26 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet RP-P-OB-77.036; Atlas van Stolk 2322.

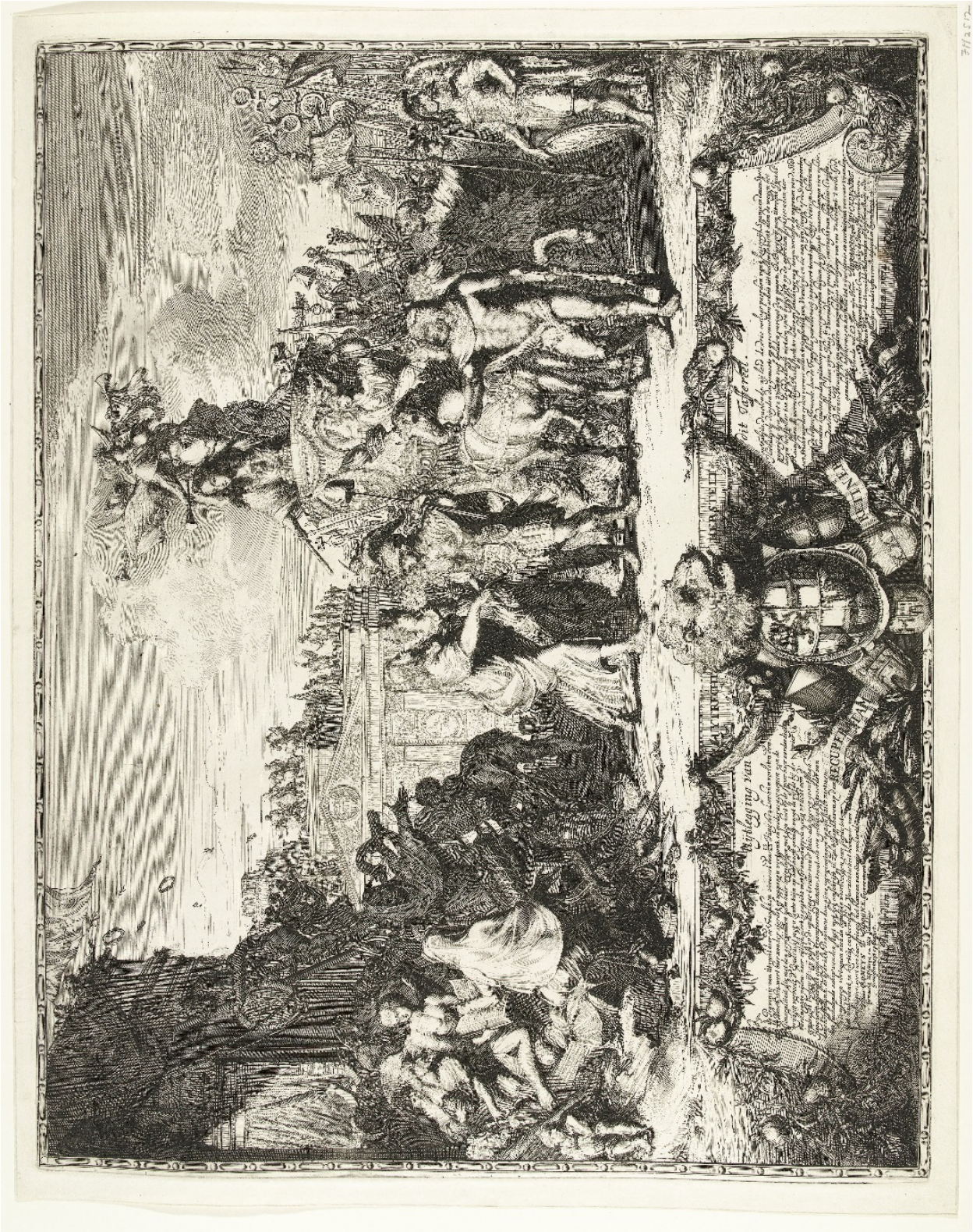


37. Jacob de l'Ambre, *'Theatrym, of Tragedie, Gespeelt in 't Jaer 1672, op het Hollandts Treur-Tonneel'*, 1672, etching/engraving/drypoint/letterpress printing, 59 x 42 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet RP-P-1878-A-1205; Hollstein Dutch 1; Atlas van Stolk 2495.

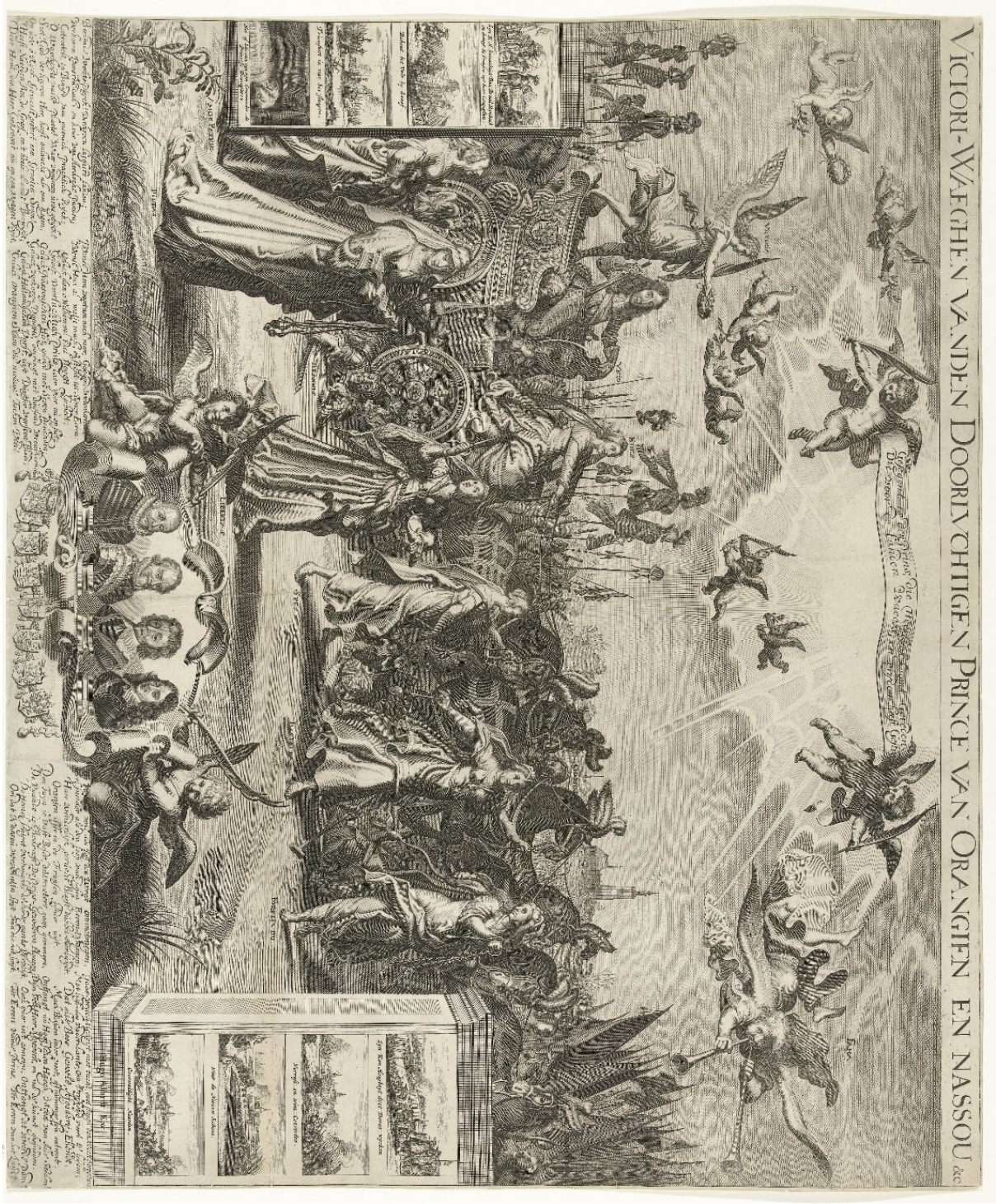
38. Anon., '*Afbeelding en Verhael van 't schrickelick Omkomen van Meester Jan de Witt, ende Meester Cornelis de Wit, sijn Broeder',* 1672, engraving/etching/letterpress printing, 50 x 36 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet RP-P-OB-77.158.

39. Anon., *'De Staende Maagd Bereyd tot Vreede',* 1672, engraving/letterpress printing, 37 x 22.5 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet RP-P-OB-77.037.

40. Gerard de Lairesse, *Zinneprent op Willem III, na de veldtoch van 1673 en de verovering van Grave in 1674,* 1674, etching, 68 x 46 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet RP-P-OB-68.291; Atlas van Stolk 2611.



41. Romeyn de Hooghe, '*Uytrecht Herstelt',* 1674, etching, 40 x 52 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet RP-P-OB-79.282.



42. Daniël van den Bremden, '*Victori-Waeghen vanden Doorluchtigen Prince van Orangien en Nassou &*', 1675, etching/engraving, 45 x 55 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet RP-P-1890-A-15484; Hollstein Dutch 1-2(2); Atlas van Stolk 2558.

DE DOODT
Van het
EEUWIGH EDICT,
Veroorsaeckt door
't ERF-STADTHOUDERSCHAP
Van sijn HOOGHEYT en sijn Mannelijcke Successeurs.
Vast gestelt den 2 Februarij 1674.

43. Romeyn de Hooghe (attributed to), *'De Doodt van het eeuwigh Edict, veroorsaeckt door 't Erf-Stadhouderschap van sijn Hoogheyt en sijn Mannelijcke Successeurs',* 1674, etching/letterpress printing, 53 x 34 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet RP-P-OB-79.294; Hollstein Dutch 83; Atlas van Stolk 2574.

44. Anon., *'Anticurius van Loevesteyn. In wien na 't leven afgeschildert zijn de qualiteyten, van 't Edict met sijn Factionisten',* 1674, etching/letterpress printing, Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet RP-P-OB-79.152.

45. Anon., *'De Groote Afgodt van Hollant 1674,* 1674, etching, 15 x 14 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet BI-B-FM-063.

46. Romeyn de Hooghe, *Allegorie op het huwelijk van Willem III en Mary Stuart,* 1677, etching/ engraving, 66 x 47 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet RP-P-OB-79.442.

47. Pieter van Abeele, *Vrede van Nijmegen, ter ere van de prinsen van Oranje,* 1678, silver, d 8.7 cm., w. 113 gr., Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum NG-VG-1-1051.